10

10 ORIENTATION--information especially likely to be needed by users of a file as a frame of reference for understanding the materials classified elsewhere; organization of the file, special coding decisions, and evaluation of the file.

Guide to the AX5 Vedda File

[The Vedda file is composed of two sources at present. It is expected that additional sources will be processed in the near future.

The Vedda are regarded as one of the most primitive culture groups of Asia. They formerly occupied most of the island of Ceylon, but have now virtually become extinct as a culture.

Nearly all the important information in this file comes from the classic study by Seligmann and Seligmann conducted in the early part of the twentieth century. The second source (2: Bailey) predates the work of Seligmann and contains some information on material culture and religion.

The file is incomplete in many respects, but information on social organization and religion and various other aspects of culture is available.]

Processed in 1961

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 of the earliest foreign records such as that found in the tract *De Moribus Brachmanorum* written about 400 A.D., the author of which professes to have obtained his information from a Theban traveller.

[114] To Robert Knox, who wrote in 1681 after a captivity in Ceylon lasting 20 years, belongs the credit of having first accurately described the Veddas. "Of these *Natives* there be two sorts *Wild* and *Tame*. I will begin with the former. For as in these Woods there are Wild *Beasts* so Wild *Men* also. The Land of *Binton* is all covered with mighty Woods, filled [101] with abundance of *Deer*. In this Land are many of these wild men; they call them *Vaddahs*, dwelling near no other Inhabitants. They speak the *Chingulayes* Language. They kill *Deer*, 175 and dry the Flesh over the fire, and the people of the Countrey 105 come and buy it of them. They never Till any ground for Corn, their Food being only Flesh. They are very expert with their Bows. They have a little ax, which they stick by their sides, to cut hony out of hollow Trees. Some few, which are near Inhabitants, have commerce with other people. They have no Towns nor Houses, only live by the waters under a Tree, with some boughs cut and laid about them, to give notice when any wild Beasts come near, which they may hear by their rustling and trampling upon them. Many of these Habitations we saw when we fled through the Woods, but God be praised the *Vaddahs* were gone.

"Some of the tamer sort of these men are in a kind of Subjection to the King. For if they be found, tho it must be with a great search in the woods, they will acknowledge his Officers, and will bring to them *Elephant-teeth*, and *Honey*, and *Wax*, and *Deer's Flesh*; but the others in lieu thereof do give them near as much, in Arrows, Cloth, etc. fearing lest they should otherwise appear no more.

"It had been reported to me by many people, that the wilder sort of them, when they want Arrows, will carry their load of Flesh in the night, and hang it up in a *Smith's* Shop, also a Leaf cut in the form they will have their Arrows made, and hang by it. Which if the *Smith* do make according to their Pattern they will requite, and bring him more Flesh;

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER II

PRESENT CONDITION OF THE VEDDAS

WE propose to treat the Veddas under three headings :— 101

(i) Veddas.
(ii) Village Veddas.
(iii) Coast Veddas.

Although it may not be easy in every case to say into which group a given person falls, and although the proposed classification rests on no natural or known physical basis, it seems that at the present day the Veddas fall into these three groups characterised by different sociological features. The term "Rock" or "Jungle" Vedda will be avoided; it has been applied by some authors to the wilder specimens of that class which we propose to call simply Veddas.

The coast Veddas are briefly described in Chapter XII.; they live in scattered villages on the east coast and are chiefly to be found north of Batticaloa. They have much Tamil blood [563] in their veins, and though often taller than pure Veddas, some still retain an appearance which suggests their Vedda origin. This is far more marked in the males than in the females, and it appeared to us that any of the latter might have been local Tamils, whereas some of the men clearly differed from the surrounding population.

Before giving an account of the present condition of the 115 different Vedda communities, we propose to give the substance of a number of conversations with a remarkable old Kandyan who in his boyhood, youth and manhood was closely associated with the Veddas of the Eastern Province, and whose memory certainly goes back for 80 or 90 years. In order to make his

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

231 for the Sinhalese of Potuliyadde, receiving every fifth calf that is born. The community has, or recently had, ten or more head of cattle of their own and have sold bulls to the brother-in-law of our *tavalam*[1] leader for as much as 30 Rs., indeed, our *tavalam* leader stated that he had himself visited the Danigala chena and had also seen the cattle. On this occasion Kaira and his sons 291 wore a coloured cloth as the Sinhalese do and their women wore a *kambaya* and coloured breast handkerchief. Mr Bibile was 621 able to confirm some of these statements from his own know- 177 ledge and on making investigations among the local villagers 609 discovered that there was a whole community living on the chena settlement, some of whom had married Sinhalese. Indeed it appeared that not only have members of this community learnt to play the part of professional primitive man, but there has even been specialisation, for as far as we could learn, the men we met at the look-out hut are those who always receive visitors or come to Bibile when sent for, while the others whom we did not see do not pose as wild Veddas. Probably the part they now play had only recently crystallised into a professional rôle, but it must be remembered that so long ago as 1863 Bailey discussing these Veddas, or their fathers, says "they were brought in from the forests to be 'looked at'" and he adds, "I never saw that contempt for money which Tennant supposes is still existing'."[2]

101 **Kovil Vanamai.** In the Eastern Province in the neighbourhood of Devulani tank the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are found, this term being applied to a number of groups of Veddas living in this neighbourhood. The name Kovil Vanamai means temple [346] precincts and seems to have arisen from there being one or more temples in this part of the country, while some of these shrines are traditionally associated with Veddas, apparently with old settled coast and village Veddas, for we have no reason to think that the ancestors of the folk we saw at Bandaraduwa, or the other wilder Veddas of fifty years ago, were in any way guardians of the temples or dependent on their 511 bounty. Although at the present day the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are represented by scattered groups, for the most part

[1] A *tavalam* is a train of pack bulls.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

months previously to wander into Tamankaduwa where they 511
hoped to get yams and perhaps some game. A number of women left the village immediately after our arrival, explaining that if they did not go and find some yams they and their children would get nothing to eat that night. Some of the men possessed bows and arrows but game was scarce, and their [262]
living was obviously precarious, yams, monitor lizards, honey and berries forming their staple diet. Fowls were kept and were 231
taken down to the road (10 miles distant) to sell. Like all Veddas they possessed dogs, invaluable to them in catching monitor lizards when there is no bigger game to hunt, and their care for them was shown by a small shelter which they had built in order to shade a bitch with a litter of puppies.

In physical characters these Veddas somewhat resembled the 142
neighbouring Sinhalese, but were less stoutly built; this appearance may however in part have been due to malnutrition. Their headman is a short, well-nourished, exceedingly active and intelligent individual, whose only Vedda characteristic is his short stature. Plate XIV, figure 2, represents a number of Omuni women.

Unuwatura Bubula. The position of the Unuwatura 101
Bubula Veddas is extremely difficult to understand, they occupy 177
two small groups of huts (one of which is shown in Plate XV, figure 1) a little distance from the huts of some peasant Sinhalese. They formerly lived at Mudugala and have doubtless been in close contact with the Sinhalese for many generations, but whether they are the remains of village Vedda settlements or are settled wild Veddas cannot be stated with certainty, though the latter seems more probable. It must be explained that though this community has mixed much with the Sinhalese and has doubtless been much influenced by them, they have their own shamans and they perform their own rites quite apart from their Sinhalese neighbours. Unfortunately the shaman of these people who knew most about the customs and rites of this community was ill, having overtaxed his strength at the first ceremony performed for us, and was not able to talk much, but he was present at most of our conversations and was thus a check on the younger man, but for the reason indicated many

[i.e., Veddas of Onuwi. - Avalyti]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours' 177 influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut [562 783] because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura 144 Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded, 141 since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

184 The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to 361 describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *kile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanliness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XII

COAST VEDDAS

THE Coast Veddas or Verdas occupy a number of settlements in the Tamil zone on the east coast. They exceed in number both the Village Veddas of Bintenne and their wilder neighbours of the borders of Uva and the Eastern Province; this is no doubt due to the fact that in the majority of Coast Veddas there is a large admixture of Tamil blood, and the comparatively thriving condition of their settlements must be attributed to the same cause. The date of their first arrival on the coast and of their subsequent intermarriage with the Tamils is quite uncertain; the latter state that there have always been Veddas in the neighbourhood of the sites they now occupy, but the Veddas themselves have a tradition that they come from inland. Knox does not mention them, but Nevill considers that they come from Sabaragamuwa (Sufferagam), being driven thence in the 17th century.

"The Vaeddas say that they never were related to these Coast Vaeddas, and do not know when they came to the Coast, or where they came from, nor did they ever hear that they belonged to any waruge of the race.

"The Coast Vaeddas do not know when they came or how they came, but they say that long ago their ancestors came from the Gala, far beyond the hills to the west. They also sometimes say they came from Kukulu-gammaeda and spread out along the Coast. Some say this is Kukulugam near the Verukal; others suppose it to be somewhere far away[1]."

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. 1. p. 183.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
173 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *waruge*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

241 The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
342 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
415 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from
534 that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 those only who are the most barbarous, who have preserved in all essentials their isolation from other races intact, that we must expect to find the most marked peculiarities.

101 The term Veddah—or Weddah—in itself, indicates no particular race. It simply means "a hunter", and is, in India, applied to aboriginal or barbarous tribes generally.*

In this sense, a great portion of the population of the eastern parts of Ceylon appears, at some period or another, to have been so called. There are still extensive districts known as "Weddirata", or the country of the Veddahs, the inhabitants of which, although they are, owing to the remoteness of their situation, less civilized than the bulk of the people of the island, are not Veddahs, but Singhalese, in kindred, religion, and customs.

101 It is highly probable that the people of these remote districts
174 and of others, where Veddah descent is still claimed, are more directly derived from the race which originally stocked the island than those who inhabit such parts of it as were more accessible to the settlers from Continental India, who, in process of time superseded the aborigines.†

But the people distinguished in Ceylon, by the name of Ved-
131 dahs—wholly distinct, as I have said, even from those who, though now Singhalese, yet describe themselves as descended from Veddah ancestors, are to be found in the districts of Batti-

---

* Weddá (Singhalese) an archer; some trace it to Bedda (Jungle). Introduction to Alwis' Sidath Sangarawa.

Vedán (Tamil), a hunter—one who lives in the woods; a name given to rude tribes, aborigines in the Indian peninsula. Vedan (Tamil), corruptly Vaidan, Veddah, also Beddah, or Weden—a hunter, a fowler; a name given to wild tribes, inhabiting the hills and forests of the south of India almost in a state of nature—probably the aboriginal race of the peninsula. Prof. Wilson's *Glossary of Revenue and Judicial Terms.* The word Veddah is still used in Ceylon as a hunter, and so applied to persons, not "Veddah" in the limited sense of the word.

† The Weddirates were, under the native government, exempted from
648 all service save military—the most honourable; and rendered tribute to the king, of beeswax, dried flesh, and honey, which was continued for some time after we obtained possession of the Kandyan provinces. But the inhabitants of these districts marry and associate with those of the adjoining districts, and are apparently the same people. There may exist some eth-
142 nical difference; indeed, I think even an unscientific eye can detect a difference in the appearance, not only of these people, but of the Wanniahs of the northern and central parts of Ceylon, when compared with the ordinary natives. I have tried to obtain skulls of the different races, of which there are many in the island, viz., Tamils, Moors, Singhalese of the low country and of the Kandyan provinces, the people of the Weddiratas—Wanniahs of Nowerakalawiya and Batticalas—Mookwas of the north-west and east provinces, Malays, Goorowas, Rhodias, etc., but it is most difficult to obtain them. The subject may be worthy of the attention of the Ethnological Society, though beside the object of this paper.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Tennent says truly, that they have "no system of caste among themselves; but, singular to say, this degraded race is still regarded by the Singhalese as of most honourable extraction, and is recognized by them as belonging to one of the highest castes;" and he relates a legend, in which he says this belief originates; a legend, however, at which, he tells us, the Veddahs themselves smile, and of which they profess their ignorance. 648 [564]

As I shall afterwards show, I do not think this legend, which is confessedly not a Veddah tradition, has anything to do with the consideration with which, so far as their caste goes, the Singhalese regard them. Were there no better reason, the fact that the legend is by no means universal among the Singhalese residing in their vicinity, would probably be sufficient reason to reject it.

But Tennent has not been correctly informed with regard to their own belief regarding their own origin. For strange as it appears, they claim to be of royal descent. Beyond this vague assertion they profess to know nothing. They do not attempt to trace their descent from any particular king. They know nothing of their history. This is their *one* tradition; and though the neighbouring Singhalese, on whom they affect to look down, smile at their claim to such an illustrious origin, they do "regard them as of most honourable extraction," and in reply to any inquiry respecting it, only repeat the Veddah version of their royal lineage. It is said, too, that in the time of the native government the Veddahs always spoke of the king as "hoora," or "cousin."† 173

The Veddahs have no particular name by which they distinguish themselves, which would aid us in speculating on their origin. They simply call themselves "Weddah," and are so called, while they speak of the ordinary natives of the country as "Singhalese." The term "Habara," or "wild, barbarous," is applied to Veddahs, in books, and also "Vannacharakiya," which means "a hunter." 101

As Knox has told us, they speak the Singhalese language; but they do so with an accent and intonation so strange, that it sounds like some foreign tongue. It seems, as it were, "broken Singhalese," such as a man would speak to whom the language was an acquired one, so much does their pronunciation differ from that of their Kandyan neighbours. Although the identity between the Veddah dialect and Singhalese is evident, when they are compared with each other, it would require a very quick and accurate ear, indeed, to detect the similarity between them when both are spoken. 191 197

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, c. iii.

† It is reported, too, that some Veddahs do not claim royal descent, but that only a portion of them do. The Bicetean and Nilgala Veddahs certainly, say they, are "Raja-wansiya," of royal lineage.

3: Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda Propitiation Ceremony.

The Veddas are the remnants of what may for convenience be referred to as the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon. They are found exclusively in that part of the island,—the greater part of it wild jungle country,—which is bounded on the north by the Verugal Aar, on the east by the sea, on the south by the Gal Oya, and on the west by the central mountain *massif* and the middle reaches of the Mahaweliganga. They vary greatly from group to group in the degree to which they have intermarried with their Sinhalese or Tamil neighbours, and have adopted those neigh-

101
131
177
184
[p. 187]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

houses of lasting character, as neither their instincts nor habits necessitated such procedure. 361

At Kumuna alone we find a modification of these conditions, in that the greater part of the land where the village stood is above flood level, and possessed of constant fresh water all the year round, besides being at a spot where there was a prospect of trade.

It should be added that all the many anicuts on this river between Kumuna and Kebilitte bear silent testimony to the violence of the floods on the river, and to the once existence of a large population, that probably vanished as soon as these engineering works were destroyed—a population who could enjoy the benefit of the river's floodings by diverting the water into immense tanks, that now are but park-like pieces of jungle. 172

The present inhabitants of the region embraced within the boundaries recorded here are unquestionably of mixed origin, as it is easy to trace on the western limits the pure Sinhalese type of feature, these fading again to a more specific type through the Maha Wedirata, and again changing markedly on the north-east of that country, till it is practically replaced by Tamils in the Panawa Pattu. Thus, it would seem that the Vedda type lay between the Uvan Sinhalese on the west and the Tamil on the east, with the result that frequently one would hear men, while asserting that they were pure Sinhalese, conversing with each other in Tamil. This I found to be actually the case at Bowela, where the villagers insisted that they were of the Goigama caste. 101 162

I was completely baffled in my attempts to secure a vocabulary of Vedda words, though I offered liberal payment for a few lessons in that language. I was pointed out men who were able to speak Vedda, and it was arranged that we should meet, in secret, at a definite time, and at a fixed spot, but when the time came I was told the men had gone away to find stray cattle, or some other equally trumped-up story. 197 198

One night I camped close to some huts in the village of Wattegama, and after my lamp had been put out and I was supposed to be asleep, I heard an animated discussion in the nearest hut, but though I could hear every word, I did not

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 effectual so long as there were no influences to weaken it, but when once a preponderating force came to surround these clans, their chance of survival was small, and to prevent individual extinction amalgamation presented the path of minimum resistance.

The effect of this amalgamation was to break down the primitive methods, and concurrently to infuse new blood, and with it to stay, or lessen, the forces that were weakening an already over-inbred stock.

101 161 If we refer to certain statistics, as recently as 1840 we find that a rough enumeration of the so-called Rock-Veddas disclosed that only thirty families in Bintenna then existed.

Since then the increase of civilized races pressed with yearly greater insistence, till we are forced to conclude that the primitive Vedda is now no more, or nearly so.

142 In my Paper read at the meeting of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society on September 19, 1914, I have described the features of the Vedda family I found at Setawa, but I venture here to repeat it for easy reference.

The man Dissan Hamy is about 5 ft. 10 in. in height, thin, small round the chest, with rather short arms, slender legs, with hardly any calf development. He does not know his age. His head is small, with small dark-brown beady eyes set far back in their sockets. His hair is short, not tied in a [302] knot, staring, and frizzy. His younger brother is shorter in stature, but with the same character of hair on the head. The elder has short, scanty, and bristly moustaches, but in both brothers there is a marked scarcity of hair on the face and body. Dissan Hamy's two sisters are both of normal height, and dress like the other women of the country. They are about 5 ft. 3 in. in height, with slender limbs. Both women are mothers, and both indicated the small breast development that appears to be characteristic of women residing [302 854] in the arid parts of the country I explored. In both women the hair is short and frizzy. Their infants had shaved heads.

I remarked that the skin of Dissan Hamy's body is darker than that of the other members of the family. The nose is strongly formed, with thin dilated nostrils. The mouth is rather wide, with lips of no unusual thickness.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the [103] sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

●101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though [262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that [281] ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, [534] stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothurupathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

5: Spittal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

some unfortunate who had trodden on a wriggling thing. We learnt too late that we had over-shot the game *talawas* of Wavinna by four miles. There was nothing for it, but to plough back through the mud at five the following morning, and to return at ten with a fine buck greatly to the joy of our dispirited company.

Veddas were my quest. Wherever I went, whomever I met, my one question was, "Are there any Veddas hereabout?" So far I had no luck.

A tall slouching man, obliging to obsequiousness, was the *aratchi* of Paragahakelle. He it was who first told me, as he escorted us the next morning, that good Veddas were to be found up north at Galmede. Years ago an illness took him there in search of a famous *vedarala** who one day said to him, "Let us go and see the Veddas." He found them in caves, clothed in leaf and beaten bark, grinding *kurrukhan* and maize with fragments of stone. They stank superbly, and averred that if they poured water on their heads they would surely die. But that was twenty years ago. Would we find them so to-day? The Veddas of Galmede became an obsession and a hope.

Reaching Hinimidurawa that evening the *aratchi* also told us that across the field were people who called themselves Veddas. Even as he spoke one of these joined us. Shifting his gaze from our guns to the fresh spoor of an elephant, he said, "That brute will certainly kill us one day; we cannot escape him. All last night he had me up that tree in the *chena*. A few weeks ago he pulled down one of our huts killing a man and his son." He suggested we might hunt the beast.

"Where is he now?" I asked.

"I drove him that way last night," he said, indicating the direction of our proposed camp. This was not reassuring; the ravages of the animal were in evidence everywhere.

We settled down for the night by a stream that intersected the path. Large fires were lit and the men asked leave to sing, for it was not safe to be voiceless in the feeding grounds of so notorious a 'rogue'. Even as the forest echoed to lewd snatches, we heard the challenge. Having arranged for an all-night watch we were soon asleep. I was roused at midnight by a blowing sound quite close to me. The fires had died out and no one was awake! Groping in the dark I tugged at the first human leg I touched, but it was quite a while before its owner awoke, yawned—and grasped the situation. Then for ten minutes the forest rang to an uproar that might have scared a demon. The next morning, traces in the sand revealed the story. Lying as we were full in the path of the elephant, it had come to within ten yards of us on its nightly visit to the *chena*; then, suddenly changing its mind, it had turned away. It was well I woke when I did.

Heenbanda, a Vedda of Hinimidurawa, illustrated, from personal experience, the potency of a charm he gave us: Coming suddenly on a she-bear with cubs, he had shouted his charm as she rushed at him. The animal was hurled back, spread-eagled, as if struck. Recovering, she advanced again, and this time clasped the unfortunate man by the neck with her fore legs, while with her hind paws she ripped his abdomen; marks of which encounter he still carried. Heenbanda's brother who

*Native physician.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

triangle bounded on the south by the Gal Oya: on the west by the Bibile-Batticaloa road: and on the east by the coast road. Within this space are found the Veddas of Danigala, Henebedda and Bingoda, besides the few about Kotelinda, Divulana and Serangamadu. If to this tract were added that to the west and north of the Bibile-Batticaloa road, between it and the Mahaweli-ganga, we shall have embraced the Veddas of Bintenne, Gunner's Quoin, and other scattered settlements, and accounted for every Vedda extant—a mere handful of people in all.

Kaurala of Kotelinda was the first Vedda worthy of the name we had encountered on this long journey. He was a Bingoda Vedda of the Morana *waruge*, but had spent most of his days at Bandaradua now derelict. He lived with his family in a crude hut in the jungle; his sole weapons were an axe, a bow and arrows. He was a simple soul, laughing uproariously at one moment, and the next assuming that troubled gravity so characteristic of his race. He knew every inch of his jungles; there was no tree, stream, or stone once passed which he could not instantly recognise again. This instinct and the sun were his sole means of orientation. We tried to press him into service, but he refused. "How can I come?" he said, tossing head and arms like a windmill. "I am a lone man. I live in the jungle. I am only a Vedda. If I go, who is there to look after my children? See here, now," pointing to the damaged trees about his hut; "this is what the *botukandas** have done. How can I come?"

Our deviation to Kotelinda was in vain. We had hoped to cut across the hills of Madana to Galmede; but the path had long been absorbed into the forest. We had therefore to double back to Bokkebedda, and thence strike north, through Gonagalla, to Divulana. With our usual ill-luck on this trip, we caught our fifth thunderstorm. It dropped plumb on us and worried us all the way; while in the unscathed beyond, over the treed parkland, the sunset wrought a panorama of opal and pearl, touching to glory the austere peak of Friar's Hood, queen of the distant hills.

*Elephants.

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena* ; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house" ; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark ; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that ; merely a covered treatle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats ; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone ; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned :

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas ; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain : it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good !

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes : *Gona-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VI

VEDDAS OF BINGODA

1. BINGODA HOMES

Innumerable years had flown,
Since first the chisel in her hand
Necessity, the sculptor, took,
And in her spacious meaning planned
These forms, and that eternal look.

L. BINYON

197 CONCEDE me three points and I shall attempt to show that there exist
[101] in Ceylon to-day Veddas worthy of the name. Language, apparel and weapons are the concessions I ask.

Let us begin by confessing, that the Veddas we shall tell of have no pure language of their own, but merely a patois, in which Sinhalese words predominate and Vedda words are few ; their clothing is not the traditional
291 leaf or threshed *riti* bark, but fragments of foul rag affording, if anything, less cover ; the weapons they favour are guns (of a type almost as
411 dangerous to user as to quarry) and not bows and arrows which they employ only in sore necessity.

Vital issues, you will say, which should deprive this people of their name. But language, dress and arms may change without materially altering, for a time at least, ancient customs and primeval instincts.

101 The word Vedda originally meant hunter ; and a people supreme in jungle-craft, always capable of gleaning from the unfriendly forests a sufficiency for their needs and utterly incompetent to husband even the primitive agriculture of the *chena*, has surely a claim to the name.

224 It must not be supposed that every Vedda possesses a gun ; far from it ;
[411] occasionally there may be a single weapon to a whole clan. The usual thing is for the Sinhalese or Moors to lend their guns to these superb
[427] trackers, who never waste a shot and seldom return without their quarry, a large share of which goes by agreement to the owner of the gun.

114 Of my first accidental meeting with these Veddas amid the hills of Galmede, I have already told. Barely four months had elapsed before I found myself renewing their acquaintance ; this time with set purpose.

Arriving at the forest village of Mullegama, sacred to Buddhists, and abounding in lime groves and Moors, I was fortunate enough to run up against my friend Kaurala of Kottelinde, who, so difficult of acquisition before, now became our willing guide.

131 Bingoda, the home of our Veddas, is some three miles from Mullegama, and lies on the Dhungolla Oya, a tributary of the Magalavatan Aar which connects Bingoda with Galmede ten miles away—all in the circuit of

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously. 131

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. 101 [301] [157]

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were apparently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very jealous of their women. [301] [626] 152]

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine. 576 [411]

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukhan* and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community. 342 [241]

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit! 101 361

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting. 161 177

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from 224

18: Kleiweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia OB1
Prehistoric Philippines OA3
Vedda =AX5
000
PP
142
144

found in Philippine caves. This particular /106/ skull seems to indicate a race of people of short stature, sub-brachycephalic, with receding forehead, an arcus supracorbitals which protrudes only slightly; a very prognathous and also very platyrrhine race. Sanchez believes that this race preceded the present Negrito groups.

PP
114

However, it appears to me that this conclusion is very premature, based as it is on only one skull of which one does not even know its correct age. (1)

1. D. Sanchez y Sanchez, "Un cráneo humano prehistorico de Manilla /A Prehistoric Human Skull of Manila/," Memorias de la Real Soc. española de Historia Natural, Vol. XI, 1921.

I
144
114

Another racial element of the Indonesian Archipelago is the Vedda type, which probably arrived there later than the Negritos and which has become known mainly by the explorations of the Sarasins, Rudolph Martin, and Skeat and Blagden.

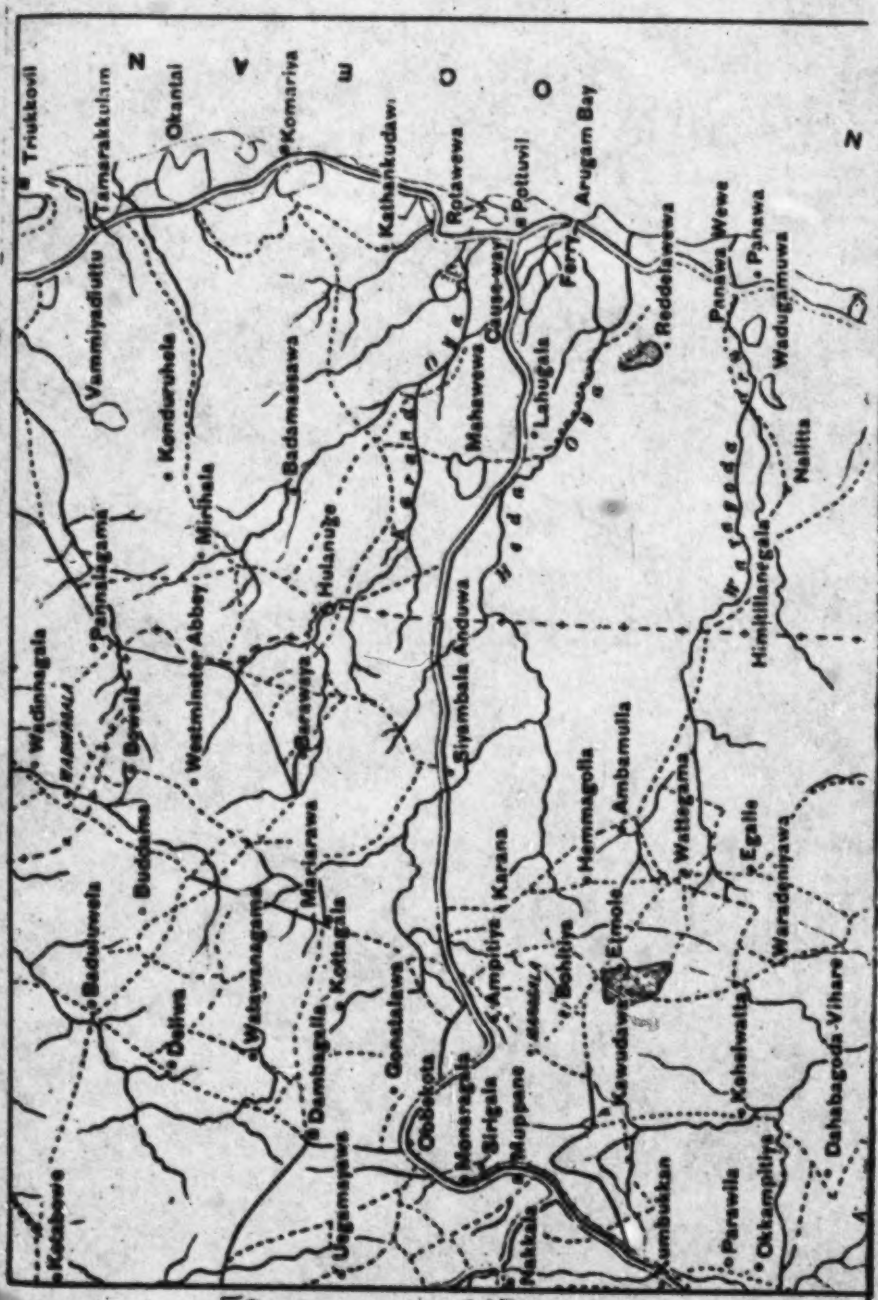
V
114
[101]

Paul and Fritz Sarasin have made a careful study of the Vedda tribes of the island of Ceylon. In their excellent book Die Weddas von Ceylon und die sie umgebenden Völkerschaften (Wiesbaden, 1892 and 1893), one can find a very extensive description of those tribes, both from an ethnographical and anthropological angle. The Veddas of Ceylon are a very rare racial element /107/ who lived in the

V
131

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

102
133
361



[Facing p. 164(A)]

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

DQ
133
361

The Vedda Country.

[Facing p. 164(B)]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

word arrived from the elder of the district. Then one of the archers accompanied him to the boundary which took between two and three hours' walking. Here he had once more to wait until word arrived from the elders of this district, whereupon the first guide handed him over to a second and then returned. In this way the second guide brought him to a third, and the process continued until he had had more than twelve guides, being over seven days on the way before he reached the province of Batticaloa and the flat district which extended to the coast, and is inhabited by Tamils. He and his ten or twelve companions never suffered any want on the way, as the Veddahs supplied them with food, consisting of good dried venison which was preserved in honey, ground nuts (probably yams) and fruit. But none of the Veddahs spoke a word with him or his companions because it was so prescribed by their customs[1]."

423 609 [574]

Nevill's account of the life led by both the wilder and the more sophisticated "forest" Veddas has been quoted on pp. 81 and 82, in the chapter on Family Life. Nevill's experience was chiefly gained among the Veddas of the Bintenne, but if rather less emphasis be laid on the hut built "close to a place where water can be got," and it be realised that even during the hot dry season rock shelters are the common homes of the wilder Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road, all that he says on this subject can be implicitly accepted.

Commenting upon Nevill's account, the Sarasins point out that since trespassing on land belonging to another group leads to fierce quarrels, the condition described by Nevill must be taken to imply that the territory of each group includes the whole or a part of one considerable hill or rock *massif*. Our experience enables us to confirm this suggestion, and it will be shown later that not only are hills the property of particular groups, but that subject to the rights of the group there is also personal property in hills. Text figure 4 is a sketch map of the territory of the Henebedda Veddas, and roughly shows the position of their caves, which are named Bendiyagalge, Pattiavelagalge, Hitibeminigalge, Punchikiriammagalge, Uhapitagalge, Maladeniyagalge and Kirawanbalagalge. The last is almost

423 423 361 [103]

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 479.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so as to form two rock shelters, each of which has a well-cut drip ledge in no respect differing from those admittedly cut by the Sinhalese about the time that Buddhism was introduced to the island, and the lower cave has in addition two square sockets cut in its roof resembling those discovered by Mr F. Lewis at Nuwaragala and figured by him[1]. Further, there are three steps cut in the solid rock shelters, and other smaller steps and signs of ancient working are to be found in the caves, though there are no inscriptions on the rocks of either of these caves, as there are below the drip ledge of Uhapitagalge. 423 361

Pattiavelagalge lies at a distance of rather less than an hour's walk to the S.W. of Bendiyagalge, at the base of the rocky hills forming the boundary of the territory of the Henebedda community. It was said that the name of this cave was derived from *pattia*, a place where cattle were tied, and *vela*, a field, the reason for the name being that about 100 years ago a Sinhalese chief, recognised by the Veddas as being partly of Vedda descent, was allowed to come and live here and pasture his cattle. This man may have been a fugitive during the rebellion of 1818, but this could not be determined with certainty. Hitibeminigalge lies a short distance due west of Bendiyagalge. [103]

Punchikiriammagalge is a small shelter situated almost due south of Bendiyagalge and near the main track across the country. At the present day it is often used by Tamil gall-nut gatherers. Maladeniyagalge, about two miles from Ambilinne rest-house, is also much used by gall-nut collectors. Uhapitagalge, shown in Plate XVII, figure 2, has a well-carved drip ledge, beneath which is the inscription in Brâhmi characters referred to on p. 22.

The natural boundaries of the Henebedda territory as well as the fact that they still have as neighbours the Danigala Veddas, who exercise a jealous supervision of the border on that side on which there is no well-marked natural boundary, made this particularly easy territory to map out. The Sitala Wanniya territory, which we have attempted to delimit in text figure 5 was more difficult and its boundary is only an approximation.

[1] *Proc. Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, Vol. XIX, 1907.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedds AX5

on serener days, it flamed through the Island making it its permanent home, while in India, the land of its birth, it dwindled away.

We had undertaken this trip with the object of visiting Meminigallagolla where we learned the wildest Veddas of the Eastern province lived; but on coming to Omuna we found that that place, only twelve miles away, was quite unknown to the present folk of Omuna, a pathless barrier of dense jungle intervening. We made the best of a bad job; and, abandoning our original project, struck west for Dolagalwella.

At evening we camped by a desolate pool called *Havan-hapane-mulle* (rush-cutting nook). There is barely a spot in these jungles, however lone, that has not its name, thanks to the nomadic Veddas. Here was a glade in which they hunted, or a pool at which they drank, there a hole in which an axe was found (*Poro-thutu-walle*).

The only indications of the track we followed were the barely recognisable prunings, fifteen years old, of saplings. The forest was ideal for travel; in the shelter of the great trees the morning air was cool and refreshing. Coming to the Maduru Oya we walked a mile up-stream and climbed the mimosa-covered bank, soon to be lost in a wilderness of trees. A leader monkey yelled a warning to his clan, a surprised sambur belled startlingly close; but after that a silence prevailed unbroken by the song of a single bird. We spent the night by a rocky streamlet close-hugged by dense forest walls. Heavy clouds crept over us to the rumblings of thunder. The blurred crescent of the moon struggled for freedom. Our campfires crackled in the ghostly gloom, and quiet human voices pervaded the forest's deadly stillness save for the melody of the trickling water.

> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

Deserted Mahaella marked the limit of our westward journey. Here we struck at right angles the northern track to Yakkure, but, before taking it, deviated south to the village of Dolagalwella. For three days we had followed uncertain game trails, and seen no human beings besides those of our company. The path now began to show signs of use: there were chipped trees, polished stones on which axes had been whetted, and fire-places where monitors were roasted. Obviously we were nearing civilisation! Indeed, here it was.

Scaling a strong stockade we found ourselves in a *chena*, some twelve acres in extent, in which nestled the half dozen huts of the closely related families of a Vedda patriarchy. The maize and *kurrukkan* crops had been taken, and the place was now rank with a catch-crop of vegetables and fruit: beans, brinjals, melons, cassava, plantains and papaws. Chillies luxuriated; there was not a compound but had its vermilion heap, not a hut but had a section partitioned off with frame and fire-place for drying them during the rains; chillies were the current coin with which these folk traded with the pedlar Moors.

The males of the settlement were away in quest of food, and only the women and children remained. No folk on earth, perhaps, are shier than Vedda women; in the presence of the stranger they are dumb. Some of them were relatively fair-complexioned, presumably from Kandyan admixture; all wore an abundance of bead ornaments, finger

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

flesh which they tore out and ate. They were afraid only of the buffalo and the dog. The Veddas, not very long ago, are said to have herded the last of them into a cave and destroyed them. Brute or man, persistent rumour in jungle countries brings the *Nittaewo* within the realm of the probable. 776

Entering the forest at Siyambala Anduwa, and working north, we strove to maintain a route as far removed as possible from civilisation represented by the coast road on the one hand, and the Badulla-Batticaloa road on the other.

Two miles within the jungle was the old path, now over-grown and abandoned, from Badulla to Pottuvil. It led hereabouts through a narrow pass guarded, it is said, a few generations ago by the Karande Hela Vedda who, having fenced it across, levied toll on travellers. Intercepting, as he did, a trade route from the interior to the coast, we may be certain he made a good thing of it, getting his share both of the *kurrukkan*, maize, vegetables and fruit of the *Vanni*, as well as of the paddy, salt and dry fish of the Coast. 173

Kandanketiya, nine miles from Siyambala Anduwa, boasts an ancient temple of the era of Dutugemunu. We found it in the keeping of a doddering priest of eighty, who showed us round, all the while muttering "hu-hu, hu-hu," his only form of comment. His bed-room, dark, airless and dirty, was better adapted to mice and spiders than human beings. A great brass spittoon, emptied he told us once in two weeks, was the proudest thing there. A stupendous bo-tree, planted by himself, mocked with its vigour the withered frame of him who had tended it. Throwing open the doors of his little temple, without much ado he bade us enter the holy of holies, and pointed proudly to pictures of *devas* and harpies, half spurred-fowl half woman, who he confidently asserted lived in the Himalayas. Incidentally he indicated a money-box on the altar. But no sooner were our donations secure than his interest in us rapidly declined, reaching its climax when we told him we were going: "All right, go," he said, settling down comfortably on his bed. 172

A hornbill flying repeatedly to a large tree attracted our attention. Perching itself wood-pecker-wise on the trunk, it fed the occupant of a hole there with berries which it brought out of its crop one by one. We were told this was the male feeding the female he had deprived of feathers and shut up in the hole. We suggested there might be young. "Not so," said a woman; "where then are the feathers and droppings at the root of the tree?" Here was an opportunity to test the truth of gossip we had heard regarding the domestic amenities of hornbills. A man was sent up to the nest. Squeezing his hand through the narrow opening he produced an egg; then seized something by the beak, and unsuccessfully tried to pull it through. With an axe he enlarged the hole and soon handed down to us a veritable travesty of a bird. Scared out of her wits, voiceless, featherless, with half-opened beak, she flapped pathetic wings and tumbled ludicrously about in attempts to escape. She was obviously unfit for existence in the outer world and we returned her to her dark abode. Rumour was right, the male hornbill took no risks. 136

Bowala village lies at the northern end of Westminster Abbey. Buried as we were in the forest depths, we had not seen the hill since leaving the heights of Haputale. Suddenly the leviathan bulked over the trees. "There, that is why it is called Govinda Hela*," said our guide pointing 361 [103]

*Goa inda hela—rock where the monitor lizard is.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the [103] sheer face of the rock.

We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, [241] plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though [262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that [281] ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, [534] stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothuru-pathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree
that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of
the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of
brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pine-
apple.

The height was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the
superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then
the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There,
crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadina-
gala; to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thanagoda* (breast-
mounds) and behind them *Thanakirigoda* (breast milk mound) with
wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks
driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the
summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach
of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale:
A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a
ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing
daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by
just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within
reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it.
When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep
into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards
it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge
collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year.
On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor
fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife
who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena kalangkal-
angme popehorai*," which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 535
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were
hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with
slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose
and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that
these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted
by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with
great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that [534]
studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch
perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For
a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step
dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they out-
distance us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

A [the hill called Westmwster Abbey. - Analyst].

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarming blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

302 755 252

V ●103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

G 101 105

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 361 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

000 V [132] A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 751 accompanied him, now struck the bear with his axe and, when she turned on him, killed her. So much for charms; excellent things—provided a weapon is in your hands. "Trust in God," says the Arabic proverb, "but fasten thy camel securely."

G 361 Uhana was a surprise; the place gave every promise of being in a few years a flourishing settlement, thanks to Government grants of land, cattle and grain on easy terms. Luck at last! Near Uhana was a gipsy camp. Wadinagala gave us first promise of these people; but like a mirage they had faded from stage to stage of our journey, leaving only their camp refuse to mock us. Now, here they were, within two miles of us. We stayed over the next morning that we might visit them. As we neared their encampment we met a man who told us that he had passed them on their way to another camp. They who had been here for weeks must needs pack and begone within an hour of our visit! They were bound, the man said, for a place a mile and a half away. We followed, but did not find them there; instead, was another tantalizer who assured us that we would find them on a knoll by a stream a mile and a half beyond. We proceeded, painfully aware that every step of our way must be retraced in the broiling sun before we could earn our lunch. Disappointment again! Almost tearful with frustration and fatigue, we had thrown ourselves down, when a kindly individual came to our aid.

"Rest here," he said. "I shall go forward and see. Come if you hear me 'hoo.' I can tell of their presence some distance away by the crowing of their cocks and the clatter of their camp." We waited and were rewarded.

G [492] [231] [343] On an undulant opening, reminiscent of Somerset pastures, we found the gipsies. They had just unloaded their pack-bulls and were setting up camp under the blazing sky of noon, disdainful of the shelter of the cool environing jungle—the very antithesis of Vedda ways. Cattle and fowls flecked the glade; boys led goats into the forest. Women, graceful as Dianas, were erecting talipot shelters over collected household goods and communal stacks of grain. Tall men, lithe and sinewy as greyhounds, with mongrels at their heels, carried naked babes. Children, reading favour in our faces, essayed shrill nasal choruses clapping arms to chest. The chief, a quietly curious, grizzled man, with a care-free air bred of the freedom and independence of his life, held in play a vicious cobra just captured. He summed the gipsy life in a sentiment savouring of Borrow: "What are we?" he said. "Children of the open ways, bronzed by the sun, soaked by the rain, born on the trail, buried on the trail. That is our life." They had a sambur spear among them, and apparently only one man adept in its use; but that spear, their little dogs and their own untiring sinews were match enough for any sambur once started.

G 622 G 411 224

V 361 From Uhane to Kotelinda by way of hill-girdled Bokkebedda in the drenching rain. Here, at a glance, we noticed crude little Vedda huts amidst those of the Sinhalese villagers. We were now among the hills of Madana long famed for Veddas; but to-day their caves are only tenanted by bears. Up to now we had traversed a stretch of country designated on the maps Maha-Veddi-Ratta (Great Vedda Country)—an empty name of about as much significance at the present time as the term Cinnamon Gardens applied to Colombo. Kotelinda lies in the centre of a region that is to-day the last stronghold of the Veddas—that

V 103 V 131

4. FRIAR'S HOOD AND THE VEDDAS OF GALMEDE

ACCOMPANIED by Kauwa and a Tamil, we left Divulana to enter upon the wildest part of our journey. The *illuk* glades, so familiar to us for many days, now gave place to jungle sunless, forsaken, virginal and silent save for the cry of a cicala or the rustle of a jungle cock or chevrotan.

Crossing the Amankelle Oya we came to the deserted home of the Bandaradua Veddas—Kauwa's old home. It outlay a glade in full view of the Bandaradua rock. All that now marked the place were a cadju tree, that spread its branches in a great canopy, and a few live fence sticks all overgrown with *pussela-wel*, the pounded bark of which the Veddas soak in water rendering it soapy for cleansing their lousy heads.

Late in the evening we were at the foot of Friar's Hood, that loneliest of Ceylon's forest hills, the landmark of the old Portuguese mariners. The environing jungle was sinister with the menace of unseen things. Here our guide had once encountered a gang of no less than six bears, and indicated to us the very trees up which he and his companion had shinned. It was not the sort of place one would care to be in alone; and yet, in a clearing by the rock, a Moor had recently lived with his wife for three years, growing amidst his cassava a deadlier plant,* the joy and bane of Eastern lands.

We camped on this deserted plantation. As it darkened a sambur belled and stamped around us in high dudgeon that his accustomed pasturage had been usurped. The hooded peak before us melted into the gloom, only to stand out again under the stars more sinister and secret than ever. This lonely outlaw, standing away from the herded hills, had survived a race of men. It was there when the first paleolithic ancestors of the Veddas crossed from India, when Ceylon and that land were one. Towards it, and the security it afforded, was the best remnant of that race gradually driven by succeeding waves of civilisation through the long years. To-day around it the last of the Veddas are dying. And yet,

> The hills are shadows and they flow
> From form to form, and nothing stands;
> They melt like mists, the solid lands,
> Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

It is difficult to say where Galmede really begins. We must ascribe to it all that tract of deserted *chenas*, with their crumbling Vedda shelters and *mora* forests devastated by elephants, between Friar's Hood and the Magalawatavan Oya, on the other bank of which stand the few huts that comprise the Galmede of to-day. This place, the port of our dreams, we entered with beating hearts.

The first individual to meet us was no Vedda at all but a Chetty!

"Where are the Veddas?" I asked eagerly.

"There are no Veddas here," he said.

*Cannabis indica.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

CHAPTER VII

BINTENNE

THE pass at Kadugannawa was thronged with bartering humanity. Being Sunday, it was market day, and the occasion served well to help us lay in a good stock of tobacco and betel, the best passport to the wild interior.

On through Teldeniya, whose cocoa plantations teem with snails that straggle over the road to explode under our car-wheels, and then, after Urugalla, we climb the Nugatenne gap and, skirting the Dumbara valley, attain beautiful wind-swept Madugoda. So far among the hills. From here it is a sudden drop to the Mahaweli and the wilderness beyond. We have left Madugoda but a little way when, at a turn, there suddenly opens before us a magic sea of misty greenery broken by hill ranges; there stand many blue mountains we know, Kokagalla, the dancing rock of the Veddas, and Friar's Hood faint and far; and there gleam a river and a tank; the former the Mahaweli, the latter placid Horabora Wewa traditional lake of Vedda lands.

The descent from the hills here is perhaps the most precipitous in all Ceylon; we drop some two thousand feet, and negotiate eighteen elbow bends within four miles; then, skirting the base of the mountain we come to the ferry of Weragantota and cross the Mahaweli in canoes to Alutnuwara, a fever-stricken place; whoever sojourns here even a few days invariably pays the penalty.

A quaint old town is Alutnuwara, or Bintenne as the jungle dwellers call it. Cosy homes and boutiques nestle under shady trees. Chained monkeys and caged parrots are ubiquitous and may be purchased for a song. Laden *tavalam* teams rest here on their way to the interior. It being April, every tree has its nesting bird—bee-catchers, bulbuls, drongos, coppersmiths and all the rest of them; hungry little squirrels cheep spasmodically for food; song fills the air.

Scattered about the place one is surprised to find old cannon. Those who see them for the first time frame visions of an era when ancient Sinhalese kings built these in foundries, and fed them with powder made from sulphur and nitre available in the neighbouring hills. But we may safely assume that firearms were unknown in Ceylon prior to the coming of the Portuguese. What then is the story of these brave things that lie in a ditch here, set off a doorway there? They were brought here, according to some, from the East coast by the English in their attempts to take Kandy; but finding the mountain barrier impassable they abandoned them here. The more likely explanation, however, is that they are a survival of the time when Alutnuwara was a military station after the Kandyan rebellion of 1817, "the last great occasion on which the English forces were arrayed in hostility against the natives of any portion of Ceylon."* To prevent a repetition of rebellion, a

*Emerson Tennent.

[p. 91]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION.

104 THE transliteration of unfamiliar oriental words must constitute a difficulty to all who are not oriental scholars. In the present instance the matter is further complicated by the phonetic changes undergone by many Sinhalese words in the mouths of Veddas and the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedirata. Under these circumstances it seemed best not to attempt to polish the dialect in which our informants talked, but to treat it as an unwritten language, and to write all native words according to some generally recognised and easily applied rule. We selected the scheme recommended by the Royal Geographical Society, under which consonants are pronounced as in English and vowels as in Italian, only modifying it by writing *c* for the *ch* sound in *church*. Satisfactory as this plan proved to be in the field it is obviously wholly unsuited to that part of the work which consists of the transliteration and translation of songs or invocations written down in Sinhalese by our interpreters. Mr Parker and Mr Gunasekara have therefore made use of a system of transliteration suggested by the former, consisting of that prescribed by the Ceylon Government (cf. Mr Gunasekara's Sinhalese Grammar, pp. 8 and 9) with the following modifications:

(1) Long vowels are indicated by the sign –.

(2) The letters ඇ, ඒ, ඊ, ශ are represented by æ, e, ch, ś respectively.

ව has been represented by v or w.

Hence the transliteration of the Sinhalese alphabet according to this modified system is as follows:

Vowels—අ a, ආ ā, ඇ æ, ඇ ǣ, ඉ i, ඊ or ඌ ī, උ u, ඌ ū, ඍ ṛi, ඍ ṛī, ඎ ḷi, ඎ ḷī, එ e, ඒ ē, ඓ ai, ඔ o, ඕ ō, ඖ au.

Consonants—ක k, ඛ kh, ග g, ඝ gh, ඞ ṅ, ච c, ඡ ch, ජ j, ඣ jh, ඤ ñ, ට ṭ, ඨ ṭh, ඩ ḍ, ඪ ḍh, ණ ṇ, ත t, ථ th, ද d, ධ dh, න n, ප p, ඵ ph, බ b, භ bh, ම m, ය y, ර r, ල l, ව v or w, ශ ś, ෂ sh, ස s, හ h, ළ ḷ, ං ṃ, ඃ ḥ.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The semi-nasal sounds (represented by the symbol ং, as in ඞ් ṅg, ඤ් ñj, ඬ් ṅḍ, ණ් ṅd) are represented by ṅ, and the semi-nasal sound (represented by the symbol ඦ as in ඦ) of m is represented by ṁ. 104

The use of two systems of transliteration in the same book, though far from ideal, has, we believe, not led to any ambiguity, for the absence of all diacritical marks (with the exception of an occasional – over a long vowel) will immediately indicate that a word is written as it stood in our field notes. Thus in the vocabulary the words are given as we took them down in the field, while the more elaborate system of transliteration is used by Mr Gunasekara in his notes on the origin of these words. From one standpoint there may even be an advantage in the use of a simple system of transliteration. Being ignorant of Sinhalese we have recorded the sounds we heard, without the modifications which a knowledge of the language would suggest. Thus *hatera* is everywhere written for *hatura* (bear); *Baṇḍara* pronounced *Bandar* by all Veddas and many peasant Sinhalese will be found printed in both forms, and the spelling of many other words is varied in the same manner. Perhaps the most striking example of variation in spelling is in the name of the people of whom this book treats. We have thought it best to use the common English spelling and to write the word Vedda, but this word is spelt in at least two other ways, in the *verbatim* quotations from the manuscript or printed works of others.

C. G. S.
B. Z. S.

3 *February* 1911.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

GLOSSARY OF NATIVE WORDS

104

Adukku, an offering of cooked food.
Aiya, elder brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.
Akka, elder sister, daughter, paternal uncle's daughter.
Alutyakagama, a bower-like structure to which the *yaku* are called in certain ceremonies.
Arachi, the headman of a Sinhalese village settlement.
Aude, a ceremonial arrow (S. *awuda*).
Baena, sister's son, brother's son, hence son-in-law.
Bambara, the rock bee (*Apis indica*).
Baṇḍara, often shortened to *Bandar*, the spirit of a deceased chief or important ancestor to whom offerings are made. *Baṇḍara* are generally hurtful, but have certain protective functions (Sinhalese).
Bulatyakagama, an elaborate form of *maesa* used at Unuwatura Bubula.
Chena, a piece of rough cultivation.
Deva, a god.
Deyo, god, properly *deviya*, pl. *deviyo*, often altered to *dyiya* and *dyiyo*.
Dia lanuwa, a waist string.
Dugganawa, shaman (Vedda).
Gamarale, a village headman (Sinhalese).
Hangala, a length of white cloth worn by the shaman in certain ceremonies.
Hangotu, the Sinhalese for *maladena*, q.v.
Hura, father's sister's son, mother's brother's son, i.e. the cousin whom a girl should marry.
Kaduwa, a wooden sword used in certain ceremonies.
Kaelebasa, the jungle language of Ceylon.
Kapurale, a devil-dancer (Sinhalese).
Katandirale, a devil-dancer (Sinhalese).
Kiriamma, lit. grandmothers, generally used for the spirits (*yakino*) of old Vedda women.
Kirikoraha, lit. a pot containing coconut milk, hence one of the ceremonies in which this is the chief offering.

[p. 456]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

104 **Kolamaduwa**, a ceremony which takes its name from the structure round which it is performed.

Kudaram, a rough altar erected by Coast Veddas.

Maesa, an altar-like structure on which are placed offerings to the *yaku*.

Maleya, younger brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.

Maludema, a deerskin vessel in which honey is collected (cf. Plate LXV).

Maaliya, a wooden implement for taking honeycomb (cf. Text Fig. 12).

Mukkaliya, the tripod used in the *hirikovaha* and other ceremonies.

Naena, father's sister's daughter, mother's brother's daughter, i.e. the cousin whom a man should marry.

Pilliyar, a sacred stone within the precincts of the temple at Pellanchensi (Coast Veddas). *Pilliyar* is the Tamil name of the God Ganesa: a rude stone placed under a shady tree may be treated as representing the god.

Pingo, a carrying stick.

Ran kaduwa, lit. "golden sword," a wooden sword or stick used in certain ceremonies (cf. Text Fig. 11).

Ratemahatmaya, hereditary overlord or "laird."

Ruwala, the central pole and structure erected for the *ruwala* ceremony.

Sannasa, a record of a grant of land generally inscribed on a metal plate or rock face.

Talawa, an open space in the jungle, a glade.

Tavalam, a train of pack bulls.

Ule, a yam stick.

Vederale, a native doctor (Sinhalese).

Vidane, a Vedda headman appointed by Government.

Wadia, trading places where Veddas and Moormen pedlars meet to barter.

Wanniya, a Vedda chief, also used as a proper name, e.g. Sita Wanniya. The word is also applied to the inhabitants of the Wanni, a wild tract in the North Central Province.

Waruge, a clan.

Wilkoraha, a pot used for fetching water in the ceremony invoking the Rahu Yaku.

Yaka, f. *yakini*, pl. *yaku*, f. *yakine*, (i) the spirit of a dead Vedda.
(ii) Other spirits.

Yakka, yakkini, the aborigines of Ceylon referred to in the Mahawansa.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 of the earliest foreign records such as that found in the tract *De Moribus Brachmanorum* written about 400 A.D., the author of which professes to have obtained his information from a Theban traveller.

[114] To Robert Knox, who wrote in 1681 after a captivity in Ceylon lasting 20 years, belongs the credit of having first accurately described the Veddas. "Of these *Natives* there be two sorts *Wild* and *Tame*. I will begin with the former. For as in these Woods there are Wild *Beasts* so Wild *Men* also. The Land of *Bintan* is all covered with mighty Woods, filled [101] with abundance of *Deer*. In this Land are many of these wild men; they call them *Vaddahs*, dwelling near no other Inhabitants. They speak the *Chingulayes* Language. They kill *Deer*, 175 and dry the Flesh over the fire, and the people of the Countrey 105 come and buy it of them. They never Till any ground for Corn, their Food being only Flesh. They are very expert with their Bows. They have a little ax, which they stick by their sides, to cut hony out of hollow Trees. Some few, which are near Inhabitants, have commerce with other people. They have no Towns nor Houses, only live by the waters under a Tree, with some boughs cut and laid about them, to give notice when any wild Beasts come near, which they may hear by their rustling and trampling upon them. Many of these Habitations we saw when we fled through the Woods, but God be praised the *Vaddahs* were gone.

"Some of the tamer sort of these men are in a kind of Subjection to the King. For if they be found, tho it must be with a great search in the woods, they will acknowledge his Officers, and will bring to them *Elephant-teeth*, and *Honey*, and *Wax*, and *Deer's Flesh*; but the others in lieu thereof do give them near as much, in Arrows, Cloth, etc. fearing lest they should otherwise appear no more.

"It had been reported to me by many people, that the wilder sort of them, when they want Arrows, will carry their load of Flesh in the night, and hang it up in a *Smith's* Shop, also a Leaf cut in the form they will have their Arrows made, and hang by it. Which if the *Smith* do make according to their Pattern they will requite, and bring him more Flesh;

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

but if he make them not, they will do him a mischief one time or another by shooting in the night. If the Smith make the Arrows, he leaves them in the same place, where the *Vaddahs* hung the Flesh. 195 105

* * * * * * * *

"About *Hourly* the remotest of the King's Dominions there are many of them, that are pretty tame, and come and buy and sell among the people. The King once having occasion of an hasty Expedition against the *Dutch*, the Governour summoned them all in to go with him, which they did. And with their Bows and Arrows did as good service as any of the rest but afterwards when they returned home again, they removed farther in the Woods, and would be seen no more, for fear of being afterwards prest again to serve the King.

"They never cut their hair but tye it up on their Crowns in a bunch. The cloth they use, is not broad nor large, scarcely enough to cover their Buttocks. The *wilder* and *tamer* sort of them do both observe a Religion. They have a God peculiar to themselves. The *tamer* do build Temples, the wild only bring their sacrifice under Trees, and while it is offering, dance round it, both men and women.

"They have their bounds in the Woods among themselves, and one company of them is not to shoot nor gather hony or fruit beyond those bounds. Neer the borders stood a *Jack-Tree*; one *Vaddah* being gathering some fruit from this Tree, another *Vaddah* of the next division saw him, and told him he had nothing to do to gather *Jacks* from that Tree, for that belonged to them. They fell to words and from words to blows, and one of them shot the other. At which more of them met and fell to skirmishing so briskly with their Bows and Arrows, that twenty or thirty of them were left dead upon the spot.

"They are so curious of their Arrows that no smith can please them: The King once to gratifie them for a great Present they brought him, gave all of them of his best made Arrow-blades: which nevertheless would not please their humour.—For they went all of them to a Rock by a River and ground them into another form. The Arrows they use are of a

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175
105

different fashion from all other, and the *Chingulays* will not use them.

"They have a peculiar way by themselves of *preserving Flesh*. They cut a hollow Tree and put honey in it, and then fill it up with flesh, and stop it up with clay. Which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want.

"It has usually been told me that their way of *catching Elephants* is, that when the Elephant lyes asleep they strike their ax into the sole of his foot, and so laming him he is in their power to take him. But I take this for a fable, because I know the sole of the Elephants foot is so hard, that no axe can pierce it at a blow; and he is so wakeful that they can have no opportunity to do it.

"For portions with their Daughters in marriage they give hunting Dogs. They are reported to be courteous. Some of the *Chingulays* in discontent will leave their houses and friends, and go and live among them, where they are civilly entertained. The tamer sort of them, as hath been said, will sometimes appear, and hold some kind of trade with the tame Inhabitants, but the wilder called *Ramba-Veddahs* never show themselves."

175
648

From Knox's account it is evident that in his time or a little before this, some of the Veddas were in touch with the court and were even sufficiently amenable to discipline to be of use as an auxiliary fighting force, indeed, there is abundant evidence that long before this a part of the inhabitants of Ceylon, with enough Vedda blood in them for their contemporaries to call them Veddas, were politically organized and constituted a force whom the rulers of the island found it necessary to consider. Upon this subject we cannot do better than quote part of a letter from Mr H. Parker in which this authority states his views on this subject. "At the time when Sinhalese history begins, a part of them [Veddas] had reached a far more advanced state than the others. They were politically organised, and according to the Mahavansa had a supreme king and subordinate chiefs 80 years after Wijaya became king[1].

[1] "He established the yakkhas Kalavela in the eastern quarter of the city [Anuradhapura]; and the chief of the yakkhas, Citta, he established on the lower side of the Abhaya tank. He (the king), who knew how to accord his protection with

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp, within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords. 361

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter. 301 304

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of coconut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]." 415 [531]

VILLAGE VEDDAS OF TAMANKADUWA.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of intermarriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils. 144 621

Elakotaliya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-bred. Their mode of life is similar to that prevalent at Dambani and Bulugahaladena, i.e. they are occupied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their *waruge* and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaku. 105● 621

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve mud huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1901. [113]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

105 on their chena. We waited here a little while and two Veddas
.62 passed, one carrying a gun; we asked them to return to their chena and fetch some of the other villagers. Soon some twenty
[431] men and about as many women and children arrived bringing us presents of honey, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. Scarcely any of them presented the Vedda type, they were all distinctly larger and more heavily built. Except their knowledge of their *waruge* and recognition of the Nae Yaku all remains of Vedda customs seemed to have been lost.

Yakure. The inhabitants of Yakure, a village about six miles from Kalukalaeba, call themselves Veddas, though physically (Plate XVI, figure 1) they would pass as Tamils or mixed
[194] Tamils and Sinhalese, and show even less evidence of Vedda blood than do the Kalukalaeba people. Their village consists of about 40 mud houses and is compactly built; a great number of cattle was seen grazing outside the confines of the village. Like the Kalukalaeba folk they know their *waruge* and invoke the Nae Yaku, but they have a temple, a simple mud hut, and worship a number of Sinhalese gods. Some men (Plate XVI, figure 2) from a village called Ulpota near Gunner's Quoin were
[197] seen here who also appeared to have mixed blood; they knew the "Vedda language," that is to say we were able to get from them about the same number of words as we obtained at Dambani. When one of them was asked when this dialect was used he replied "only when we are sent for by the Government agent or any other white man." Among themselves they speak
[191] Sinhalese though they can also speak Tamil as it is largely the language of Tamankaduwa.

Rotawewa. There is a settlement of alleged Veddas at Rotawewa about six miles from Minerriya tank. Concerning these we were told that they cultivated rice, and were in no respect different from the neighbouring Sinhalese, while Mr Jayawardene writes: "There is only one village of Veddas in Sinhala Pattu of Tamankaduwa District, and that village is Rotawewa, about six miles from Minerriya. These Veddas lived on the chase and subsequently took to chena clearings, and when the place began to be frequented by the low-country Sinhalese and other traders, some of them were able to sell their meat to them and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they saved a little money and bought a patch of land of about 11 acres from Government, which land they now cultivate with paddy.... There are sixteen houses in the Vedda Settlement of Rotawewa, and the householders in every case are descendants of Veddas. They are Sinhalese without any signs of Tamil admixture." 105 L21

They say they are of the Morane *waruge*, and they seem not to know any other *waruge*. Mr Horsburgh however states that "there is one other Vedda village in Sinhala Pattuwa besides Rotawewa, viz. Gallinda, with about three families who are the same people as those of Rotawewa." [614]

As a matter of convenience we have prepared a tabular summary of the conditions prevailing at the various settlements of wild and village Veddas that we visited. Besides those mentioned, many other families and even isolated individuals exist scattered throughout the Vedirata, especially in the neighbourhood of the Badulla-Batticaloa road near Maha Oya and Kallodi. These folk are in the last stage of degeneration, having given up their own wandering life and habits; they have mostly drifted into Sinhalese villages there to die out miserably. 105 177 511

105
177
511

Place	Health	Game	Chena	Cattle	Foreign Influence	Remarks
Henebedda	Good	Plentiful	Good	Kept for Sinhalese	Slight among the old men, considerable among the young	A thriving and vigorous community
Danigala	Good	Plentiful	Good	Kept for themselves	Considerable	Live much as Sinhalese, but pretend to live by hunting and honey alone
Kovil Vanamai	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Considerable	Fast dying out, or at the best losing their Vedda identity; all live on chenas and always we believe in association with Sinhalese
Uniche	...	Scarce	?	?	Foreign influence is principally Tamil	We did not see these people in their own settlement
Sitala Wanniya	Good	Plentiful	None	None	Very slight	The older men of this community had never made chena
Galmeda	Poor	Scarce	Very poor	None	Probably slight	We only saw a colony of this group who had settled at Godatalawa
Omuni	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Dominant	A few chickens were kept for sale, these people were wretchedly poor and most of them decidedly ill-nourished
Unuwatura Bubula	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Dominant	
Village Veddas						
Dambani &c.	Good	Scarce	Good	Many tame buffalo	Considerable	An anomalous but thriving group (cf. pp. 49 to 53)
Elakotaliya	Good	Scarce	Good	Cattle	...	These groups live in well built mud huts on flourishing chenas and appear to be prosperous and comfortable. They appear to possess more Tamil than Vedda blood
Kalukalaeba	Good	Scarce	Good	Cattle	...	
Yakure	Good	Scarce	Good	Large herds of cattle	...	These people live in well built huts in a compact settlement which might almost be called a town. They have a Sinhalese headman.

[p.58]

1: Seligmann, C. G. & Brenda Z. Seligmann. The Veddas. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911.

Pp. xix, 463; 71 plates; 15 text figures; appendix; glossary; index

Yale: Nkd72 I38 911s

[The authors of this first comprehensive study of the Veddas devoted most of their attention to the jungle-dwelling Veddas whose way of life is more primitive than the Village Veddas and the Coastal Veddas. All of them, however, have come under the influence of foreign cultures. One of the major aims of this book is to trace the course of this acculturation process and to reconstruct the historical development of Vedda society. In describing the contemporary Veddas, the authors supplement their personal observations with reports written by previous observers. The topics discussed include the kinship structure, village organization, economic activities, life cycle, religion,

111 AX5 Vedda--2

1: Seligmann, C.G. & Brenda Z. Seligmann.

music, language, and sensory perception. A rather extensive list of Vedda words is included in the text. --Analyst]

Field date: 1907-1908
Analyst: Robert Lee

Evaluation: Ethnologists-5
Processed in 1961

111 AX5 Vedda

2: Bailey, John. An Account of the Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon: their Habits, Customs, and Superstitions. Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London, n.s., Vol. 2, pp. 278-320. London: 1863.

Yale: Nk10 Et35e 2

[Bailey, who was Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary of Ceylon for a period, gives a description of the Vedda based principally upon his own observations. Covering first physical anthropology, he proceeds to describe the economic life, social life, and religious beliefs of the people. He then attempts to reconstruct the origin of the Veddas. Finally, the author includes a vocabulary and list of names. --Analyst]

Field date: ca. 1854
Analyst: James R. Leary

Evaluation: Government Official-5
Processed in 1961

3: Naish, R.B. A Vedda Propitiation Ceremony. Folk-Lore, Vol. 41, pp. 187-194. London: Published for the Folk-Lore Society by William Glaisher, Ltd., 1930.

Yale: Nkg10 F72 90-91

/This short article was written by an administrative officer who was engaged in combatting a cholera epidemic in Ceylon. It describes in narrative form a propitiation ceremony undertaken annually to honor the Great Goddess (Periya Devi). The ceremony was performed by the Vedda of a remote coastal village north of Batticaloa. The description is spotty and incomplete since Mr. Naish was too tired to stay till the end of the performance, but it does offer some data on costumes, participants, music and manner of dancing associated with the ritual. ---Analyst/

Field date: 1925
Analyst: A. Vinogradov

Evaluation: Government Official-5
Processed in 1965

4: Lewis, Frederick. Notes on Animal and Plant Life in the Vedda Country. Spolia Zeylanica, Vol. 10, pp. 119-165. Colombo: Colombo Museum, by H. R. Cottle, Acting Government Printer, 1919.

1 map

Yale: S4 C335S 9-10

/The author, a natural scientist and Fellow of the Linnean Society, travelled extensively in the Uva and the Eastern Provinces which form the traditional land of the Veddas. He describes in detail the topography of the area, climate (including charts of the rainfall), and water resources, and lists the fauna and flora found, both domestic and wild. The article also includes a short and succinct summary of Vedda aboriginal culture as related to the author by an old Vedda informant. Passing reference is made to present settlement patterns of Veddas, their "secret" language, prevalent types of diseases and native remedies. The material has been

4: Lewis, Frederick.

marked for categories in the Vedda file where it is not ambiguous. Sinhalese and Tamils occupy the same general area. --Analyst/

Field date: (ca. 1906-1918)
Analyst: A. Vinogradov

Evaluation: Natural Scientist-5
Processed in 1965

5: Spittel, Richard Lionel. Wild Ceylon: Describing in Particular the Lives of the Present Day Veddas. Third edition. Colombo: Printed by The Ceylon Daily News for General Publishers Ltd., 1945.

Pp. xiv, 110; 31 photographs; 1 text figure

University of Pennsylvania: 915.48 Sp45

/Pp. 21-33 and 97-110 were not processed since they contained no material on the Veddas. This book is a personal account written by a Burgher physician in the early 1920's relating his experiences while in pursuit of the "pure" Vedda (the Burghers are descendants of Dutch and other European employees of the Dutch East India Co. who intermarried with Sinhalese). The author made several trips covering large tracts of Eastern and Uva Provinces in whose jungles the last remnants of the Vedda still lived under extremely primitive conditions and often in symbiotic relationship with the Sinhalese chena cultivators (shifting cultivation). The author is impressionistic and highly subjective in his reactions to the Veddas he encountered both as individuals or as members of scattered settlements. Some effort is made at reconstructing the aboriginal Vedda culture through use of informants. The best described aspects of Vedda culture contained

5: Spittel, Richard Lionel.

here are their residences and information pertaining to hunting and collecting. It is made clear throughout that what Veddas are left have been strongly influenced both racially and culturally by the Sinhalese and the Tamils. --Analyst

Field date: ca. 1920
Analyst: A. Vinogradov

Evaluation: Physician-5
Processed in 1965

Spittel, Richard Lionel. Vanished Trails, The Last of the Veddas. Bombay: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, Indian Branch, 1950.

Pp. xvi, 259; sketches; glossary

Library of Congress: DS489.2.S63

/The author writes "This work has been written as one continuous story depicting the lives of three generations of Veddas in their transition from the troglodyte, food-gathering stage to the crude beginnings of the hut-dweller and food-producer. It is the true story (allowing something for the demands of the novel) of the last remnant of Ceylon's most primitive aborigines -- their swan-song." -- Analyst/

Spittel, Richard Lionel. Savage Sanctuary. No place of publication: Liverright Publishing Corporation, 1942.

Pp. xii, 335; sketches

Library of Congress: PZ3.S75965 Sav3

/This source, while based on Vedda ethnography, is a fictionalized account of the life of a Vedda outlaw. Therefore, it has not been processed for the Vedda file.--Analyst/

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp, within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords. 361

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter. 301 304

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of coconut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]." 415 [531]

Village Veddas of Tamankaduwa.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of intermarriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils. 144 621

Elakotaliya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-bred. Their mode of life is similar to that prevalent at Dambani and Bulugahaladena, i.e. they are occupied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their *waruge* and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaku. 105 621

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve mud huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1901. [113]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

In Horabora tank there will be excellent lotus. To gather them excellent women go; tying on strings of beads they go. The multitude who cherish affection, leaving Horabora behind, go to Pangara gammana. 782 539

The Veddas of Sitala Wanniya told us that they did not invoke the Kiriamma with offerings for the cure of sickness though they had heard that the Veddas of the Bintenne did so and Handuna gave us these lines as part of the Bintenne invocation, which he said he had learnt from his father. He only understood the first few words which he translated "There are fine lotus in Horaboraweva and fine women go to pluck them." A variant of this invocation—if such it be—has been published by Mr Louis De Zoysa[1] as a song of the Veddas of Horaborawewa.

Sorabora vevé sonda oſu neſum ę
Mlwd nelanmaſa sonda liyé e
Kalu haralá hudu haralá uyá de
Oſu sálé bat hannaſa máſu nę.

Fine, fine water-lilies and lotuses grow in Sorobora tank!
These to gather come fine, fine women.
They make them into black and white curries;
To eat the water-lily-seed rice there are no curries.

Obviously both versions are corrupt and have been derived from an invocation (No. XXXIX) sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony.

INVOCATION TO THE KIRIAMMA OF INDIGOLLAEWA ASKING FOR SUCCESS IN HUNTING.

Bandaraduwa.

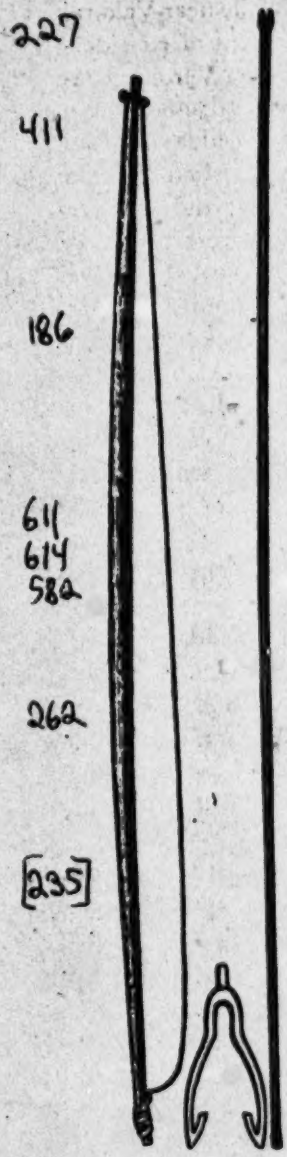
XXXIV. *Írt kanda Monara galada wádiyá*
Í dahasak wida tara karapu dunu diyá
Yanda enda diya pá man balápiyá
Indigollit Devi waedíyat subá wíyá

Aeli gigiran piſa inda walu kaſina lamá
Diya gigiran piſa inda diya damana lamá
Naddunná dunu diya ata kudá lamá
Riri oruwa piſa sakman karana lamá

[1] Note on the Origin of the Veddas, with a few specimens of their songs and charms. *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1881, Vol. VII, Part II, p. 102.

[113]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5



[113] Fig. 13. Verda bow and harpoon × $\frac{1}{12}$.
Iron harpoon head × $\frac{1}{3}$.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *waruge* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *waruge*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *waruge* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 330.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XIII

MUSIC

By C. S. Myers.

Introductory.

The account of Vedda music given in this section is based upon an examination of thirty-four phonographic records of songs obtained from the Veddas by Dr and Mrs Seligmann[1]. 533 [126]

These songs are probably simpler in structure than any other native songs hitherto studied.

Nine of the tunes are composed of only two notes. In three others the tune consists also of two notes, but with the addition of one or more unimportant grace-notes. These twelve songs may be conveniently classed as belonging to Group A.

Twelve other songs consist of three notes only. These we shall class under Group B.

Nine songs contain four notes, and one consists of five notes. These we shall consider as Group C.

Of the songs in Group A, in no case is the range sensibly greater than our whole-tone interval. With the exception of two anomalous songs, no song in Group B has a range sensibly greater than our minor third. With one exception, no song in Group C has a range greater than a fourth.

There is evidence that the songs of Group A are more archaic than those of Groups B and C. For, unaware of the above system of classification, Dr Seligmann was asked to indicate those songs which appeared to him (on grounds of language, ceremonial, etc.) most probably archaic and those

[[1] We received the manuscript of this chapter from Dr Myers in November 1909, but owing to our absence from England, publication was deferred for six months. Meanwhile, in the *Quarterly Magazine of the International Musical Society* (Year xi, Part 2, 1910) there appeared a short account of Vedda music by Herr Max Wertheimer, based on an examination of four phonographic records obtained by Frau M. Selenka. Dr Myers has thus had no opportunity of alluding to Herr Wertheimer's observations in this chapter.] [114 113]

[p. 341]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

Sinhalese, as a foreign language which the Veddas long ago adopted in the place of their own. 117

The obvious phonetic changes from the Sinhalese which we noted in the Vedda dialect were the substitution for the sibilant "s" of the palatal "ch" which though generally retained might be thrown out, thus "head" Sin. *isa* becomes in the Vedda dialect *iya* or sometimes *icha*, and *gas* the Sinhalese word for "tree" becomes *gai* or *gayi* in Vedda. There may be other phonetic changes which an expert linguist would detect, but certainly the substitution of "ch" for "s" is the change which gives its characteristic harsh quality to the Vedda dialect. 114

A number of authors have published short lists of Vedda words, that given by the Sarasins being of most importance, for although it consists of only 22 words care is taken to indicate the equivalent in use in each of the Vedda groups visited by the authors. More complete vocabularies have been collected by Bailey and Nevill, and vocabularies have also been published by two native scholars. One of these, who wrote under the *nom-de-plume* A. J. W., Batticaloa, has published his material in a somewhat inaccessible periodical, the *Ceylon Literary Register* (Vol. v, 1891). His information, which includes a number of sentences and lullabies, has evidently been carefully collected and would probably be specially useful to Sinhalese and Sanskrit scholars. Its great defect is that no mention is made of the places where the information was obtained, or the conditions prevailing when it was collected. [113]

Mr A. J. W. Marrambe's publication entitled *The Vedda Language* and apparently printed at Colombo in 1893 which contains some Vedda invocations is of less value, for while it suffers from the same defects it does not appear to have been prepared with the care which characterises the vocabulary in the *Literary Register*[1]. [113]

An important if indirect contribution to the study of the Vedda language has recently been made by Mr Parker, who, in *Ancient Ceylon*, gives in parallel columns Nevill's Vedda vocabulary and the equivalents of these words in the Kaelebasa

[1] The identity of initials suggests that the two accounts may be by one author.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

194 about 63½ inches[1]. We may also refer to the measurements of Sinhalese made by M. Emile Deschamps and given in his book *Au Pays des Veddas* (pp. 464 and 465). M. Deschamps has informed us that his measurements were all made on Kandyans, among whom he found that the average height of 16 males was 1·60 m. (about 63 inches) while the average cephalic index of 14 males was 75·9.

On the cultural side the evidence, though less obvious, is, we believe, no less convincing. There is as far as we can ascertain no evidence of there ever having been an organisation into exogamous clans among the Sinhalese, but there is not the least doubt that this exists among the Veddas, among whom it must therefore be considered to have arisen, and we know that this is characteristic of many of the more primitive Jungle (Dravidian) peoples of India[2]. The Vedda cult of the dead must also be looked upon as a primitive and not an adopted feature since it is found among many Indian jungle tribes. There is no need to labour this point since the information given us by Mr Parker and quoted on pp. 14 and 142 indicates, not that the Vedda cult of the dead is derived from Bandar worship, but that this has arisen among the Sinhalese from a cult previously existing in Ceylon. These considerations seem to us to put beyond doubt the fact that the present day Veddas are the lineal descendants in culture as well as in physique of the early (Dravidian) people who inhabited Ceylon, before it was colonised by an Aryan-speaking people, though they do not rebut the "evidence afforded by the caves" (Parker *loc. cit.*) or explain the adoption by the Veddas of the Sinhalese language.

The caves, however, do not seem to us to present any insuperable difficulty. A very small number of caves or rock

[1] We may here quote the opinion of Mr Edgar Thurston who, on looking at a number of photographs of Veddas, made the remark that he should not have known them from photographs of members of a number of Indian Jungle Tribes.

[2] This is not the place to discuss the meaning of the term "Dravidian" or the Dravidian problem; we use the term to signify the short, dark, dolichocephalic peoples of the Deccan. Dr Haddon considers that the Veddas should be classed with the Kurumbas, Irulas and some other Jungle Tribes of the Deccan as pre-Dravidians (*Races of Man*, pp. 7 and 13).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 of the earliest foreign records such as that found in the tract *De Moribus Brachmanorum* written about 400 A.D., the author of which professes to have obtained his information from a Theban traveller.

[114] To Robert Knox, who wrote in 1681 after a captivity in Ceylon lasting 20 years, belongs the credit of having first accurately described the Veddas. "Of these *Natives* there be two sorts *Wild* and *Tame*. I will begin with the former. For as in these Woods there are Wild *Beasts* so Wild *Men* also. The Land of *Bintan* is all covered with mighty Woods, filled [101] with abundance of *Deer*. In this Land are many of these wild men; they call them *Vaddahs*, dwelling near no other Inhabitants. They speak the *Chingulayes* Language. They kill *Deer*, 175 and dry the Flesh over the fire, and the people of the Countrey 105 come and buy it of them. They never Till any ground for Corn, their Food being only Flesh. They are very expert with their Bows. They have a little ax, which they stick by their sides, to cut hony out of hollow Trees. Some few, which are near Inhabitants, have commerce with other people. They have no Towns nor Houses, only live by the waters under a Tree, with some boughs cut and laid about them, to give notice when any wild Beasts come near, which they may hear by their rustling and trampling upon them. Many of these Habitations we saw when we fled through the Woods, but God be praised the *Vaddahs* were gone.

"Some of the tamer sort of these men are in a kind of Subjection to the King. For if they be found, tho it must be with a great search in the woods, they will acknowledge his Officers, and will bring to them *Elephant-teeth*, and *Honey*, and *Wax*, and *Deer's Flesh*; but the others in lieu thereof do give them near as much, in Arrows, Cloth, etc. fearing lest they should otherwise appear no more.

"It had been reported to me by many people, that the wilder sort of them, when they want Arrows, will carry their load of Flesh in the night, and hang it up in a *Smith's* Shop, also a Leaf cut in the form they will have their Arrows made, and hang by it. Which if the *Smith* do make according to their Pattern they will requite, and bring him more Flesh;

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 territory in the neighbourhood of Pattiavelagalge cave described
177 in Chapter V. This was about 100 years ago, and may have been connected with the troubles of the revolution which undoubtedly led to an influx of Sinhalese into the wilds of the Vedda country.

Further, the eschatological beliefs of the Kandyan Sinhalese furnish abundant evidence that these have been influenced by the Veddas, and certain of these beliefs can be explained on no other hypothesis, unless it be asserted that the beliefs of the Veddas and those of the invading Sinhalese were from the first nearly identical. We refer particularly to the *bandara* beliefs described on pp. 141 to 145, which have probably attained to the position they now hold because, as pointed out to us by Mr Parker, it is in accordance with Sinhalese Buddhist teaching that the spirits of the deceased may become *yaku*. This of course might merely imply that Sinhalese Buddhism had originally been influenced by the Vedda Cult of the Dead, but that this is not the explanation is shown by the fact—for information concerning which we are indebted to Mr Parker—that the Low-Country Sinhalese have nothing of the Kandyan "hero and ancestor worship" as it is styled by this authority[1].

114 Sir James Emerson Tennant devoted a chapter of his monumental work to the Veddas, but interesting as this chapter is it contains "little else than a comparison of the habits of the people of the island, as observed by the ancient voyagers in the fourth and fifth centuries, with the traditional...customs of the Veddahs as reported by Knox. The accomplished author throws no new light on the wild tribes of the Veddahs as they are. On the contrary, his account of them is in some important particulars defective, and even inaccurate. He glances casually at those tribes which are in the wildest state, touching with precision none of their peculiarities, and dwells in detail upon those only, which, from long association with the Sinhalese and Tamil races, have lost much of their originality. Of the ancient aborigines he has compiled much that is curious. Of the existing Veddahs he has given us little besides an epitome of former notices."

[1] We again quote from one of Mr Parker's letters.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

So wrote John Bailey in 1863 in a footnote to the paper in which his own observations are reported, and no one who knows the Veddas will disagree with him. Indeed, Bailey's paper is a remarkably careful and critical piece of work, concerning which all must agree with Nevill who recognised it as the first scientific account of the Veddas[1]. 114

It was succeeded in 1881 by a summary by Virchow of what was then known of the Veddas, and measurements were given of a number of Vedda skulls. This paper was translated into English and published in 1886 in Vol. IX of the *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. But no original detailed study of the sociology of the Veddas appeared until the extremely valuable observations of the late Hugh Nevill, to which we shall frequently refer, appeared in the *Taprobanian*, to be followed in 1893 by a magnificently illustrated work *Die Weddas von Ceylon und die sie umgebenden Völkerschaften*, published by the Doctors Paul and Fritz Sarasin, which however deals less fully with the sociology than with the physical anthropology of the Veddas[2].

Three articles by Dr L. Rutimeyer, published in 1903[3], describe the author's impressions of parties of Danigala and Henebedda Veddas who visited him at Bibile Rest House and review the then existing condition of our knowledge concerning the ethnology of the Veddas, finishing with a summary of the views expressed by the Sarasins concerning the relationship of the Veddas to other races.

As this volume will scarcely touch on physical anthropology we now give a short account of the chief physical characteristics 142

[1] *Taprobanian*, 1887, Vol. I, p. 175.

[2] It must not be thought, however, that the period from 1863 to 1893 was absolutely barren; Mr B. L. Hartshorne published a paper dealing with the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1876, and papers on the Veddas continued to appear in the *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. One paper, that by C. Stevens (*Proc. Roy. As. Soc. Ceylon Branch*, 1886), must be regarded as absolutely misleading, and the value of many of these communications is reduced by the absence of data concerning the origin and mode of collection of the information given. Thus in Volume VII, 1881, Mr Louis De Zoysa published a number of Vedda songs which would be of great value if a single word were said of where, how, or by whom they were collected. This literature will be found in a bibliography given by the Sarasins on p. 594 of their work.

[3] *Die Nilgalawedda in Ceylon*. Globus 1903.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142 is rarely prominent. The lips, though well developed, are not tumid (except sometimes in the young); sometimes the mouth is rather flat. This when accompanied by moderately prominent cheek bones gives some faces an expression of considerable energy. The jaw is not prognathous, the nostrils are moderately broad, the root of the nose is depressed but never flattened to any considerable degree. The average of the nasal indices of 17 skulls gave the figure 52·7 (minimum 43·3, maximum 62·2, median 52·3), which is just short of the index (53) at which platyrrhiny is commonly assumed to begin. Nevertheless we believe that the Veddas may more fairly be classed as mesorrhine than platyrrhine, for certainly the impression made on us by the living was that they were not specially broad-nosed. The capacity of the 18 male skulls described by the Sarasins varies from 1012 to 1502 c.c. with an average of 1278 c.c.: none of the three female Vedda skulls from the inner Vedda district have a capacity of less than 1150 c.c., though there is a skull of an adult Vedda woman in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons with a capacity of only 960 c.c.

141

Summing up the physical characters to which we have briefly referred we may define the Veddas as a short, wavy-haired, dolichocephalic race, with moderately long faces and moderately broad noses. Expressing the results of measurements taken by the Sarasins we may say that chamaeprosopes and leptoprosopes occur in about equal numbers, and that the Veddas are mesorrhine or present a low grade of platyrrhiny.

114 The latest Vedda literature of any importance is a volume published by the Sarasins which records the work they did in Ceylon during 1907 when they established the existence of a stone age upon the island. This fact had not been realised before, though two naturalists, Mr E. E. Green and Mr J. Pole, both old residents, had already collected and recognised as artifacts the quartz implements which were the typical product of the stone age in Ceylon, and which, as pointed out by the Sarasins, are most reasonably to be attributed to the Veddas. A number of rock shelters were explored; these were situated at Kataragam in the south of the island where no Veddas now exist, and in other parts of Uva, in the present Vedda country.

[Kataragam, see p. xx. —Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Not all the caves investigated yielded evidence of prehistoric habitation, but from a certain number were obtained quartz, chert and shell implements which put the matter beyond doubt and conclusively show that Ceylon formerly possessed a stone age. The greater part of the volume is taken up by an account of prehistoric quartz and chert artifacts, and the excellent reproductions given by the authors show that the quartz implements they discovered belong to the same type as those found by ourselves and described elsewhere[1].

But in addition the Sarasins found hammer stones, a few pieces of worked bone, and a series of shells of the large land snail (*Helix phoenix*), the curve of each shell being occupied by a circular hole large enough to allow of its sharp edge being used as a cutting tool[2].

Plate VIII shows a number of typical Vedda implements. All are of quartz except No. 2 which is of chert. Nos. 1 and 3 are worked on one side only, the unworked side being shown in order to illustrate the well-marked bulb of percussion which distinguishes many of the specimens. The general characteristics of these implements are so well shown in the plate that a description in detail is not necessary. Attention may, however, be called to figures 6, 8 and 9; the first of these shows a large part of the outer surface of the quartz pebble from which it was made. No. 8 belongs to a type of which numerous examples occur among European stone implements, this specimen is thicker than is usual and measures 15 mm. from one surface to the other. No. 9 can scarcely have been intended for anything but an arrow head, two views are given of this remarkable implement which comes from a cave on the Scarborough Estate at Maskeliya, and for a drawing of which I am indebted to Mr Pole. No. 2 is of chert and was found in the same cave; two views of this implement are given. The localities from which the other specimens were collected were as follows: No. 1 was found by Mr Pole at Maskeliya, No. 3 we picked up at Bandarawela, No. 4 was collected by Mr Green

[1] C. G. Seligmann, "Quartz Implements from Ceylon," *Man*, 1908, 63.

[2] These shells in fact constitute a primitive plane or spokeshave and resemble those found in Queensland and some parts of South America at the present day.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION (CONTINUED)

114
771

WE have now described the fundamental ideas of the Vedda cult of the dead, but superposed upon these there are two other strata of belief both of which have influenced the religion of certain groups of Veddas to a greater or less extent. Before discussing these we may briefly indicate the views of the more thorough of previous investigators. In this as in other matters Knox was better informed than many of his successors when he said of the Veddas, "The *tamer* do build Temples, the wild only bring their sacrifice under Trees, and while it is offering dance round it, both men and women[1]." Tennant's account adds little to this; Bailey's account, undoubtedly the most complete and trustworthy that has been given to date, is not quoted here because it will be found almost in full on pp. 160 and 161 where the religious beliefs of the Nilgala Veddas are discussed. Tennant writes, "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state...in short, no instinct of worship, except...when sick, they send for devil dancers to drive away the evil spirit, who is believed to inflict the disease. The dance is executed in front of an offering of something eatable, placed on a tripod of sticks, the dancer having his head and girdle decorated with green leaves. At first he shuffles with his feet to a plaintive air, and by degrees he works himself into a state of great excitement and action, accompanied by moans and screams, and during this paroxysm, he professes to be inspired with instruction for the cure of the patient[2]."

114
771
765

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 63.
[2] Tennant, *op. cit.* pp. 441 and 442.

[p. 146]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Even Nevill missed the essentials of the Vedda cult of the dead, though he shows that he knew something of what actually occurred. "The Vaedda religion seems to have been such that the spirit alone was recognised as human, and the flesh, when the spirit has left it, receives neither veneration nor superstitious reverence. Where the life left the body, there the body was left....Two or five days after the death, however, the relations were invited to the scene of funeral and a feast was held...to satisfy relations there had been no foul play....

"The Vaeddas of Bintenne, however, having assembled relations and neighbours, procure rice, or other grain, and decorate the pot in which it is cooked with sprays of the liniya tree[1], a shrub with leaves like our hazel, but with bright scarlet flowers. If no flowers can be got, bits of red cotton or other cloth should be used. The celebrant then dances round the pot of food, with an arrow in his hand, singing any chant he knows, and making obeisance to the food by a wave of the arrow. The food is then distributed....

"It is evident this custom cannot apply to those who formerly did not eat grain. These, however, were few. Roasted game would probably with such take the place of grain, and the latter seems only used as the best and most unusual food procurable, much as our poor try to provide cake, and not bread and cheese, etc. at weddings....

"Bodies were never buried until the English Government endeavoured to enforce burial. The Vaeddas have not the least objection to the corpse being buried, but object greatly to being forced to dig the grave...[2]."

Although the Sarasins underestimated the importance of the Vedda cult of the dead, and failed to discover that even "Nature" Veddas make offerings to the spirits of their departed, their opinions and conclusions are necessarily given at some length on account of the undoubted importance of their work. "The Veddas of Dewilane told us that after death they became spirits or yakas, but as to whether these persisted (*lebten*) or not they never thought; they did not pray to them nor honour them. The 'Nature' Veddas from Danigala...told us in 1885

[1] *Helicteres isora*, L.

[2] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 179.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

114
769
775

that they worshipped neither their ancestors, nor a devil nor a god. Five years later the Veddas settled at Henebedda in the Nilgala district told us that they believed that the dead became spirits or yakas; but they did not make offerings to them. At Wewatte they likewise believe that the dead become yakas and there they invoke them in cases of sickness...gods they have none. A Vedda from the neighbourhood of Kalodai (Pallegama district) named Manikrala informed us that they worshipped children, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother—in short their dead relatives. In remembrance of the death of such relatives they gave a present to the first Buddhist priest whom they met. We therefore asked this 'Culture' Vedda whether his relatives continued to live as spirits after death, but he replied that he did not know; the present of rice was simply in remembrance of the deceased man. In answer to the further question whether they had a definite religion or worshipped a god, he replied that he had never thought about it, and he gave us the impression that this question and the idea it suggested were new to him.

"We found the idea of the existence of the departed as spirits further developed in an old 'Culture' Vedda of Mudagala near Mahaoya, named Sella. He said they had no gods besides their departed. Every year at the full moon they consumed yams and other food at the burying place. On this occasion they hold a dance in honour of the departed, invoke the dead by name and pray them to help them. At Omuni the corpses were buried in Sinhalese fashion and provided with burial presents; but two Veddas when we questioned them about their religion could tell us nothing on this point, and said that the departed were not honoured as gods[1]."

From these data the Sarasins conclude that "genuine 'Nature' Veddas either lack, or at the most have a quite uncertain idea of the persistence of the souls of the dead at the site of death, and that they make no offerings to their manes[2]." Further, they state "that among 'Culture' Veddas this idea has developed but little, for they either answered that they did not know whether they persisted as souls after death, or that they

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 497 and 498. [2] *Loc. cit.*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had never thought the matter over. Nevertheless they honour the names which like the Sinhalese they call Yakas with food, dances or offerings. Any monotheistic idea of God is absent both in 'Nature' and in 'Culture' Veddas[1]."

The three strata of belief to which we referred at the beginning of this chapter and which exist among the Veddas of the present day, have not fused so thoroughly that there is any great difficulty in isolating them. We believe they may be tabulated as follows:

I. The Cult of the dead, including the cult of the spirits of recent ancestors, i.e. of the Nae Yaku and the *yaku* of certain Veddas who have been long dead and may well be regarded as heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka.

II. The Cult of foreign spirits, who have become naturalised and have taken the friendly protective nature of the Vedda *yaku*.

III. The Cult of foreign spirits who, though not often regarded as such, have retained their foreign nature and are in the main terrible or even hostile.

Another feature of the last stratum of thought is the endowment of true Vedda *yaku* with foreign attributes[2]. When the history of the island is considered, it is not surprising that the first condition, which may be considered the primitive religion of the Veddas, should nowhere be found standing alone at the present day. It is impossible to say how much the Indian invaders influenced the aboriginal inhabitants of Lanka (Ceylon) when they took possession of the island under Vijeyo about 500 B.C., for the few references made to Veddas in the ancient chronicles of the country throw no light on this subject.

Knox mentions that Veddas paid a tribute of game and honey to the Sinhalese, and in his day there were "wild and tame" Veddas, and it is certain that from the middle ages onwards there was a considerable amount of intercourse between at least the tamer Veddas and the Sinhalese. Therefore it is natural that foreign beliefs should have gradually infiltrated the native Vedda cult.

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] The invocation (No. XLI) to Ambarapoti Kirisamma given on p. 316 is an excellent example of this. Bilindi Yaka is here treated as if he were a Sinhalese or Tamil deity.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ריקה
769
[539]

'Mâ miya, mâ miya, mâ deyâ,
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâh!'

'My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?'

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions, when the intervention of the guardian spirit is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.

"Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

"Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. 'Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come! wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!' and they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.

"They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. 'Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!' was the only reply I received to repeated questions. They have no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings[1]."

ריקה

Although in essentials this account is accurate, certain corrections and suggestions must be made. The "bilindoo yakkoon" are not "infant spirits" but obviously represent Bilindi Yaka who became a *yaka* while still a child. The arrow dance is clearly described and agrees with the dance we saw and photographed near Bendiyagalge, figures of which are given in Plate XXVI.

ריקה
114

With regard to the spirits of the dead appearing in dreams and stating where game will be found, this, which is quite contradictory to our experience, has already been referred to on

114

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* pp. 300—303.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 p. 135, but it may be noted that Bailey clearly did not know of the existence of shamanistic ceremonies and we have little doubt that the information given him, which he took to refer to dreams, in fact described the experiences of possession. The "few sticks...with a branch thrown over them" are clearly remains of the *massa* upon which the offerings are placed.

775 753 The *Maha Yakino* are the spirits of old Vedda women, the chief of whom is the Maha Kiriamma, who, as Bailey pointed out in 1863, is more feared than loved, and in many cases is supposed to send sickness. It was said that her name was Anami and that she lived at Okegala near Alutnuwara, dying of old age; but in spite of these circumstantial details, which are perhaps due to the teachings of Tissahami, neither the name nor the memory of her husband has survived.

775 Unapane Kiriamma is another important *Maha Yakini* who lived near Unapane[1].

Unapane Kiriamma also gives luck in honey getting, and it is thought that she in some way causes bees to build good combs, in fact, all the *Maha Yakino* are associated with rock honey from the belief that they especially affect the rocky crests of hills[2].

Although the *Maha Yakino* are looked upon as the spirits of old Vedda women and are reputed to show their fondness for children by kidnapping them, they are regarded with considerable awe, for they are considered to send disease, and it is necessary to make an offering to them in order that this may be removed. This is generally done at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony described on p. 268. With the exception of the

[1] She is known to the jungle Sinhalese of the Vedirata, who state that with her husband Unapane Kaira Wanniya she made the Unapane paddy fields. She is particularly invoked by barren women, and those who have brought forth still-born children, for increase of cattle and milk, to prevent cattle being taken by leopards or damaging the crops and to give good harvests. [842]

[2] Offerings of honey made to the *Maha Yakino* are described elsewhere. The belief that the *Maha Yakino* are especially associated with hills is also found among the Sinhalese of the Vedda country, who especially associate these spirits with hills on which springs are found or on which streams arise. One such hill near Nilgala, which at the end of the rains has many small streams running down its face, is known as Yakini Ela and is especially associated by the neighbouring Sinhalese with the *Maha Yakino*, who they say can be heard moving about the crest at night. [823]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

still dancing, stripped the leaves from the *alutyakagama*, and, holding on to the horizontal cross bar, shook the framework violently in order to drive away any of the *yaku* who might still be resting there.

7AL 535

Unfortunately we were not able to get much trustworthy information about this or any of the other dances at Unuwatura Bubula, as Sela Kaurala, who appeared to suffer from asthma and chronic bronchitis, coughed up a good deal of blood after this dance, and was unable to discuss the ceremony with us afterwards. His pupil, Naida Kaurala, was not nearly so well informed. There were several points which we were unable to settle satisfactorily; Gale Yaku, we were told, were many and not one Yaka, yet Gale Yaka or Yaku seemed confused with Kande Yaka, for we were told that the big *aude* was for Kande Yaka and the smaller one for Bilindi Yaka. Nevertheless the shaman held both when dancing to Gale Yaka, and he spun the pot of rice, which in several other communities had been done by the shaman when possessed by Kande Yaka.

[114]

THE RUWALA CEREMONY.

This ceremony was danced by the Veddas of Uniche. It began by Wannaku, who was wearing a *hangala* of new white cloth, moving slowly round the centre post of the *ruwala* holding a bunch of leaves in each hand and reciting an invocation to Ruwala Yaka and Yakini, who live on Nuwaragala. He stood close to the central pole of the *ruwala*, and at first faced towards the north, that is, not in the direction of Nuwaragala but towards the quarter whence came the *yaku* who live on Nuwaragala and other hills who are invoked in this dance. These *yaku* were not the spirits of the dead, but had always existed as *yaku*. The original home was on the other side of the ocean in Handun Kaele, the "sandal-wood jungle," which the educated, but not the peasant, Sinhalese recognise as being in India. Long ago the *yaku* made a raft and crossed the ocean, and the sail (Sin. *ruwala*) and mast of their raft are represented by the centre pole (*ruwala*) of the structure of that name, while the streamers represent the "silver" and "golden" stays of their mast.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XIII

MUSIC

By C. S. Myers.

Introductory.

The account of Vedda music given in this section is based upon an examination of thirty-four phonographic records of songs obtained from the Veddas by Dr and Mrs Seligmann[1]. 533 [126]

These songs are probably simpler in structure than any other native songs hitherto studied.

Nine of the tunes are composed of only two notes. In three others the tune consists also of two notes, but with the addition of one or more unimportant grace-notes. These twelve songs may be conveniently classed as belonging to Group A.

Twelve other songs consist of three notes only. These we shall class under Group B.

Nine songs contain four notes, and one consists of five notes. These we shall consider as Group C.

Of the songs in Group A, in no case is the range sensibly greater than our whole-tone interval. With the exception of two anomalous songs, no song in Group B has a range sensibly greater than our minor third. With one exception, no song in Group C has a range greater than a fourth.

There is evidence that the songs of Group A are more archaic than those of Groups B and C. For, unaware of the above system of classification, Dr Seligmann was asked to indicate those songs which appeared to him (on grounds of language, ceremonial, etc.) most probably archaic and those

[1 We received the manuscript of this chapter from Dr Myers in November 1909, but owing to our absence from England, publication was deferred for six months. Meanwhile, in the *Quarterly Magazine of the International Musical Society* (Year xi, Part 2, 1910) there appeared a short account of Vedda music by Herr Max Wertheimer, based on an examination of four phonographic records obtained by Frau M. Selenka. Dr Myers has thus had no opportunity of alluding to Herr Wertheimer's observations in this chapter.] [114 113]

[p. 341]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Sinhalese, as a foreign language which the Veddas long ago adopted in the place of their own. 197

The obvious phonetic changes from the Sinhalese which we noted in the Vedda dialect were the substitution for the sibilant "s" of the palatal "ch" which though generally retained might be thrown out, thus "head" Sin. *isa* becomes in the Vedda dialect *iya* or sometimes *icha*, and *gas* the Sinhalese word for "tree" becomes *gai* or *gayi* in Vedda. There may be other phonetic changes which an expert linguist would detect, but certainly the substitution of "ch" for "s" is the change which gives its characteristic harsh quality to the Vedda dialect. 194

A number of authors have published short lists of Vedda words, that given by the Sarasins being of most importance, for although it consists of only 22 words care is taken to indicate the equivalent in use in each of the Vedda groups visited by the authors. More complete vocabularies have been collected by Bailey and Nevill, and vocabularies have also been published by two native scholars. One of these, who wrote under the *nom-de-plume* A. J. W., Batticaloa, has published his material in a somewhat inaccessible periodical, the *Ceylon Literary Register* (Vol. v, 1891). His information, which includes a number of sentences and lullabies, has evidently been carefully collected and would probably be specially useful to Sinhalese and Sanskrit scholars. Its great defect is that no mention is made of the places where the information was obtained, or the conditions prevailing when it was collected. 114 [113]

Mr A. J. W. Marrambe's publication entitled *The Vedda Language* and apparently printed at Colombo in 1893 which contains some Vedda invocations is of less value, for while it suffers from the same defects it does not appear to have been prepared with the care which characterises the vocabulary in the *Literary Register*[1]. [113]

An important if indirect contribution to the study of the Vedda language has recently been made by Mr Parker, who, in *Ancient Ceylon*, gives in parallel columns Nevill's Vedda vocabulary and the equivalents of these words in the Kaelebasa

[1] The identity of initials suggests that the two accounts may be by one author.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 language, collected by himself during his long sojourn in Ceylon; and to this we shall return later.

192 The Vedda words for the most important animals with which they are brought in contact which are given in the vocabulary at the end of this volume indicate that nouns and verbs in the Vedda dialect are largely formed by periphrasis. It may be urged that in certain cases this is done for the same reason that the common names of animals are avoided in all hunting languages, and doubtless this explains why the bear is commonly spoken of as *hatera* "the enemy[1]," but it will not account for one of the words for "smoke" being "that which goes from the fire when wet," or "to bring" being "to come having taken things" or for "wind" being "that which causes the stems of trees to break." Mr Parker informs us that the expression "having taken, come," for "bring" is common in Sinhalese, while Dr L. D. Barnett, whom we have consulted on the subject of periphrases, writes that "compound actions" are often expressed by paraphrase, thus the Hindi for "bring" is *le dana*, i.e. "taking give," and "depart" is *nikal jana*, i.e. "issuing go." These examples show that there is nothing peculiar or specially significant in the existence in the Vedda dialect of such periphrasis for "bring" as that given above.

Such expressions might be survivals from a time when the Vedda vocabulary was limited, when quick precision was unnecessary or at least had not been attained, and when all ideas, except the simplest, were necessarily expressed in a roundabout fashion and generally helped out by gesture. We allude in Chapter XVI to the absolute impossibility of making even such an intelligent man as Handuna of Sitala Wanniya realise the difference between a number of periods of time all shorter than a day, and in the same chapter we point out that the older generation of unsophisticated Veddas count only by saying

[1] At Sitala Wanniya we were told that the word *hariya* might be used for "bear" without danger when the animal was at a distance, but that *hatera* should be used if the animal were known or suspected to be close. Here too the word *hotahalala* was used for elephant avowedly to prevent these animals hearing their name and coming near. *Hatera* should be written *hatura*, but as we never heard any Vedda pronounce this word otherwise than *hatera*, we use this spelling throughout.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XVII

CONCLUSIONS

In the first chapter we have given an account of those facts in the history and pre-history of Ceylon which must be taken into account in any investigation of the Veddas, and we referred (p. 27) to the common Sinhalese belief that the Veddas were once rich and powerful. We stated that we could find no adequate reason for this belief, which is held only by the Sinhalese and is dismissed with contempt by all Veddas. It seemed to us that we had said enough on the subject, but the appearance of Mr Parker's recent work, *Ancient Ceylon*, which must always remain authoritative for much which concerns the Island, has persuaded us of the necessity for stating at greater length the reasons for our opinion. 174 114

Mr Parker's views on the subject of the former civilisation of the Veddas will be found on pp. 103 to 112 of *Ancient Ceylon*, and we cannot do better than begin our argument by quoting a considerable part of pp. 111 and 112 in which he both states the problem and summarises his views as to its solution.

"In dealing with the position of the Vaeddas, we are faced with this difficulty—that a portion of the race was relatively civilised in ancient times, while certain members of it are found at the present day almost in the state occupied by some of the most primitive peoples. We must adopt a theory which will include all the facts of the case; and not one which ignores some of the most important and significant and incontrovertible historical details and traditions. We cannot select the smallest and wildest group of Vaeddas, and because of their simple life as hunters place the whole race in the position which they con-

[p. 413]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 tinue to occupy...partly by accident and partly of their own free
114 choice.

"My conclusion therefore is that whether there has been any retrogression of the present Forest Vaeddas from a certain low state of civilisation or not, in very early times a great part of the race had reached a much more advanced state of culture than the wilder members of it, whose more or less isolated life either as hunters, or as hunters-and-villagers, did not in many cases induce them to feel any desire to participate in it. This more civilised portion has absorbed the Gangetic settlers, and acquired their status and language, and with some intermixture of Dravidian blood, or in many instances without it, has become the existing Kandian Sinhalese race.

"The ancestors of the present few hunting Vaeddas—who now most probably number much less than one hundred—either abandoned, some centuries after Christ, a form of village life in which they were partly or chiefly hunters, and reverted to the forest life of their forefathers; or, like some of the wild hunting tribes of the South Indian hills, remained, at least until very recent years, in nearly the original condition of the first comers to Ceylon, apparently simply because they preferred the free untrammelled life in the woods, and found their accustomed habits and household articles suited to all the requirements of a hunter's existence in the forests of Ceylon. The evidence afforded by the caves appears to me to be in favour of the former theory, which is also supported by the loss of their original language and their adoption of the Sinhalese tongue.

"The majority, however, of those who did not coalesce with the Gangetic settlers and their descendants, or accept their mode of life and culture, have, in comparatively modern times, and in certain instances partly through compulsion—since portions of the forests in which they were accustomed to hunt have been cut down in order to permit rice and millet cultivation—to some extent adopted the more civilised existence of their neighbours. Many keep buffaloes, and all but those few who live only by hunting and fishing, grow millet and other plants suited to their jungle clearings. An exceptional few in favourable sites for it even cultivate rice, and, as some of them informed me, in recent

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

years have settled down permanently and have planted such fruit trees as Coconuts, Areka-nuts, and Plantains about their houses." 174 114

Mr Parker admits such intercourse between the races as is necessary to allow intermarriage and a considerable amount of social contact-metamorphosis, so that we are in complete agreement with him concerning the "majority" of whom he speaks in the last paragraph, and no one will doubt "that in very early times a great part of the race had reached a much more advanced state of culture than the wilder members of it." It therefore only remains to discuss his conclusions concerning those of whom he speaks as the "present Forest Vaeddas."

We hold that there can be little doubt as to which of the two hypotheses put forward by Mr Parker is the correct one, and in spite of the fact that he leans towards the opposite view we shall now proceed to summarise our reasons for believing that the few unsophisticated Veddas of the present day do in fact represent the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon.

In the first place let us consider their physical characters. Experts in comparative anatomy will turn to the work of the Sarasins to estimate for themselves the significance of the primitive osteological characters they describe; it is only necessary here to refer to the more obvious external characters in which the Veddas differ from the Sinhalese. A single glance at the photograph reproduced in Plate III shows that two men in this group differ in general appearance and in their greater stature from their comrades; these two men, as has been mentioned on p. 16, are half-breeds, as are those shown in figure 1 of Plate XIV. The younger man might pass for a Sinhalese and in features closely recalls the Kandyan Sinhalese figured by Deniker[1], who does not at all resemble the relatively broad faced and broad nosed Veddas shown in Plates III, IV, V and VII. Further, among the measurements given in Chapter I the average height of 24 male Veddas measured by the Sarasins is given as 1·55 m. (about 60½ inches), while the average height of 10 Kandyan Sinhalese whom they also measured is 1·61 m. or 174

[1] *Races of Man*, 1900, p. 416.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

XXVI.—*An Account of the Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon: their Habits, Customs, and Superstitions.* By JOHN BAILEY, B.A., Oxon., Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary of Ceylon.

114 "WE shall, in this part, speak of the inhabitants of this Country, with their Religion, and Customs, and other things belonging to them. Of these Natives there be too Sorts—Wild and Tame. I will begin with the former. For, as in these Woods, there are Wild Beasts, so Wild Men also."*

So wrote, nearly two hundred years ago, that truthful old chronicler Robert Knox; and, though he praises God he never saw one of these "wild men," he proceeds, nevertheless, to give us in a couple of pages, by far the best sketch of the Veddahs that has yet appeared, notwithstanding the multitude of pens that have been employed since his time, on Ceylon.

Early in 1854, I was appointed to the charge of the extensive district of Badulla, which comprises, besides the ancient Kandyan province of Ouvah, that portion of the island where the most barbarous Veddah tribes are found. My tastes led me to take every opportunity of studying their habits and customs. My [123] official position gave me the greatest possible facilities for prosecuting my inquiries.

I accumulated much information that was both curious and valuable, but my official duties prevented me from shaping my rough notes into a readable form. For years, my papers lay in my desk, half forgotten, and it is only now that a little unlooked

* An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon, in the East Indies, etc., by Robert Knox, a Captive there near twenty years, folio, London, 1681.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

for leisure enables me to follow the suggestion of a friend, and to endeavour to arrange the materials which I collected with so much care and labour. 114

At a time when the investigation of the origin of uncivilized races is attracting so much attention in England, I trust that the results of my inquiries and observations may not be considered devoid of interest; and, in this hope, I venture to present them, such as they are, to the Ethnological Society. 121

The following sketch of the Veddahs is the result of personal and often-repeated investigation among the people themselves: it is founded only on direct evidence; I have admitted nothing on hearsay. Indeed, so difficult is it to elicit anything from people in such a state of barbarism, that I have accepted even the most direct testimony with caution and have only adopted it after careful cross-examination had satisfied me of its trustworthiness. I have tested again and again the truth of every statement I have made, sometimes reluctantly abandoning a link here and there which would have made my case more complete, only from a *doubt* of the perfect accuracy of my information.* 124 114

The facts I state are, so far as I can judge, beyond dispute, if honest and patient inquiry be of any value. The deductions I draw from them are my own, and must go for what they are worth. 114

I limit my observations to the wildest tribes, for it is amongst

---

* It may be said that it is a work of mere supererogation, if not presumption, on my part, to attempt to describe the Veddahs, seeing that Sir J. E. Tennent has so recently devoted several chapters of his work on Ceylon to this subject. But, interesting as these chapters are—perhaps the most interesting in the book—they contain little else than a comparison of the habits of the people of the island, as observed by the ancient voyagers in the fourth and fifth centuries, with the traditional but now long-exploded customs of the Veddahs as reported by KNOX. The accomplished author throws no new light on the wild tribes of the Veddahs as they are. On the contrary, his account of them is in some important particulars defective, and even inaccurate. He glances casually at those tribes which are in the wildest state, touching with precision none of their peculiarities, and dwells in detail upon those only which, from long association with the Singalese and Tamil races, have lost much of their originality. Of the ancient aborigines he has compiled much that is curious. Of the existing Veddahs he has given us little besides an epitome of former notices.

An account of the aboriginal races of Ceylon, published under the authority of a late colonial secretary of the island, would naturally be accepted and quoted as accurate and authentic. Sir J. E. Tennent's chapters on the Veddahs, therefore, render it more incumbent on me to lay before the Society the results of my own inquiries. For, though the habits and customs of wild tribes are important aids in determining their origin, a description of them is worse than useless, unless it be made by a person competent of his own knowledge to describe them. I pretend to no competency beyond this.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 those only who are the most barbarous, who have preserved in all essentials their isolation from other races intact, that we must expect to find the most marked peculiarities.

101 The term Veddah—or Weddah—in itself, indicates no particular race. It simply means "a hunter", and is, in India, applied to aboriginal or barbarous tribes generally.*

In this sense, a great portion of the population of the eastern parts of Ceylon appears, at some period or another, to have been so called. There are still extensive districts known as "Weddirata", or the country of the Veddahs, the inhabitants of which, although they are, owing to the remoteness of their situation, less civilized than the bulk of the people of the island, are not Veddahs, but Singhalese, in kindred, religion, and customs.

101 It is highly probable that the people of these remote districts and of others, where Veddah descent is still claimed, are more 174 directly derived from the race which originally stocked the island than those who inhabit such parts of it as were more accessible to the settlers from Continental India, who, in process of time superseded the aborigines.†

131 But the people distinguished in Ceylon, by the name of Veddahs—wholly distinct, as I have said, even from those who, though now Singhalese, yet describe themselves as descended from Veddah ancestors, are to be found in the districts of Batti-

---

* Weddà (Singhalese) an archer; some trace it to Bedda (Jungle). Introduction to Alwis' Sidath Sangarawa.

Vedán (Tamil), a hunter—one who lives in the woods; a name given to rude tribes, aborigines in the Indian peninsula. Vedan (Tamil), corruptly Vaidan, Veddah, also Beddah, or Weden—a hunter, a fowler; a name given to wild tribes, inhabiting the hills and forests of the south of India almost in a state of nature—probably the aboriginal race of the peninsula. Prof. Wilson's *Glossary of Revenue and Judicial Terms.* The word Veddah is still used in Ceylon as a hunter, and so applied to persons, not "Veddah" in the limited sense of the word.

† The Weddirates were, under the native government, exempted from 648 all service save military—the most honourable; and rendered tribute to the king, of beeswax, dried flesh, and honey, which was continued for some time after we obtained possession of the Kandyan provinces. But the inhabitants of these districts marry and associate with those of the adjoining districts, and are apparently the same people. There may exist some eth- 142 nical difference; indeed, I think even an unscientific eye can detect a difference in the appearance, not only of these people, but of the Wanniahs of the northern and central parts of Ceylon, when compared with the ordinary natives. I have tried to obtain skulls of the different races, of which there are many in the island, viz., Tamils, Moors, Singhalese of the low country and of the Kandyan provinces, the people of the Weddiratas —Wanniahs of Newerakalawiya and Batticalas—Mookwas of the north-west and east provinces, Malays, Goorowas, Rhodias, etc., but it is most difficult to obtain them. The subject may be worthy of the attention of the Ethnological Society, though beside the object of this paper.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honts*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—
142 both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable.
291 A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garment.† Indeed, almost the only difference
[304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have
[301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with
515 their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait,
302 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their
114 crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking
[276] gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smoking is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they
181 huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*antiaris innoxia*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

differ from the Singhalese, and those which, though Singhalese, are, in the sense here used, peculiar to the Veddahs. It has been suggested to me that some of the former are derived directly from the Sanskrit, but as I am incompetent to judge of the accuracy of these suggestions, I do not venture to give the conjectural derivations which I have received. 197

I have, myself, noted down, and caused to be noted down from dictation, several Veddah charms, which are not, I am informed, known to the Singhalese, though in some there is a certain resemblance to charms in use by the latter. Whether corrupted during the many ages in which they have been unintelligently repeated, or whether they are in a form of Singhalese now obsolete, or both, they are not easily translated. They are charms used in illness, and for protection against elephants, leopards, bears, and wild boars. 789 [755]

The Veddahs are at present chiefly known by names similar to those in use among the neighbouring Singhalese, and it is curious to observe how oddly they are jumbled together. In one family are to be found names which would only be appropriate to Kandyans of the highest caste, and names which could only be borne by the lowest. Some of their names, too, belong to Hindoos, and not to Singhalese. Some are not proper names at all; while, most strange of all, others, though utterly unknown in Ceylon, either to Tamils or Singhalese, are in common use in Bengal, and refer directly to Hindoo deities, or personages mentioned in the Puránas. 551 171

The names of the preceding generation appear to have differed in a very marked manner from the Singhalese names by which the Veddahs now are for the most part known; and those in the list appended to this paper are chiefly the names of the fathers and mothers of the present Veddahs. Most of these I was able, by the kindness of Colonel Vincent Eyre, C.B., R.A., to submit to the inspection of Professor Lees, of Bengal, and they are pronounced by him to have a decided Sanskrit affinity. [197]

It is a singular and significant fact, that not only are many of their names unknown in Ceylon, but their meaning is utterly unintelligible to the Veddahs themselves, among whom they were family designations which have descended to them from father to son for ages.

It is strange that so many have written of the Veddahs, and have been contented with information at once scanty and inaccurate. Davy believed that they had no names.* Tennent affirms that they have no charms—no "instinct of worship"—and doubts 114

* Davy, *Account of the Veddahs*, p. 115 of his work.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 if they have even any language. "Some," he says, "are so degraded that it has appeared doubtful whether they possess any language whatever; and not only is their dialect incomprehensible to a Singhalese, but even their communications with each other are made by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which bear little or no resemblance to distinct words or systematized language."* I can only say that I have been repeatedly among the very wildest of the race—indeed the "wretched outcasts," here so summarily deprived of the power of speech, are those whom I have been endeavouring to describe, and I never knew one of them at a loss for words sufficiently intelligible to convey his meaning, not to his fellows only, but to the Singhalese of the neighbourhood, who are all, more or less, acquainted with the Veddah patois.

775 The Veddahs have no idea of a future state of rewards and punishments; for the vague vestige of a belief in retributive justice, which I have before mentioned, cannot be said to show any faith in the punishment by a Superior Power of sinners in this world.

[681]

114 It has been most truly said that it is a matter of almost insuperable difficulty to arrive at a proper understanding of the creed of barbarous tribes through the medium of direct questioning, and that nothing can be more vague than all their statements on this most important subject.†

771 It is not to be wondered at that a people so barbarous as the Veddahs are—without literature of any kind—who have lived in the depth of the forests in almost complete seclusion for centuries on centuries, should be incapable themselves of giving any definite or intelligent account of what they do believe. They are unable to express in language their ideas on subjects, which, even in their own minds, have never assumed any distinct form; and though they are ready enough to answer the questions put to them, it is no easy task so to frame them as to make their object intelligible to such rude and unlettered savages. The result
776 of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than for evil. Still, vague as this belief is, not even the

* Tennent, vol. ii, pt. ix, c. iii, p. 441, 2nd ed. This is stated on the authority of "a gentleman who resided long in their vicinity, G. R. Mercer, Esq., of the Civil Service, who held office at Badulla." Those who remember that gentleman's love of a practical joke, will smile at seeing this "joke" gravely recorded in the *Physical, Historical, and Topographical Account of the Island of Ceylon*, by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, K.C.S., LL.D., etc.; and my able predecessor, Mr. Mercer, must have been as much amused at seeing it there, as any one else.

† See Hodgson's "Brief Note on Indian Ethnology," Bengal Asiatic Society's *Journal*, March 1849.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

bours' language, customs, and manner of life. In a few of the remoter forest fastnesses of the interior there are still to be found more or less pure-blooded Veddas who continue to support life by the precarious *chena* cultivation and by hunting: but in addition to these pure-blooded Veddas, who are a very feeble folk indeed in point of numbers, the inhabitants of many of what are generally recognized as Sinhalese villages, and the so-called "coast Veddas," who have their settlements in a few places along the eastern coast to the north of Batticaloa, are to a greater or less extent of Vedda origin. The Veddas as a race have been visited and described by C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann [1] and more recently by Dr. R. L. Spittel [2] of Colombo. Of the coast Veddas the Seligmanns say,—"although these coast Veddas, or Verdas as they call themselves, have intermarried with the Tamils and have adopted many Tamil customs, they still have remains of the old clan system of the Veddas, and although they usually speak Tamil, the majority of them say they have a language of their own which they consider to be the old Vedda language, and which was found to be Sinhalese. They have roughly-built temples, and we were told independently in two settlements that the chief agency worshipped was called Kapalpe or Kabalpe, *i.e.*, "ship spirit." At first we feared some misunderstanding, but when one of us was shown within one of their temples, into which after some trouble he was allowed to penetrate, a small model of a ship partly square rigged was seen, and it was stated that at a special ceremony this was hoisted to the top of a pole some thirty feet tall which stood outside the temple." [3] The ceremony to be described in what follows appears to be in fact that conducted for the propitiation of this "ship spirit" and of the goddess Ammal, and, if so, it is that which the Seligmanns saw rehearsed, in part at any rate, at Vakarai.[4] The description, therefore, imperfect and perhaps inaccurate in some details as it may be, being

[1] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *The Veddas*. See also *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 155 *et seq.*

[2] R. L. Spittel, *Wild Ceylon*.

[3] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 156, 157.

[4] *The Veddas*, pp. 335-9.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 796 guidance I touched the flowers in acknowledgement. After this the rice which had meanwhile been cooked in the enclosure in front of the shrine was offered to the goddess at the shrine, and the enclosure itself was removed.

The offering of the rice appeared to mark the conclusion of the first stage of the ceremony, for it was followed by a procession of those who were to take part in the subsequent dancing,—apparently accompanied by the image of the goddess,—out of the clearing and, as I was informed, down to the river about half a mile away for the sacred bath.

Time dragged by. The moonlight flooded the clearing, showing the ranks of the spectators sitting in their places with oriental patience and talking in undertones. At last the procession of dancers re-entered the clearing and advanced to the open space in front of the shrine. Here a ritual was gone through which seemed to be intended to induce in the dancers a state of "possession," [7] and after the performance of this ritual the dances began.

First of all two principal dancers, wearing what were evidently ceremonial jackets of red cloth, took, each of them, in one hand one of the wooden swords previously mentioned and in the other [535] a bunch of leaves, and went in and out among the people with a queer shuffling step and a curious rhythmic brandishing of the swords and leaves. Once or twice the leader stopped, and laying his sword upon the head of some person in the crowd began to [787] prophesy.[8] One prophecy, as interpreted to me by the Chief Headman, concerned the outbreak of cholera, and was in the form

[7] The Seligmanns, on pp. 134-5 of *The Veddas*, discuss at some length the nature of "possession" in the Vedda ritual dances.

[8] My impression at the time was that in uttering these prophecies the [114 197] leader of the dance used the Vedda language. Certainly the language used did not appear to me to be either Sinhalese or Tamil. It is true that the Seligmanns say, in the passage quoted in the text, that the "old Vedda language" as spoken by the coast Veddas was found to be Sinhalese; but (i) it seems at least possible that the Vedda language may remain to some extent in ritual use among them; and (ii) I am inclined to think that in the ceremony here described the invocation of Rahu Yaku, described by the Seligmanns on pp. 254-9 of *The Veddas*, was combined with the worship of Amsal and Kapalpa, described by

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a prophecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *choregos*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wach! wach! wach!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announcement was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[9]

them on pp. 335-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were not coast Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one of some interest; but as, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[9] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

2. VEDDAS OF GUNNER'S QUOIN

THE ferry at Periathurai marked the end of our river journey. Some miles inland was the rock called Gunner's Quoin round which Veddas lived. 131

Under a bo-tree by the river was an image of Ganesha the pot bellied, elephant-headed Hindoo god with offerings of withered lotus flowers before him. In a temple hard by, were massive bells and drums that kept deafening accompaniment on many a ceremonial day when peacock-plumed men, in the self-imposed torture of skewered cheek and pronged back, bounded hither and thither in delirious dance; and here were the implements, prongs and tridents, these frenzied devotees had dedicated to their unhearing god.

At the Tamil village of Manampitiya we were regaled with an old man's tales of the Veddas. He told us of one Patabanda only recently dead, called *walige**-Patabanda owing to his habit of wearing his loin cloth long behind. It appeared this Vedda was a fine marksman. A *ratamahatmaya*† once wishing to test his skill pointed to a small jak fruit on a tall tree and asked him to shoot. The arrow flew true and stuck in the fruit; whereupon the Vedda feigning anger said roughly, "Now give me my arrow; it was you who asked me to shoot". The timid chief proffered money which was disdainfully refused. The Vedda then taking another arrow hit the stem of the fruit so that it fell and enabled him to recover both arrow and fruit. Thus do men pass into fable. 114 173

We were told many another tale of Veddas and their ways, and of matters connected with the ancient ruins to be found on the rock; of an anchorite who had lived in a cave there unharmed by the bears; and of ancient Vedda kings captured by stratagem and fraud.

A walk of five miles the next morning brought us to the foot of Gunner's Quoin. I was now brimming with expectancy; for I was about to see for the first time the Veddas in their homes; that aboriginal people who had time and again attracted the scholars of Europe, and in whose veins flowed the oldest blood of the inhabitants of Ceylon. They were here when Wijeya came from India in 543 B.C. and founded the Sinhalese dynasty; long earlier, when that Buddha came who preached to his followers at Mahiyangana after having put to flight the Yakkhas (Veddas?); to an even still older beginning their ancestry went, to a time in the stone age when man vied for existence with prehistoric forms. 114

To-day hardly a Vedda true to the old traditions survives; not one that uses beaten bark for apparel, or depends for sustenance solely on the jungle. The inroads of civilisation and the effects of miscegenation with the neighbouring Sinhalese or Tamils are tending surely towards the extinction of the race. Yet, for all that, many of the old Vedda traits still survive in their degenerate descendants and these are still a link with an unfathomable past. 144 178

*Tail †Kandyan chief

[p. 7]

CHAPTER II

THE VEDDAS OF HENEBEDDE

I. NUWARAGALA AND BEYOND

Talk not of temples, there is one
Built without hands, to mankind given;
Its lamps are the meridian sun
And all the stars of heaven,
Its walls are the cerulean sky,
Its floor the earth so green and fair,
The dome its vast immensity;
All Nature worships there.

VEDDER

FOR months we had nursed the prospect of a ramble in the Vedda country. Professor Seligmann, writing some nine years previously of the parts we hoped to visit, had said: 114

"We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgalla but among the Nuwaragala hills.....After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sittala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to have a surplus to barter with the Moormen or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, pots and occasional rice and coconuts."*

Thus it was that the Nuwaragala and Sittala Wanniya terrain came to be the object of our search. But reaching Maha Oya we received a rude awakening at the outset. We were questioning our guides regarding the route when to our surprise they told us that no Veddas now remained in Sittala Wanniya; that some few who had been at Galmede had either [131] died or gone eastward: and that, not certainly for two generations had Veddas been known to inhabit the Nuwaragala caves. To see Veddas, they said, we would have to go to Henebedde and Danigala, places within easier access of Bibile farther south. We had no choice but to change our plans and commit ourselves to the larger undertaking of working down through Henebedde to the high road at Bibile, after a journey of some sixty miles through the forest.

The jungle is as a home to some; they are never so happy as when they are amidst its delight and mystery. The bird songs, the sun glimmering

*The Veddas by C. G. and B. Z. Seligman [p. 11]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

were loath to purchase their intimacy with gifts. Time enough for that, when we had won them over by less humiliating means. Besides, these Veddas were evidently spoilt, and we wished to show them they were not the important personages they imagined themselves to be. 123

"We are going then," said Handuna. It was now our turn for dejection. Was it for such an ungracious issue we had travelled so far?

I had a last card, having brought some neosalvarsan, a sovereign remedy for yaws so rife among these people. The offer was received with indifference. There was only one case among them, they said, and the patient was too ill to come. This being just what we wanted, I offered to visit them the next morning. [164]

"You cannot come where we live unless we allow you," said the irrepressible Kaira. "And we won't show you our caves or anything, unless you give us presents."

Sick with exasperation and disgust at the behaviour of these impossible children, I told them they could take our offer or leave it as they chose, and turned to other work. The result was a grudging acquiescence; and, leaving a guide behind, they went away.

A word of explanation regarding the sophistication of a people so remote. They were in fact about the purest-blooded Veddas extant; indeed, it was to this very circumstance they owed their disappointing behaviour; for it had attracted Seligamann among them. What that implied may well be imagined. To obtain the valuable sociological information with which his book abounds, he had gained the confidence of these folk with scrupulous consideration and kindness, showering on them gifts of all kinds. Moreover, the patient investigation of the most intimate details of their lives by such a man, heightened their self-esteem. Of this we had an amusing illustration. I was obliged to admonish a group of Sinhalese that embarrassed us with their attentions. A Vedda sidled up and, tapping me familiarly on the shoulder, whispered, "Those people don't like us, they are jealous of us. We and you gentlemen are one; they are different!" 156 114 [186]

To dismiss these Veddas as spoilt uninteresting folk would imply failure to discern their innate simplicity, beneath the veneer of pose and importunity, for which contact with an indulgent stranger had been responsible. In their homes they still are as artless as their forbears were before ever white man set foot on these shores.

We were out hunting early that afternoon, when a sudden snapping sound arrested our attention. The Vedda we were with listened a few seconds. "Catching *talagoyas*," (monitor-lizards), he said laconically. The excited barking of a dog and rebuking human voices soon confirmed his conjecture. Going up, we found two men, one of whom carried a large quivering monitor just killed; while two dogs, still spirited with the chase, danced round their victim and growled and snapped at us. One of the men now set about to disjoint the quarry's tail at the middle, leaving it connected only by a tag of sinew; then, slitting the submandibular web, he rove the tail through till it locked at the division, making the reptile eat its own tail as it were, and carried it neatly in a loop. The monitor is best hunted at high noon; after four in the afternoon it takes to trees and holes. 224 231

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

on serener days, it flamed through the Island making it its permanent home, while in India, the land of its birth, it dwindled away.

We had undertaken this trip with the object of visiting Meminigallagolla where we learned the wildest Veddas of the Eastern province lived; but on coming to Omuna we found that that place, only twelve miles away, was quite unknown to the present folk of Omuna, a pathless barrier of dense jungle intervening. We made the best of a bad job; and, abandoning our original project, struck west for Dolagalwella.

At evening we camped by a desolate pool called *Havan-kapane-mulle* (rush-cutting nook). There is barely a spot in these jungles, however lone, that has not its name, thanks to the nomadic Veddas. Here was a glade in which they hunted, or a pool at which they drank, there a hole in which an axe was found (*Poro-thutu-walle*).

The only indications of the track we followed were the barely recognisable prunings, fifteen years old, of saplings. The forest was ideal for travel; in the shelter of the great trees the morning air was cool and refreshing. Coming to the Maduru Oya we walked a mile up-stream and climbed the mimosa-covered bank, soon to be lost in a wilderness of trees. A leader monkey yelled a warning to his clan, a surprised sambur belled startlingly close; but after that a silence prevailed unbroken by the song of a single bird. We spent the night by a rocky streamlet close-hugged by dense forest walls. Heavy clouds crept over us to the rumblings of thunder. The blurred crescent of the moon struggled for freedom. Our campfires crackled in the ghostly gloom, and quiet human voices pervaded the forest's deadly stillness save for the melody of the trickling water.

> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

Deserted Mahaella marked the limit of our westward journey. Here we struck at right angles the northern track to Yakkure, but, before taking it, deviated south to the village of Dolagalwella. For three days we had followed uncertain game trails, and seen no human beings besides those of our company. The path now began to show signs of use: there were chipped trees, polished stones on which axes had been whetted, and fire-places where monitors were roasted. Obviously we were hearing civilisation! Indeed, here it was.

Scaling a strong stockade we found ourselves in a *chena*, some twelve acres in extent, in which nestled the half dozen huts of the closely related families of a Vedda patriarchy. The maize and *kurrukkan* crops had been taken, and the place was now rank with a catch-crop of vegetables and fruit: beans, brinjals, melons, cassava, plantains and papaws. Chillies luxuriated; there was not a compound but had its vermilion heap, not a hut but had a section partitioned off with frame and fire-place for drying them during the rains; chillies were the current coin with which these folk traded with the pedlar Moors.

The males of the settlement were away in quest of food, and only the women and children remained. No folk on earth, perhaps, are shier than Vedda women; in the presence of the stranger they are dumb. Some of them were relatively fair-complexioned, presumably from Kandyan admixture; all wore an abundance of bead ornaments, finger

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

He left the group and seated himself before me—a sinewy, handsome, bearded man of perhaps forty. 115

"Those Veddas," he said contemplatively, when I told him how we stood; "who can say where they are? In one cave to-day, in a another to-morrow. They said they came from Dhik-galge, did they? But you can never take a Vedda's word for that. If they are not there—what then? All our trouble will be in vain. I cannot say I know the caves in those hills very well. I have only been among them once, and that many years ago, when I took my wife from her people. She and I wandered about there. How well she knew the trails, she who had trodden them but once as a little child; for her home, like mine, was elsewhere. I would see a track and point to it saying, 'This must be the way to the cave.' 'No,' she would say 'that leads to the wilderness; there should be a path by that tree yonder'; and she would always be right. I remember well the *hong* tree by the Alu-galge; I shot two monkeys and we ate them there." And so his thoughts rambled amid honey-moon scenes he loved to recall.

But, as this meandering led nowhere, I offered a reward of five rupees to anyone who would show me the Veddas in their caves on the morrow, and took to bed. For long I lay pondering what manner of man was the Chetty who could live in this wilderness with a Vedda women for wife. He seemed to know intimately every Vedda in the district, and had sometimes even shared their caves. He remained an enigma, as also that smile of his, no more than a mere display of the teeth, which imbued the knit, pathetic cast of his features with an expression whether of saintliness or villainy, it was hard to tell. Ostensibly he was here to rear cattle; but why come so far for that?

The next morning, accompanied by Meenemaruwa, the Chetty and a half-Vedda of Galmede, we set out on our quest. The plan was this; we were to travel to a spot where a certain stream crossed the path: there we would probably find foot-prints; if these led to the hills we would follow, if in the opposite direction, pursuit would be useless, as that would imply that the Veddas had returned to their homes in Bingoda fifteen miles away; for at this season the Veddas did not live in their caves, and the party we were in search of must have come on a few days hunting. I now understood the reticence of these people to take me on what might prove a wild goose chase; and learnt, what was more important, that the Veddas of Galmede were the Veddas of Bingoda. 114

We came to the stream; the foot-prints were there. Our guides bent down eagerly examining them. "This is Suthubanda's," they said "and this Badapissa's; this other is a woman's; no, it's a boy's." The tracks pointed towards the hills! The chase began.

Meenemaruwa led, for he alone could decipher that trail, three days old, on the hard dry ground. Once we left the stream there was apparently not the faintest indication of a foot-mark; but our guide moved rapidly along, and soon involved us in an enforested labyrinth of hills. Very occasionally a broken twig would furnish a clue. Indicating one of these Meenemaruwa said, "Now, that would never have been done had old Handuna been alive. 'Hu,' he would have said, slapping the errant one, 'do you want to show everybody the way to our caves; then where would we go if people came after us?' To the rock, the cave and the hive there must be no clue; that is the Vedda law. 114 B60 487

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 342 114 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aratchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 224 482 142 609 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

600 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VI

VEDDAS OF BINGODA

I. BINGODA HOMES

Innumerable years had flown,
Since first the chisel in her hand
Necessity, the sculptor, took,
And in her spacious meaning planned
These forms, and that eternal look.

L. BINYON

197 CONCEDE me three points and I shall attempt to show that there exist
[101] in Ceylon to-day Veddas worthy of the name. Language, apparel and weapons are the concessions I ask.

Let us begin by confessing, that the Veddas we shall tell of have no pure language of their own, but merely a patois, in which Sinhalese words predominate and Vedda words are few ; their clothing is not the traditional
291 leaf or threshed *riti* bark, but fragments of foul rag affording, if anything, less cover ; the weapons they favour are guns (of a type almost as
411 dangerous to user as to quarry) and not bows and arrows which they employ only in sore necessity.

Vital issues, you will say, which should deprive this people of their name. But language, dress and arms may change without materially altering, for a time at least, ancient customs and primeval instincts.

101 The word Vedda originally meant hunter ; and a people supreme in jungle-craft, always capable of gleaning from the unfriendly forests a sufficiency for their needs and utterly incompetent to husband even the primitive agriculture of the *chena*, has surely a claim to the name.

224 It must not be supposed that every Vedda possesses a gun ; far from it ;
[411] occasionally there may be a single weapon to a whole clan. The usual thing is for the Sinhalese or Moors to lend their guns to these superb
[427] trackers, who never waste a shot and seldom return without their quarry, a large share of which goes by agreement to the owner of the gun.

114 Of my first accidental meeting with these Veddas amid the hills of Galmede, I have already told. Barely four months had elapsed before I found myself renewing their acquaintance ; this time with set purpose.

Arriving at the forest village of Mullegama, sacred to Buddhists, and abounding in lime groves and Moors, I was fortunate enough to run up against my friend Kaurala of Kottelinde, who, so difficult of acquisition before, now became our willing guide.

131 Bingoda, the home of our Veddas, is some three miles from Mullegama, and lies on the Dhungolla Oya, a tributary of the Magalavatan Aar which connects Bingoda with Galmede, ten miles away—all in the circuit of

18: Kleiweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia OB1
Prehistoric Philippines OA3
Vedda AX5
000
PP
142
144

found in Philippine caves. This particular /106/ skull seems to indicate a race of people of short stature, sub-brachycephalic, with receding forehead, an arcus supraorbitals which protrudes only slightly; a very prognathous and also very platyrrhine race. Sanchez believes that this race preceded the present Negrito groups.

However, it appears to me that this conclusion is very premature, based as it is on only one skull of which one does not even know its correct age. (1)

1. D. Sanchez y Sanchez, "Un cráneo humano préhistorico de Manilla /A Prehistoric Human Skull of Manila/," Memorias de la Real Soc. española de Historia Natural, Vol. XI, 1921.

Another racial element of the Indonesian Archipelago is the Vedda type, which probably arrived there later than the Negritos and which has become known mainly by the explorations of the Sarasins, Rudolph Martin, and Skeat and Blagden.

Paul and Fritz Sarasin have made a careful study of the Vedda tribes of the island of Ceylon. In their excellent book Die Weddas von Ceylon und die sie umgebenden Völkerschaften (Wiesbaden, 1892 and 1893), one can find a very extensive description of those tribes, both from an ethnographical and anthropological angle. The Veddas of Ceylon are a very rare racial element /107/ who lived in the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER II

PRESENT CONDITION OF THE VEDDAS

WE propose to treat the Veddas under three headings :— 101

(i) Veddas.
(ii) Village Veddas.
(iii) Coast Veddas.

Although it may not be easy in every case to say into which group a given person falls, and although the proposed classification rests on no natural or known physical basis, it seems that at the present day the Veddas fall into these three groups characterised by different sociological features. The term "Rock" or "Jungle" Vedda will be avoided; it has been applied by some authors to the wilder specimens of that class which we propose to call simply Veddas.

The coast Veddas are briefly described in Chapter XII.; they live in scattered villages on the east coast and are chiefly to be found north of Batticaloa. They have much Tamil blood [563] in their veins, and though often taller than pure Veddas, some still retain an appearance which suggests their Vedda origin. This is far more marked in the males than in the females, and it appeared to us that any of the latter might have been local Tamils, whereas some of the men clearly differed from the surrounding population.

Before giving an account of the present condition of the different Vedda communities, we propose to give the substance of a number of conversations with a remarkable old Kandyan who in his boyhood, youth and manhood was closely associated with the Veddas of the Eastern Province, and whose memory certainly goes back for 80 or 90 years. In order to make his 115

[p. 29]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

account intelligible we must anticipate certain later chapters to the extent of defining the terms *warige* and *yaka*, that is we must refer briefly to the essential features of the Vedda social system and religion.

Every Vedda belongs to a *warige* or clan, as the term may be translated, and among a large number of the Vedda communities still existing, exogamy is the absolute rule. Further, with exogamy is associated descent in the maternal line, so that the fundamentals of the social system of the Veddas may, perhaps, be summed up as a clan organization with female descent. There is no evidence, as far as we can determine, of any dual organization of the clans, but perhaps they had originally a territorial distribution. Ignoring for a moment such debatable matters, the Vedda clans are:—

(1) Morane *warige*.
(2) Unapane *warige*.
(3) Namadewa or Nabedan *warige*.
(4) Aembela *warige*.
(5) Uru *warige*.
(6) Tala *warige*.
(7) A number of other so-called *warige* of minor strength and importance, which perhaps may be local groups that have forgotten their origin and have assumed a name (sometimes obviously a place-name) as a convenience.

Turning now to the Vedda religion the word *yaka* (feminine *yakini*, plural *yaku*) is used to denote the spirits of the dead, and since the Vedda religion is essentially a cult of the dead, it is not surprising that the propitiation of the spirits of dead relatives, called the Nae Yaku, is at once its most obvious and important feature. With this is associated the cult of the spirits of certain long dead Veddas who may be regarded as legendary heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka, the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya, a celebrated hunter who lived many generations ago and whose assistance is invoked for good hunting. Kande Yaka especially helps in the tracking of sambur and spotted deer, and with him is often associated Bilindi Yaka, the *yaka* of his younger brother Bilindi. When a deer has been killed the head is set aside, and with rice and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

coconut milk (when procurable) dedicated to Kande Yaka, after which it is eaten with the rice. An essentially similar ceremony often spoken of by the same name (*kirikeruha*), but in which no meat is offered, is held after a death in order to propitiate the spirit of the dead man. The majority of Veddas believe that the Nae Yaku go to Kande Yaka, and become in some sense his attendants, and Kande Yaka, sometimes accompanied by Bilindi Yaka, is generally invoked at the beginning of the Nae Yaku ceremony. It was stated more than once that the Nae Yaku could not come to the offering unless accompanied by Kande Yaka, who was even spoken of as bringing the Nae Yaku. Some of our informants also said that the spirit of the deceased resorted to Kande Yaka and obtained his permission to accept offerings from his living relatives, in return for which the Nae Yaka would assist or injure them according to their behaviour, so that Kande Yaka, besides being of the greatest assistance in hunting, has also become the Lord of the Dead. 769

The Kandyan already mentioned, whose full title is Karagahavella Adenayaka Mudiyanselage Tissahami, visited us at Bandaraduwa; he lived at Bakiyella some ten miles from our camp. Mr Bibile, who was distantly related to the old man, told us that he must be nearly a hundred years old, since he had been brought to the wild country of the Eastern Province by his mother during the rebellion of 1818, his father having fallen in the fighting. His hair, of which he retained a fair quantity, was absolutely white and worn short, his complexion was pale with age, he had a slight unilateral facial paralysis and he walked with the aid of a stick, his back being bowed and both knees somewhat flexed; but he was withal an extraordinarily active old man, extremely intelligent and with an excellent memory, the play of the muscles of his face showing how well he realised the import of the questions addressed to him and how much they interested him. Further, his frank replies when he did not understand a question and the emphatic manner in which he delivered his answers carried conviction of the value of his evidence, and we believe that no one who listened to the old man would have considered him other than a good witness. 115 145

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of these days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps 226 were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 278 water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *nahapata*, *pusulpata* (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kuhuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AKS Vedda AKS

badly off and in varying conditions of ill health and malnutrition, 511
there is abundant evidence that only a generation back these communities were composed of a large number of families who, although they made chenas, led a healthy hunting life for a great part of the year. Plate XI, figure 2, represents some men and children of the Bandaraduwa chena settlement; from 144
this photograph it is evident that in spite of their prosperity even twenty-five years ago, there must have been much miscegenation, and the appearance of a couple of old grey-headed men alleged Veddas whom we saw in this neighbourhood certainly suggested that they possessed only a fraction of Vedda blood[1].

The following account of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas as they 115
existed some 20 or 25 years ago was given us by Tissahami, Arachi[2] of Potuliyadde, a man who on account of his long association with Veddas is often spoken of as the Vedda Arachi. This man though presenting the appearance of a typical Kandyan Sinhalese has Vedda blood in his veins, for his ancestors were [144] Veddas of Moranegala in the Eastern Province, his great grandfather being a Vedda shaman who settled at Damenegama in Uva Province. Although this man's descendants intermarried with the local Sinhalese (who are themselves in part the descendants of Veddas) and adopted the Sinhalese mode of life, one man at least in each generation continued to act as shaman (S. *kapurale*), and the father of the Arachi was a devil dancer and *wederale* (native doctor) of some note. This man's son, the Arachi, now a man of between 40 and 50, exerts a great deal of influence over the peasants in his neighbourhood, who all recognise that he is in more or less constant communication with the spirits, to which fact his neighbours attribute much of his success. In this manner was explained the quickness with which he recently learnt blacksmith's work. We had not heard of his re-

[1] Some of the "Veddas" living in the neighbourhood of Bandaradawa and the sea are comparatively tall, stoutly built men with no appearance of Vedda ancestry. Two men from Uhene in Nadahada Patta measured 65 and 65½ inches respectively. Two men, who looked like Tamils but called themselves Veddas, lived on big Sinhalese chenas at Kotelinda; one of them said that his wife's parents had belonged to the Galmodi group.

[2] *Arachi* is the title applied to the headman of a Sinhalese village settlement.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

●115 putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason
161 to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this
221 time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led
621 a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakkan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

222 Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and
411 arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted
423 of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to
621 the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walinbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

614 The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *warugu*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states
197 that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil
178 tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirakodoi*, "nothing," is said

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 439 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 141 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 mm. (60½ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 mm. (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 609 576 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

166 115 Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very 651 poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

[Lexicum; see p. xx.—Analyst]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

his movements, he nevertheless does not retain any clear recollection of what he says, and only a general idea of the movements he has performed. Although there is doubtless a certain element of humbug about some of the performances, we believe that this is only intentional among the tamer Veddas accustomed to show off before visitors, and that among the less sophisticated Veddas the singing and movements of the dance soon produce a more or less automatic condition, in which the mind of the shaman, being dominated by his belief in the reality of the *yaku*, and of his coming possession, really acts without being in a condition of complete volitional consciousness. Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that although they never entirely lost consciousness, they nearly did so at times, and that they never fully appreciated what they said when possessed, while at both the beginning and end of possession they experienced a sensation of nausea and vertigo and the ground seemed to rock and sway beneath their feet.

Some men, including Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, whom we consider one of the most trustworthy of our informants, said that they were aware that they shivered and trembled when they became possessed, and Handuna heard booming noises in his ears as the spirit left him and full consciousness returned. He said this usually happened after he had ceased to dance. We could not hear of any shaman who saw visions while possessed or experienced any olfactory or visual hallucinations before, during, or after possession. The Veddas recognise that women may become possessed, but we only saw one instance of (alleged) possession in a woman, which occurred at a rehearsal of a dance got up for our benefit on our first visit to Bendiyagalge, during which we are confident that none of the dancers were really possessed. Although we did not see the beginning of this woman's seizure we have little doubt that there was a large element of conscious deception in her actions, for when we became aware of her she was sitting bolt upright with her eyes shut and the lids quivering, apparently from the muscular effort of keeping them tightly closed, while opposite her was Tissahami the Vedda Arachi muttering spells over a coconut shell half full of water with which he dabbed her eyes and face.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

755 the offering is placed. The dance is held at night and continues until morning when the whole community eat the offering, though only the men dance. We were shown a pot in a small cave near the settlement which was said to be kept there purposely, and which it was stated was used for boiling rice for the ceremony.

771 170 We may now consider the religious beliefs of certain communities in which the third stratum of belief already alluded to is dominant. Such communities are the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne and those of the Eastern Province and Tamankaduwa, among all of whom the *Nat Yaku* were known and reverenced, but the great Vedda heroes have all disappeared, their place having been taken by numerous Sinhalese gods and demons. Some of the village Veddas even build temples, rough bark or [346] mud huts like their own habitations in which the various symbols of the *devejo* and *yaku* are kept and in which the shamas dances.

Such a temple was seen at Yakure dedicated to Gange Bandar Deyo, here also were two rough stones leaning against [348] a tree on the *bund* of Yakurewaewa which were held sacred to Gane Deyo (Ganesa).

At a place called Nadena, where there were said to be Veddas until a few years ago, on the road running inland from Patrippu in the Eastern Province, there is a temple containing an image of Ganesa and this is looked upon as a Vedda shrine. Other temples or shrines in the Eastern Province are traditionally associated with Veddas though none survive at the present day, except, we believe, at Portiv near Patrippu and at Mandur.

Village Veddas of the Bintenne.

775 115 At Dambani and the neighbouring settlements of Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the *Nat Yaku* are held to be of great importance. Reference has already been made on p. 50 to the difficulty of working with these village Veddas, and our information concerning the religious beliefs of the Dambani folk was obtained from the Arachi of Belligala; with regard to Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the little information we possess was obtained at first hand and carefully checked, and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

though incomplete we have no doubt of its substantial accuracy as far as it goes. We had considerable doubts as to the reliability of our Dambani information, but these have been removed lately as far as they affect Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* owing to the kindness of Mr Hartshorne who allowed us to look through a number of notes collected among these people thirty years ago. And since the information obtained from the Arachi of Belligala was correct on these points, there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the rest of his information.

According to the Arachi, who, it must be remembered, as stated on p. 49, knows the Dambani folk well, there are three important classes of *yaku*.

The first of these are the *Nae Yaku* who do not go to Kande Yaka but to Indigollae Yaka, who lives on a hill (*kande*) called Indigollae Kande which never has been seen. Indigollae Yaka is first invoked at the *Nae Yaku* ceremony and with him come the *Nae Yaku*. An *aude* is used in calling upon Indigollae Yaka in this ceremony, while the *Nae Yaku* are invoked by means of a cloth and beads; as among other Veddas an offering of food is made.

We could not discover with certainty at Dambani what was the relative importance of the *Nae Yaku* and the two other classes of *yaka*, but at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle our informants made it quite clear that the *yaku* of recent ancestors were the most important. Thus Kuma stated that he considered his father's *yaka* to be the most important of all and that this spirit was invoked alike to send game and in thanks for game killed.

Bandia of Wellampelle said the most important *yaka* he knew was Punchi Badena, his father's father; his mother is dead but her *yaka* is not so important[1]. Punchi Badena is invoked to get game and honey or when people are sick. At all three villages a structure, which from the description given to us resembles an *alutyakagama*, is built for the invocation of the *Nae Yaku*, to whom the customary offerings are made before

[1] We have no note that the father of Kuma was dead; although we do not remember definitely inquiring about this our impression is that both parents had been dead for some time.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[563] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

5: Spittel II-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

115 On our return journey, passing the ruins of a remarkable aqueduct
173 of stone—the Watawala Kandiya—beside the remains of a crumbling
439 bund, we arrived at Kurunduwina where we met a doddering ancient who claimed to have been alive when the British took Ceylon a hundred years ago. It is not often one meets old folk in these unhealthy lands. Here, I thought, was one who could tell us something about Veddas of a type we could not hope to see; for within view of his hut were the Sittala Wanniya hills, the immemorial homes of the Veddas. But his decrepit mind needed much jogging.

"Are there Veddas here?" I shouted twice into his deaf old ears.

"Now none," he said.

"Did they live on the rocks yonder?" I asked. He nodded affirmatively.

"Did they come here to barter?" I persisted. His tired lack-lustre eyes flashed to a memory as he answered with surprising alacrity, "Yes they came. When they had no food they came to exchange honey and hides for food. The Vedda would sit there, place his bow there, his arrows there, and his axe there, and he would ask for betel. If any one stepped over his weapons by chance, he would leap up in anger, bite the piece of human liver he carried in his betel-bag, and ask, 'Who's this that dares to defy me?' The gleam faded from the old man's eye, his weary look returned and he uttered not another word, question as I might.

The shifting *chenas* scattered about these parts make it very difficult to say where a village begins or ends. We were resting on the banks of the Rambukkan, (a course parallel to which we had so far followed) somewhere on the confines of Payile and Idambowa, when to our surprise we saw a Buddhist priest accompanied by the inevitable *abithaya** and a tall, wild, naked fellow. A Vedda of Bingoda the latter was said to be.
[609] We tried to engage him in talk, but he would have none of it; seated on his haunches he stared at us with a hang-dog apathy eloquent of hunger; this melted away in a broad grin as he left us, greedily chewing the handful of muscatels and biscuits we gave him.

The usual route from here to Potuliyadda lay through the village of Mullagama. As this involved a detour we decided on a more direct if less used track; a decision we afterwards regretted as it lost us the interesting Veddas of Bingoda, and incidentally a clue to the discrepancy between Seligmann's statement and local report regarding the Veddas of the "Nuwaragala hills"—a missed opportunity the full significance of which we were only to realise some five years later after miles of
[621] arduous and unnecessary travel. For the present we were told that the Veddas of Bingoda consisted of only three families, and that, though they forsook their huts for caves during the honey season, they were, if anything, less of the real Vedda than those of Henebedde.

Our journey was now an uncertainty; for the guides were doubtful both of the route and the likelihood of water. The jungle, hitherto dense, gave place to an occasional glade. Late in the evening we found ourselves in a spacious *talawa*, rank with tall grass that quite obliterated our path. Here we were benighted, just as we found a pool adequate to our needs. It was an interesting place, a veritable sanctuary, hill-encircled; an ideal

*A neophyte, attendant on a priest.

3. THE MARAWEETHIYA

Far or forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear
And one to me are shame and fame.

EMERSON

13 FROM Yakkure to Horiwila is six miles. The first part of the journey is through marsh; here the Mahaweli make a bend which all but encroaches on the path. The place is rank with vegetation. Tall grass thrives amidst sombre trees that stand apart, clothed out of all recognition in stoles of trailing mycania. The air is humid and oppressively still. One is glad to be rid of the swampy luxuriance with its strong suggestion of malaria.

Beyond a pleasant stretch of paddy, closer than we had ever seen it before, stood Gunner's Quoin. Tinkling cow-bells and the mournful cries of peafowl welcomed us to Horiwila.

361 144 The racial types we have passed, will repay review. Omuna, Dolagalwella and Kalukolu Eba were shifting *chena* settlements inhabited by Veddas with a large proportion of Sinhalese blood. Yakkure was a permanent village with the *chenas* apart; here the people called themselve Veddas but showed strong Tamil traits. The folk of Horiwila were not sure whether to call themselves Tamils or Veddas; while Manampitiya, beyond Horiwila, was a purely Tamil village. So does propinquity shape the type of Vedda, and forest penetration by the Sinhalese on the one hand and Tamils on the other, tend to obliterate the aboriginal race.

000 Decoyed by its beauty, we camped on a rock on the bund of the Horiwila tank, soon to learn that a stone exposed all day to the sun, was not the most desirable of camping places even at night. The stored heat radiating from the rock kept us awake till morning, and we rose quite unrefreshed for the good day's work before us, for to-day we would climb the Quoin, which, ever since we saw it across the marsh at Yakkure, beckoned us on. The Tamils of the place could only take us to the base of the hill; from there a Vedda of the Ulpotta must guide us. It was 115 quite an hour before we found him. I recognised him at once as Sinna an old friend; there were the bunions on his shoulder from carrying loads of lizards and yams, and there the hooked finger caused by a snake-bite [142 when plucking a *kanava* comb from a creviced tree. A dwarf, with 157] frizzly upstanding hair and wild eyes, and shy almost to timidity, Sinna had nothing of the sophisticated Vedda about him. He lived alone with [166] his small family at the end of the rock. The rest of his people had left when the *kurrukkan* crop failed: but Sinna remained to gather a precarious living from the scanty pickings of the field. We came on him searching for food in the forest.

The poor fellow was in great distress that morning, his favourite dog having been taken by a leopard the previous night. Hearing the animal's

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the *goa*-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Maraweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

13 causeway over an abysmal ravine. We had not the stomach to tempt those ways.

Below us stretched a vast forest studded with the tree-clad hills of Omuna, Henanagalla and many another; and over the red-topped *hongs* we caught the glimpse of the Mahaweli as it cleft the wilderness of trees.

173 To this retreat once came an ascetic who lived alone, lost in meditation, for months. His evening chant could be heard at Horiwila three miles away. The bears that came to drink at the pools in the caves did him no harm. In a hidden vault, so the story goes, he found a gold-lettered slab and a phial of oil. He made the wisdom of the script his own, and drank the oil; then descended the rock, and ever after went about as one obsessed.

115 Sinna's droll talk relieved the irksomeness of our descent. Indicating [301] a wild jasmine, he told us they were the flowers Vedda women strung on creeper-stems for the adornment of their hair. He was for leaving us at the foot of the hill and continuing his search for food for his waiting family. But we took him to camp, fed him abundantly on rice and venison and gave him a heavy hamper besides. It was pleasant to picture the rare joy of his home-coming.

000 At Manampitiya old Kanapan-*vidane* met us with two limes which he graciously presented to us. This charming Tamil custom is often the prelude to a villainous request. Kanapan gave us cordial welcome, eyed solicitously our unkempt figures, and chided us in a kindly, paternal way for undertaking so 'terrible' a journey. "Why wander in the wilderness when you can play about the highways in your car?" he said. His conversation, though varied kept reverting to one theme—the delinquencies of the village school-master, now away on a holiday. Kanapan had a penchant for denunciation; on a previous occasion it was the tyranny of an apothecary, now it concerned the amours of a pedagogue.

"Is that the sort of man to teach young children?" he concluded disgustedly. "A man who breaks up quiet homes. The woman does not even care for him; he bewitched her with charmed food. A respectable home wrecked by a worthless fellow!" and he spat with scorn.

Perhaps it was the full bottle of whisky standing tantalisingly on the table that induced him to confide in us that the village tavern had now been closed for over two years, during which time he had not touched a drink; he had almost forgotten the taste of liquor he said wistfully.

"Then you are a total abstainer now?" I ventured.

"What's to be done, sir, I have to be," he sighed.

"I suppose you wouldn't have a drink now if one were given you?" I asked.

"How can I refuse when a gentleman offers," said he, taking the wind out of my sails. "With your favour, sir, I will. Cha," he continued with sudden affection, "I feared you had been to the war and got killed. How glad I am to see you again, sir."

We poured him a bumper which he swallowed neat, placing the empty cup within easy reach beside him. He reverted to the school-master;

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

some unfortunate who had trodden on a wriggling thing. We learnt too late that we had over-shot the game *talawas* of Wavinna by four miles. There was nothing for it, but to plough back through the mud at five the following morning, and to return at ten with a fine buck greatly to the joy of our dispirited company.

Veddas were my quest. Wherever I went, whomever I met, my one question was, "Are there any Veddas hereabout?" So far I had no luck.

A tall slouching man, obliging to obsequiousness, was the *aratchi* of Paragahakelle. He it was who first told me, as he escorted us the next morning, that good Veddas were to be found up north at Galmede. Years ago an illness took him there in search of a famous *vedarala** who one day said to him, "Let us go and see the Veddas." He found them in caves, clothed in leaf and beaten bark, grinding *kurrukhan* and maize with fragments of stone. They stank superbly, and averred that if they poured water on their heads they would surely die. But that was twenty years ago. Would we find them so to-day? The Veddas of Galmede became an obsession and a hope.

Reaching Hinimidurawa that evening the *aratchi* also told us that across the field were people who called themselves Veddas. Even as he spoke one of these joined us. Shifting his gaze from our guns to the fresh spoor of an elephant, he said, "That brute will certainly kill us one day; we cannot escape him. All last night he had me up that tree in the *chena*. A few weeks ago he pulled down one of our huts killing a man and his son." He suggested we might hunt the beast.

"Where is he now?" I asked.

"I drove him that way last night," he said, indicating the direction of our proposed camp. This was not reassuring; the ravages of the animal were in evidence everywhere.

We settled down for the night by a stream that intersected the path. Large fires were lit and the men asked leave to sing, for it was not safe to be voiceless in the feeding grounds of so notorious a 'rogue'. Even as the forest echoed to lewd snatches, we heard the challenge. Having arranged for an all-night watch we were soon asleep. I was roused at midnight by a blowing sound quite close to me. The fires had died out and no one was awake! Groping in the dark I tugged at the first human leg I touched, but it was quite a while before its owner awoke, yawned—and grasped the situation. Then for ten minutes the forest rang to an uproar that might have scared a demon. The next morning, traces in the sand revealed the story. Lying as we were full in the path of the elephant, it had come to within ten yards of us on its nightly visit to the *chena*; then, suddenly changing its mind, it had turned away. It was well I woke when I did.

Heenbanda, a Vedda of Hinimidurawa, illustrated, from personal experience, the potency of a charm he gave us: Coming suddenly on a she-bear with cubs, he had shouted his charm as she rushed at him. The animal was hurled back, spread-eagled, as if struck. Recovering, she advanced again, and this time clasped the unfortunate man by the neck with her fore legs, while with her hind paws she ripped his abdomen; marks of which encounter he still carried. Heenbanda's brother who

*Native physician.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

triangle bounded on the south by the Gal Oya: on the west by the Bibile-Batticaloa road: and on the east by the coast road. Within this space are found the Veddas of Danigala, Henebedda and Bingoda, besides the few about Kotelinda, Divulana and Serangamadu. If to this tract were added that to the west and north of the Bibile-Batticaloa road, between it and the Mahaweli-ganga, we shall have embraced the Veddas of Bintenne, Gunner's Quoin, and other scattered settlements, and accounted for every Vedda extant—a mere handful of people in all.

Kaurala of Kotelinda was the first Vedda worthy of the name we had encountered on this long journey. He was a Bingoda Vedda of the Morana *waruge*, but had spent most of his days at Bandaradua now derelict. He lived with his family in a crude hut in the jungle; his sole weapons were an axe, a bow and arrows. He was a simple soul, laughing uproariously at one moment, and the next assuming that troubled gravity so characteristic of his race. He knew every inch of his jungles; there was no tree, stream, or stone once passed which he could not instantly recognise again. This instinct and the sun were his sole means of orientation. We tried to press him into service, but he refused. "How can I come?" he said, tossing head and arms like a windmill. "I am a lone man. I live in the jungle. I am only a Vedda. If I go, who is there to look after my children? See here, now," pointing to the damaged trees about his hut; "this is what the *botukandas** have done. How can I come?"

Our deviation to Kotelinda was in vain. We had hoped to cut across the hills of Madana to Galmede; but the path had long been absorbed into the forest. We had therefore to double back to Bokkebedda, and thence strike north, through Gonagalla, to Divulana. With our usual ill-luck on this trip, we caught our fifth thunderstorm. It dropped plumb on us and worried us all the way; while in the unscathed beyond, over the treed parkland, the sunset wrought a panorama of opal and pearl, touching to glory the austere peak of Friar's Hood, queen of the distant hills.

*Elephants.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena* ; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house" ; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark ; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that ; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats ; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone ; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned :

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas ; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain : it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good !

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes : *Gona-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 "But surely there are Veddas in Galmeda; everybody told us so," I insisted.

"Veddas of a sort, yes," was the reply; "and perhaps among them, one or two good ones; but the best live away in the caves, in those rocks yonder. Now if you'd come yesterday you'd have seen two of them who brought me some *goas* in exchange for betel and tobacco."

000 Disappointment melted into sudden hope. So, there were real Veddas still left. But oh! these people. Was ever chase so disheartening? Always the promise, never the fulfilment. Were we chasing phantoms of the wilderness, mocking spirits of a dead race, intolerant of the intrusion on their tranquil sepulchres?

There was no possibility of visiting the cave-Veddas that day. So I decided to stay over and visit them the next morning, travelling across the pathless hills to the high road; while my companion,—fed up to the teeth by now at the very mention of the word Vedda, and in a bad way with festering tick-bites, heat exhaustion, and lack of fresh food—tried to dissuade me from an adventure that promised no success. But I was bent on it. So we agreed that most of the bearers should accompany him to Maha Oya by an easier route, while I remained behind with three men and a two days' ration of tinned food.

With nightfall my prospect of securing a guide to the Galmeda hills was no nearer than in the morning. The only man who could be relied on was down with fever. I was seated disconsolately in the Chetty's garden after dinner, close to a chatting group, when suddenly I saw a shadow slip in out of the darkness and join them; there was some whispering; "Ah, is this the man they call Meenemaruwa?*" I heard 648 one of my bearers ask.

241 "Yes, I am he they call murderer, rogue and everything besides." 115 The answer came loud and unabashed from the man himself.

Rumour had spoken of him as far away as Kotelinda; and it had not spoken kindly. He lived three miles up the river by himself, inspiring the neighbourhood with awe of him. He was in a quandary that night. Returning home after a short absence, he had found that his brother had been taken into custody for illicit *chena* cultivation. He waxed eloquent on his wrongs, while the others listened: "Now what I want to know," he said "is why they should have taken my brother, who is a fool and cannot say a word in his defence, when they might have taken me? No, they wouldn't do that because I can talk. My brother cultivated the *chena* it is true, but it was I who gave it to him; the land is mine. They want me to pay taxes, I who am a Vedda! My grandmother was a [826 Vedda of Veddas, you should have seen her. How well I remember the 789] piece of human liver she carried in her betel-bag. We children would take it from her and want to throw it away; she would pluck it from us, saying, 'Hu, what do you want with this, isn't it mine?' Io, why do they treat me like this? Someone is angry with me. It must be the *aratchi*. No, the *aratchi* is good to me; he and I are friends. Now *Heltyar*, what must I do? I must go to the courts myself and get a petition drawn." Thus he talked interminably, while I wondered how a Vedda could come to argue like a lawyer.

"Now leave all that aside," I interrupted, "and tell me how I am to see these Veddas of the rocks tomorrow."

*Murderer.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

He left the group and seated himself before me—a sinewy, handsome, bearded man of perhaps forty. /15 114

"Those Veddas," he said contemplatively, when I told him how we stood; "who can say where they are? In one cave to-day, in a another to-morrow. They said they came from Dhik-galge, did they? But you can never take a Vedda's word for that. If they are not there—what then? All our trouble will be in vain. I cannot say I know the caves in those hills very well. I have only been among them once, and that many years ago, when I took my wife from her people. She and I wandered about there. How well she knew the trails, she who had trodden them but once as a little child; for her home, like mine, was elsewhere. I would see a track and point to it saying, 'This must be the way to the cave.' 'No,' she would say 'that leads to the wilderness; there should be a path by that tree yonder'; and she would always be right. I remember well the long tree by the Alu-galge; I shot two monkeys and we ate them there." And so his thoughts rambled amid honey-moon scenes he loved to recall.

But, as this meandering led nowhere, I offered a reward of five rupees to anyone who would show me the Veddas in their caves on the morrow, and took to bed. For long I lay pondering what manner of man was the Chetty who could live in this wilderness with a Vedda woman for wife. He seemed to know intimately every Vedda in the district, and had sometimes even shared their caves. He remained an enigma, as also that smile of his, no more than a mere display of the teeth, which imbued the knit, pathetic cast of his features with an expression whether of saintliness or villainy, it was hard to tell. Ostensibly he was here to rear cattle; but why come so far for that?

The next morning, accompanied by Meenemaruwa, the Chetty and a half-Vedda of Galmede, we set out on our quest. The plan was this; we were to travel to a spot where a certain stream crossed the path: there we would probably find foot-prints; if these led to the hills we would follow, if in the opposite direction, pursuit would be useless, as that would imply that the Veddas had returned to their homes in Bingoda fifteen miles away; for at this season the Veddas did not live in their caves, and the party we were in search of must have come on a few days hunting. I now understood the reticence of these people to take me on what might prove a wild goose chase; and learnt, what was more important, that the Veddas of Galmede were the Veddas of Bingoda. 114

We came to the stream; the foot-prints were there. Our guides bent down eagerly examining them. "This is Suthubanda's," they said "and this Badapissa's; this other is a woman's; no, it's a boy's." The tracks pointed towards the hills! The chase began.

114 B6 487

Meenemaruwa led, for he alone could decipher that trail, three days old, on the hard dry ground. Once we left the stream there was apparently not the faintest indication of a foot-mark; but our guide moved rapidly along, and soon involved us in an enforested labyrinth of hills. Very occasionally a broken twig would furnish a clue. Indicating one of these Meenemaruwa said, "Now, that would never have been done had old Handuna been alive. 'Hu,' he would have said, slapping the errant one, 'do you want to show everybody the way to our caves; then where would we go if people came after us?' To the rock, the cave and the hive there must be no clue; that is the Vedda law.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Meenemaruwa accompanied us a little way, singing Vedda songs with the voice of a priest chanting *bana*. I told him he had the throat of a drongo, which pleased him immensely. He explained, that as a boy he had been taken in hand by Buddhist priests who "straightened" his throat.

"Why are you called Murderer?" I asked.

"There was a man in our village," he said "whose wife abused everybody. I remonstrated with her, and her husband resented my interference, and bore ill-feeling towards me." (Rumour said that his relations with the woman were not quite as detached as he made out). "One day I was walking through an *illuk* field with a gun I had borrowed from a Moor, when I saw this man and two others coming towards me. The path was narrow; but who were they that I should make way for them or anyone else? This was twenty years ago, I was but a boy then. As we met, my enemy caught me by the neck and shoved me aside, and the two others struck me. I saw the devil then, and, placing my gun to the man's chest, fired; he dropped. A spark flew into my eye and, prevented my shooting the others as they ran. When I saw what I had done I went away and hid in the jungle. The first night I spent on a trestle where I used to watch for sambur; four drank at the water that night, but I had not the heart to shoot one. For a year I wandered in the forests, a hunted man, only creeping out occasionally at night to beg a little food or powder. Eventually, tiring of the life and hearing that the man I had shot had partially recovered, I sent word that I would give myself up. The *aratchi* who came to arrest me was afraid to approach me. I placed my gun aside and gave him my hands; as he clapped the manacles on there were tears in his eyes. I spent five years in various jails in the Island, seeing many places and learning much wisdom. That was many years ago; cha, I am getting older now." He left us happy with his morning's work and his well-earned reward.

The Chetty of Galmede escorted me to Maha Oya the next day where my friend, now quite refreshed, awaited me. Some hours after our arrival, I was recounting to the Chief Headman of the place, our two weeks experiences all the long and devious way from Siyambala Anduwa, when my mention of the Chetty's name suddenly electrified him.

"He came with you here, did you say?" he asked, starting up. "Then he is here now. *Aratchi*, go quick and get him. That's the man I have been wanting these two years. He's the greatest scoundrel in the Province; there are any number of writs against him; but he lives on the borders of two Provinces, and when I send my men to take him, he merely crosses over to the other side, defies them to capture him if they dare and sends back insolent messages to me. The man you call Meenemaruwa is another of his sort. If only I can get them."

That night we were dining with the Chief when a man sent a message asking if he might see him. It was the Chetty; now hand-cuffed, alas! He said something to the Chief in a whisper, and smiled that enigmatic smile of his. Was it a saint's or a scoundrel's? This time there was no doubt, for he had offered to betray his *ganja* growing accomplices among the poor half-Veddas of Galmede, as the price of his liberty.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

Cambridge Archaeological and Ethnological Series

THE VEDDAS

[p. i]

1:Seligman & Seligman 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vodds AX5

000

The Cambridge Archæological and Ethnological Series is supervised by an Editorial Committee consisting of WILLIAM RIDGEWAY, *Sc.D., F.B.A., Disney Professor of Archæology,* A. C. HADDON, *Sc.D., F.R.S., University Reader in Ethnology,* M. R. JAMES, *Litt.D., F.B.A., Provost of King's College, and* C. WALDSTEIN, *Litt.D., Slade Professor of Fine Art.*

[p. ii]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

000

The Vedda country, view from Bandyagalge rocks.

[facing p. iii]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

THE VEDDAS

000

BY

C. G. SELIGMANN, M.D.
LECTURER IN ETHNOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

AND

BRENDA Z. SELIGMANN

WITH A CHAPTER BY

C. S. MYERS, M.D., D.Sc.

AND AN APPENDIX BY

A. MENDIS GUNASEKARA, MUDALIAR

[p. iii]

Cambridge:
at the University Press
1911

Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
London: FETTER LANE, E.C.
C. F. CLAY, MANAGER

Edinburgh: 100, PRINCES STREET
Berlin: A. ASHER AND CO.
Leipzig: F. A. BROCKHAUS
New York: G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
Bombay and Calcutta: MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD.

Nkd72
I38
911s

[p. iv]

All rights reserved

Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

TO

L. B.

AND

E. W. B.

[p. v]

[p. vi is blank]

PREFACE

THE Veddas have been regarded as one of the most primitive of existing races, and it has long been felt desirable that their social life and religious ideas should be investigated as thoroughly as possible. The welcome opportunity of conducting this research was afforded me on the initiative of Dr A.C. Haddon, who suggested to the Honourable Mr John Ferguson and Dr Arthur Willey that it was desirable that the Ceylon Government should continue its enlightened policy of studying the anthropology, archaeology and history of Ceylon and its peoples. This proposal received the warmest support of the Governor, Sir Henry Blake, G.C.M.G., and his successor the present Governor, His Excellency Sir Henry E. McCallum, G.C.M.G., A.D.C., of the Colonial Secretary and of the other members of the Legislative Council who made a liberal grant covering the expenses of the expedition in the field. 121 122

Not only was the work urgently needed on account of its scientific importance, but it was known that the Veddas were a numerically small people verging on extinction, and so affected by contact with Tamils and Sinhalese that if they were not studied promptly there was every possibility that it would soon be too late to study them at all; indeed, with all my efforts I was able to meet only four families, and hear of two more, who I believe had never practised cultivation. Pure-blooded Veddas are not quite so rare as this statement implies. The Danigala community, the best known "wild" Veddas of Ceylon, are still reasonably pure-blooded, though they have adopted many Sinhalese habits, including cultivation, and have assumed the rôle of professional primitive man. They are commonly fetched to be interviewed by travellers at the nearest rest house, where they appear clad only in the traditional scanty Vedda garment, whereas, when not on show, they dress very much as the neighbouring peasant Sinhalese. 121 161 177

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

123 In spite of the decay into which the Vedda social fabric has
126 fallen, I believe that the expedition may be considered to have achieved a considerable measure of success, since it has brought to light a number of facts hitherto unknown. This result is largely due to my wife, for I feel convinced that the measure of success attained in gaining the confidence of these shy and extremely jealous people was entirely due to her presence and assistance. Not only would it have been impossible otherwise to obtain certain important results in special departments, as for instance the phonograph records of lullabies, but I should never have had the opportunity of studying Vedda family life with the degree of intimacy which her presence made possible. It must not however be thought that the assistance she rendered was of the somewhat passive kind which the presence of any sympathetic woman would have given. Indeed, the opposite was the case, for, with a single exception, the ceremonial dances described in Chapter IX were recorded by Mrs Seligmann, while I devoted the whole of my attention to obtaining a reasonably complete series of photographs. So fully did she share in the work in this and many other ways that when working up our results I found that my original idea of a volume containing a number of jointly written chapters by no means did justice to her work, and her name therefore appears as that of joint author of this book.

126 With regard to the dances photographed, those witnessed at Sitala Wanniya and Bandaraduwa were performed in the depth of the jungle under circumstances which necessitated under-exposure in spite of the use of the most rapid plates. Hence a number of the photographs reproduced in Chapter IX have been more or less "faked," the detail being painted in on bromide prints and fresh negatives prepared. Probably no one will have any difficulty in recognising the photographs which have been treated in this way, but in order to avoid any possibility of a mistake those plates which have been touched up are indicated by an asterisk.

000 The translations and transliterations of the charms in Chapter VIII and the invocations in Chapter X have been prepared by Mr. Henry Parker, late Assistant Director of the Ceylon Irrigation Department, who has also read through and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

criticised Chapters I, VI, VII, VIII, XIV and XV. But the assistance he has thus rendered is by no means the full measure of our indebtedness, for there is scarcely a chapter in which we have not availed ourselves of his great knowledge of Ceylon, and although we have endeavoured to acknowledge in the text the help he has given us, we feel we have scarcely done justice to the benefit we have derived from discussing many points with him. Dr C. S. Myers is responsible for the chapter on Music; to him we are greatly indebted for undertaking this work in spite of the many other calls on his time.

We owe to Mr A. Mendis Gunasekara, Mudaliar, the transliteration and translation of the songs given in Chapter XIV. Mr Gunasekara has also worked over the vocabularies we took in the field and has added greatly to the value of these by the derivations which he has been able to suggest for many of the words, and we desire to express our appreciation of the energy and knowledge he has brought to the task.

It is a pleasure and a duty to refer to the assistance rendered by friends and officials in Ceylon. In the first place our thanks are due to the Colonial Secretary, Sir Hugh Clifford, K.C.M.G., and the Hon. Mr John Ferguson, C.M.G., for constant advice and help. We received the greatest assistance from Dr Arthur Willey, F.R.S., until recently the Director of the Colombo Museum, who not only placed his own knowledge and experience at our disposal, but encouraged us to make the freest use of his department. He thus saved us much trouble and a considerable expenditure of time, and to him we owe a debt of gratitude which we cannot adequately express. Our obligation to the officers of the Survey Department is very great, and we desire to record the assistance rendered by the Surveyor General, Mr P. Warren, C.M.G., the Assistant Surveyor General, Mr R. S. Templeton, and Mr W. C. S. Ingles. Encouraged by his success with plates exposed in Colombo Mr Ingles took an immense amount of trouble with a number of colour-plates which had been exposed in the jungle, but the results though interesting were not such as to be of scientific value. Mr Frederick Lewis, F.L.S., of the Land Settlement Department, who has travelled much in the Vedda country, also rendered valuable assistance, and we have made free use of his paper (*Journ. Roy. As. Soc.* C.B. 1902) giving the vernacular

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

names of many trees and flowering plants of economic importance to the Veddas. We are also under obligation to Mr J. Harward, Director of Public Instruction, and we must not omit to mention the attention shown to us by Mr G. A. Joseph, Hon. Secretary of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

While in the field we received help from so many friends from Government officers to peasant Sinhalese that it is impossible to mention all by name. We must specially thank Mr H. White and Mr H. R. Freeman, the Government Agents of Uva and the Eastern Province respectively, not only for much kindly advice but for putting at our disposal such adequate interpreters as Mr W. R. Bibile, Ratemahatmaya, the Muhandiram Kumarakulasinghe and Mr D. C. de Silva, Kachcheri Interpreter. We are greatly indebted to these gentlemen as we also are to Mr Samuel Perera for his assistance in locating a group of Veddas, for whom we had been searching for some weeks, and to Mr C. Herft, District Engineer, Batticaloa, who twice supplied us with coolies when we were in serious difficulty for transport. Our thanks are also due to Mr G. T. Bradley of the Irrigation Department and Mr G. D. Templer of the Forest Department as well as to Mr G. W. Woodhouse, District Judge, who spent a whole day of his holidays interpreting for us.

We received much help from Mr G. P. Greene, General Manager of the Ceylon Government Railways, and from Mr C. Donald of Bandarawela, whose assistance in the transport of stores was of the utmost service. We must also refer to the many acts of kindness and help rendered both officially and unofficially by our friend the late James Parsons, Principal Mineral Surveyor, whose recent tragic death has deprived the island of one of the most scientific of its officials.

By the kindness of the Colonial Secretary and the General Manager of the Ceylon Government Railways one of the Government motor cars was put at our disposal for a week soon after landing. For the benefit of others who may be engaged in similar work we desire to refer to the value of a preliminary survey of the country conducted from a motor car. Our survey enabled us to gain valuable information without going more than ten miles on foot from the main road.

We are indebted to the following gentlemen for help and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

advice on various matters, Dr L. D. Barnett, Mr R. I. Pocock, Professor Ridgeway and Mr Vincent A. Smith. It remains to thank Dr W. H. R. Rivers for the unflagging interest he has shown in this volume, the whole of which he has read in manuscript and discussed with us, to the very great advantage of the work. We are also indebted to him for permission to reproduce from the *British Journal of Psychology* the block which appears on p. 403; while some of the figures of quartz implements reproduced in Plate VIII have already appeared in *Man*. The index and glossary have been prepared by Miss M. C. Jonas.

C. G. S.

10 *February* 1911.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION.

104 THE transliteration of unfamiliar oriental words must constitute a difficulty to all who are not oriental scholars. In the present instance the matter is further complicated by the phonetic changes undergone by many Sinhalese words in the mouths of Veddas and the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedirata. Under these circumstances it seemed best not to attempt to polish the dialect in which our informants talked, but to treat it as an unwritten language, and to write all native words according to some generally recognised and easily applied rule. We selected the scheme recommended by the Royal Geographical Society, under which consonants are pronounced as in English and vowels as in Italian, only modifying it by writing *c* for the *ch* sound in *church*. Satisfactory as this plan proved to be in the field it is obviously wholly unsuited to that part of the work which consists of the transliteration and translation of songs or invocations written down in Sinhalese by our interpreters. Mr Parker and Mr Gunasekara have therefore made use of a system of transliteration suggested by the former, consisting of that prescribed by the Ceylon Government (cf. Mr Gunasekara's Sinhalese Grammar, pp. 8 and 9) with the following modifications:

(1) Long vowels are indicated by the sign –.

(2) The letters ඇ, ඊ, ඒ, ශ are represented by æ, c, ch, ś respectively.

ව has been represented by v or w.

Hence the transliteration of the Sinhalese alphabet according to this modified system is as follows:

Vowels—අ a, ආ ā, ඇ æ, ඇ ǣ, උ u, ඌ ū, ඍ ṛi, ඎ ṛī, ඏ ḷi, ඐ ḷī, එ e, ඒ ē, ඓ ai, ඔ o, ඕ ō, ඖ au.

Consonants—ක k, ඛ kh, ග g, ඝ gh, ඞ ṅ, ච c, ඡ ch, ජ j, ඣ jh, ඤ ñ, ට ṭ, ඨ ṭh, ඩ ḍ, ඪ ḍh, ණ ṇ, ත t, ථ th, ද d, ධ dh, න n, ප p, ඵ ph, බ b, භ bh, ම m, ය y, ර r, ල l, ව v or w, ශ ś, ෂ sh, ස s, හ h, ළ ḷ, ං ṃ, ඃ ḥ.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The semi-nasal sounds (represented by the symbol ং, as in ඟ ñg, ඦ ñj, ඬ ñḍ, ඳ ñd) are represented by ñ, and the semi-nasal sound (represented by the symbol ඹ as in ඹ) of ම is represented by m̃. 1109

The use of two systems of transliteration in the same book, though far from ideal, has, we believe, not led to any ambiguity, for the absence of all diacritical marks (with the exception of an occasional – over a long vowel) will immediately indicate that a word is written as it stood in our field notes. Thus in the vocabulary the words are given as we took them down in the field, while the more elaborate system of transliteration is used by Mr Gunasekara in his notes on the origin of these words. From one standpoint there may even be an advantage in the use of a simple system of transliteration. Being ignorant of Sinhalese we have recorded the sounds we heard, without the modifications which a knowledge of the language would suggest. Thus *ḥatura* is everywhere written for *ḥaturu* (bear); *Baṇḍaru* pronounced *Bandar* by all Veddas and many peasant Sinhalese will be found printed in both forms, and the spelling of many other words is varied in the same manner. Perhaps the most striking example of variation in spelling is in the name of the people of whom this book treats. We have thought it best to use the common English spelling and to write the word Vedda, but this word is spelt in at least two other ways, in the *verbatim* quotations from the manuscript or printed works of others.

C. G. S.
B. Z. S.

3 *February* 1911.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CONTENTS

000

CHAPTER		PAGE
	Preface	vii
	Note on Transliteration	xii
I.	Historical and Geographical	1
II.	Present Condition of the Veddas	29
III.	Social Organisation. Genealogies	59
IV.	Family Life	81
V.	Property and Inheritance	105
VI.	Religion	122
VII.	Religion (continued)	148
VIII.	Magic	190
IX.	Ceremonial Dances	209
X.	Invocations	273
XI.	Arts and Crafts	318
XII.	Coast Veddas	331
XIII.	Music, by C. S. Myers	341
XIV.	Songs	356
XV.	Language	380
XVI.	Speech of the Veddas	393
XVII.	Conclusions	413
	Vocabulary	423
	Appendix	431
	Glossary	435
	Index	437

[p. xiv]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

LIST OF TEXT FIGURES

PAGE

1. Plan of caves at Bendiyagalge 83
2. Plan of Pihilagodagalge 87
3. Toy *mattiya* 93
4. Plan of the Henebedda Territory 108
5. Plan of Sitala Wanniya Territory 110
6. Boundary mark 113
7. Arrow with wooden blade and wooden *ainb* 138
8. *Ainb* 138
9. Some of the objects used in the Bambura Yaka ceremony: (*a*) *Mulgala illya*, (*b*) *Ulla*, (*c*) *Mastigala* 240
10. Ceremonial bow and arrow of Bambura Yaka 246
11. *Ran Andawa* 256
12. *Mastiya* 328
13. Veda bow and harpoon. Iron harpoon head 334
14. Plan of Veda temple and its surroundings 336
15. Apparatus for testing Müller-Lyer illusion 403

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

LIST OF PLATES*

Frontispiece. The Vedda country, view from Bendiyagalge rocks.

PLATE		To face page
I.	Fig. 1. View from the P. W. D. bungalow at Nilgala	2
I.	Fig. 2. The Gal Oya river near Nilgala	2
II.	Danigala Veddas on the look-out rock	16
III.	Group of Veddas of Henebedda and Bingoda	16
IV.	Poromala (Walaha), headman of the Henebedda Veddas	16
V.	Sita Wanniya of Henebedda	16
VI.	Sita Wanniya of Henebedda	16
VII.	Poromala, a Henebedda youth	16
VIII.	Quartz and chert implements	20
IX.	Steps cut in rock at Bendiyagalge	22
X.	Fig. 1. A chena settlement of the Henebedda Veddas	36
X.	Fig. 2. Henebedda Veddas of the Namadewa clan inhabiting the chena settlement	36
XI.	Fig. 1. Rough shelter on the Danigala rock dome	38
XI.	Fig. 2. Veddas of Bandaraduwa	38
XII.	Fig. 1. Mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chena at Bandaraduwa	42
XII.	Fig. 2. Uniche Veddas	42
XIII.	Women and girls of Sitala Wanniya	44
XIV.	Fig. 1. Men of mixed Sinhalese and Vedda blood from the neighbourhood of Maha Oya	46
XIV.	Fig. 2. Women of Omuni	46
XV.	Fig. 1. Vedda settlement at Unuwatura Bubula	48
XV.	Fig. 2. Village Veddas of Dambani	48
XVI.	Fig. 1. Men of Yakure	56
XVI.	Fig. 2. Veddas of Ulpota	56
XVII.	Fig. 1. General view of the rock shelters at Bendiyagalge	84
XVII.	Fig. 2. Uhapitagalge rock shelter	84
XVIII.	Fig. 1. Pihilegodagalge rock shelter	84
XVIII.	Fig. 2. Part of Pihilegodagalge rock shelter	84
XIX.	Fig. 1. Lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge	84
XIX.	Fig. 2. Early morning scene in lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge	84
XX.	Rough shelter built for isolation of women at Unuwatura Bubula	94
XXI.	Locks of hair presented to brides at marriage	98
XXII.	Fig. 1. Portion of Pihilegodagalge belonging to Kaira	112
XXII.	Fig. 2. Boundary mark cut by Handuna of Sitala Wanniya	112

* An asterisk indicates that the photograph from which the plate is made has been touched up.

[p. xvi]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda P.X5

PLATE		To face page
XXIII.	Seinin consisting of hair, tooth, quartz fragments and strike-a-light	114
XXIV.	Messages scratched on a slip of bark and an *ola* leaf	120
XXV.	*Aude* with inlaid silver Bo leaf	172
XXVI.	Fig. 1. Arrow dance (Henebedda)	214
XXVI.	Fig. 2. Arrow dance (Henebedda)	214
XXVII.	Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony. Arrow with *Na* leaves attached (Bandaraduwa)	216
XXVII.	Fig. 2. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*	216
XXVIII.	Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*	216
XXVIII.	Fig. 2. The Adukku Demawa ceremony (Henebedda)	216
XXIX.	Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, cessing the *aude* and coconut (Henebedda)	220
XXIX.	Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *aude* and coconut (Henebedda)	220
XXX.	Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *aude* and coconut (Henebedda)	220
XXX.	Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman breaking the coconut (Henebedda)	220
XXXI.	Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman examines the offering of coconut milk (Henebedda)	222
XXXI.	Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman tracking the sambar (Henebedda)	222
XXXII.	Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman tracking the sambar (Henebedda)	222
XXXII.	Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman shoots the sambar (Henebedda)	222
XXXIII.	Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman bends his head over the coconut milk (Henebedda)	222
XXXIII.	Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman possessed by Billindi Yaka promises good hunting (Henebedda)	222
XXXIV.	Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot (Henebedda)	222
XXXV.	Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the *kulatyakaya* (Unawatura Bubula)	230
XXXV.	Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman before the *kulatyakaya* (Unawatura Bubula)	230
XXXVI.	Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman salaams to the offering (Bandaraduwa)	234
XXXVI.	Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman pretends to stab the offering (Bandaraduwa)*	234
XXXVII.	Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed falls into the arms of a supporter (Bandaraduwa)	234
XXXVII.	Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman sprinkles milk from the offering on the brothers of the deceased (Bandaraduwa)	234
XXXVIII.	Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka tracks the sambar (Bandaraduwa)*	234

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

PLATE		To face page
XXXVIII.	Fig. 2. Nae Yaka ceremony, the brother of the deceased falls back possessed (Bandaraduwa)	234
XXXIX.	Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the other brother of the deceased is also possessed (Bandaraduwa)	236
XXXIX.	Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Nae Yaka embraces the brother of the deceased (Bandaraduwa)	236
XL.	Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the Nae Yaka shows his power (Bandaraduwa)	236
XL.	Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman feeds the members of the community (Bandaraduwa)	236
XLI.	Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, preparing the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*	242
XLI.	Fig. 2. The Bambura Yaka ceremony begins by Handuna singing an invocation (Sitala Wanniya)*	242
XLII.	Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar wounds the hunter (Sitala Wanniya)*	242
XLII.	Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar is at length killed (Sitala Wanniya)*	242
XLIII.	Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the bow of Dunne Yakini (Sitala Wanniya)*	242
XLIII.	Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Kaira dances with the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*	242
XLIV.	Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, offerings and properties prepared for the ceremony by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)	246
XLIV.	Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Wannaku kills the boar (Maha Oya)*	246
XLV.	Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*	250
XLV.	Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman buries his face in the *uswuhaliya* (Sitala Wanniya)*	250
XLVI.	Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman predicts the sex of the child (Sitala Wanniya)*	250
XLVI.	Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, Nila prays for his daughter's safe delivery (Sitala Wanniya)*	250
XLVII.	Dola Yaka ceremony, the offering to the Yaku (Sitala Wanniya)*	252
XLVIII.	Fig. 1. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*	258
XLVIII.	Fig. 2. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the shaman prophesies good luck in hunting and honey gathering (Sitala Wanniya)*	258
XLIX.	Fig. 1. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman offers betel leaves to the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)	260
XLIX.	Fig. 2. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)	260

PLATE		To face page
L.	Fig. 1. Alutyahagama ceremony, the beginning of the invocation (Uruwatura Bubula)	261
L.	Fig. 2. Alutyahagama ceremony, the shaman and his supporter at the *alutyahagama* (Uruwatura Bubula)	261
LI.	Fig. 1. Alutyahagama ceremony, testing the offering (Uruwatura Bubula)	261
LI.	Fig. 2. Alutyahagama ceremony, the shaman comes to us with an *ambu* in each hand (Uruwatura Bubula)	261
LII.	Fig. 1. Alutyahagama ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot of food (Uruwatura Bubula)	261
LII.	Fig. 2. Rawala ceremony, the *rawala* prepared by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)	262
LIII.	Fig. 1. Kolamadawa ceremony, the *kolamadawa* (Henebedda)	268
LIII.	Fig. 2. Kolamadawa ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Henebedda)	268
LIV.	Fig. 1. Kolamadawa ceremony, the shaman and Sita Wanniya become possessed (Henebedda)	268
LIV.	Fig. 2. Kolamadawa ceremony, shaking the leaves from the *kolamadawa* (Henebedda)	268
LV.	Nila holding bow while reciting invocation No. XXIII. When the name of the *yaka* causing the illness is spoken the bow swings to and fro	290
LVI.	Fig. 1. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave	320
LVI.	Fig. 2. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave	320
LVII.	Fig. 1. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave	320
LVII.	Fig. 2. Rock drawings of *dangetes* in Gamakandagalge cave	320
LVIII.	Vedda drawings	320
LIX.	Vedda drawings	320
LX.	Vedda drawings	320
LXI.	Vedda drawings	324
LXII.	Vedda pots	326
LXIII.	Handuna of Henebedda stringing his bow	326
LXIV.	Handuna shooting	328
LXV.	Deerskin vessel (*mahadona*) used for collecting honey	328
LXVI.	Gourd used as bee hive (Henebedda)	330
LXVII.	Betel pouch made of monkey skin (Henebedda)	332
LXVIII.	Fig. 1. Coast Veddas	332
LXVIII.	Fig. 2. Coast Veddas of Vakarai	332
LXIX.	Fig. 1. Settlement of Coast Veddas	332
LXIX.	Fig. 2. Settlement of Coast Veddas	332
LXX.	Fig. 1. Site of dance at Vakarai, showing *hadaram* and pole	338
LXX.	Fig. 2. Dancing round the *hadaram*	338
LXXI.	The end of the dance at Vakarai	338

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ERRATA

Page 16 line 25 to p. 17 line 4 for "mm." read "m."
Page 18 line 24 for "chamaeprosopa" read "chamaeprosopa"
Page 21 line 24 for "I" read "we"
Page 23 footnote line 1 for "I" read "we"
Page 35 line 1 for "remote" read "remote"
Page 44 line 3 for "1·320 mm." read "1·33 m."
Page 45 footnote line 3 for "Aculiya" read "Aculiya"
Page 142 line 23 for "Punhhi Yaka" read "Punhhin Yaka"
Page 149 line 16 for "Vijaya" read "Vijaya"
Page 150 line 10 for "Gokmada" read "Gokmada"
Page 153 line 34 for "Chapter VII" read "in the Addendum to this chapter"
Page 169 line 25 for "Wanagala" and page 170 line 36, and page 171 line 20 for "Wanagala" read "Wanagala"
Page 167, line 11 for "Gangs Bandar" read "Gangs Bandar"
Page 204 lines 6, 10 and 11 respectively read
"Go and cleave it in the tail, by the rita"
"Go and cleave it in the neck, by the rita"
"Go and cleave it in the stomach, by the rita"
Page 224 for lines 10 to 11 read "*Lagiya* is the ablative case of *lia-aya*, rita"
Page 229 line 6 for "many yaka" read "many yaka"
Page 231 line 19 for "hangala" read "hangala"
Page 245 line 11 for "Ala Yaka" read "Ala Yaka"
Page 302 line 11 and p. 333 line 24 for "Chapter VIII" read "Chapter VII"
Page 302 last line for "Chaptir XV" read "Chapter XIV"

[p. xx]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL

THE Vedda country at the present day is limited to a roughly triangular tract lying between the eastern slopes of the central mountain *massif* and the sea. This area of about 2400 square miles is bounded on the west by the Mahaweli Ganga, from the point where, abandoning its eastern course through the mountains of the Central Province, the river sweeps northwards to the sea. A line from this great bend passing eastwards through Bibile village (on the Badulla-Batticaloa road) to the coast will define the southern limits of the Vedda country with sufficient accuracy, while its eastern limit is the coast. So defined it includes the greater part of the Eastern Province, about a fifth of Uva and a small portion of that part of the North Central Province known as Tamankaduwa, and is traversed by a single high road capable of taking wheeled traffic. This runs from Badulla, the capital of Uva, lying at the foot of the central mountain mass of the island, to the coast a few miles to the north of Batticaloa, the capital of the Eastern Province.

Excepting only the mountain scenery of Upper Uva and the Central Province, the Vedda country even in its present diminished form presents every variety of scenery met with in Ceylon, including alike the magnificent Uva park lands and the sandy mangrove-fringed flats of the Eastern coast. Within its borders is situated Mahayangana (Alutnuwara) the ancient assembling place of the Yakkas where, according to the Mahawansa, Buddha appeared and struck terror into their hearts before propounding his doctrines to the hosts of *devas* who

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133

Fig. 1. View from the P. W. D. bungalow at Nilgala

Fig. 2. The Gal Oya river near Nilgala

[facing p. 2]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 attended him there. Here was erected the Mahayangana dagaba, the oldest in Ceylon, built over the relics of the very Buddha and from its inception to the present day the goal of countless generations of pious pilgrims reaching it by descending the Gallepadaluila, the pass of two thousand steps, that leads in less than an hour from the breezy uplands of the Central Province to the steamy river valley two thousand feet below. It is from this, the old pilgrim path, wending its way above the pass through the pleasant hills of Uva from the forgotten city of Medamahanuwara, that the best idea of the Vedda country is obtained. A sudden rise in the ground gives the first view of the Vedda country through a V-shaped frame of hills, and from such a spot as this Knox must have looked upon Bintenne. "It (the country of Bintan) seems to be a smooth land and not much hilly, the great river running through the midst of it. It is all over covered with mighty woods and abundance of deer, but much subject to dry weather and sickness. In these woods is a sort of wild people inhabiting, whom we shall speak of in their place[1]."

Continuing along the path a little further, a wider view is obtained where the track seems to end abruptly in a great rock, the Ballangala or look-out rock, upon which the pilgrim halts to gaze reverently upon the ancient dagaba and the flat land spread out before him.

Here flows the Mahaweli ganga, soon to be hidden in the great sea of forest-clad lowland stretching away to the north, from which rise Kokagalla and other hills, the traditional homes of the Veddas, like rocky islands in the distance. To the east tower the Uva Mountains, stretching onwards in a diminishing series towards the uplands of Nilgala. In Bintenne, including in this term parts of both Uva and the Eastern Province, the jungle consists of a forest of great trees without much undergrowth, occasionally interrupted by open spaces, covered with coarse grass, which, however, does not grow much higher than the knee. These open patches are more numerous in the Eastern Province than they are in Uva Bintenne (which is traversed by

[1] *An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon in the East Indies*, London, 1681. Chapter II, p. 5.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

many small streams) and it is generally supposed that they are the sites of ancient cultivation; there are comparatively few streams in this country though swamps and small water holes containing stagnant water are common[1]. 133

Northward in Tamankaduwa (a division of the North Central Province) the great trees give place to poorer growth and a scrubby jungle is found. On the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road lie the Nilgala hills, the best of the Vedda domain and the most pleasing country in Ceylon. Here, broad valleys lie between jungle-clad ranges of much weathered gneiss, among whose rocky crags and rounded domes, *bambara*, the rock bee (*Apis indica*), builds its combs. Here is no gloomy jungle, but in the valleys are many thickets and small trees growing scattered as in a young orchard, their trunks protected by coarse lalang grass which often attains 5 or 6 feet in 133 137

[1] The character of the Bintenne of the Eastern Province has been well stated by Mr H. Freeman, Government Agent for the Eastern Province, in his Administration Report for 1908, for the following extract from which I am indebted to Mr John Ferguson: "This is an unsatisfactory region; a wretched population of about 3,000 in the largest patto of the Province has, with the exception of three or four small patches of paddy land, nothing to live on except chenas and jungle produce; they have not the advantage of the hundreds along the coast who can get a sort of living by begging from their neighbours. Necessarily the Bintenna folk are miserable in appearance; nearly all of them are sick. There are many abandoned tanks, but the people have neither the physique nor the will to restore them. There are no coconuts to speak of in Bintenna; the few trees are either infertile or barren. Still we must take the people and the country as we find them, and rather than let the population drift away from Bintenna to the chena country of Uva, I would concentrate them on the more fertile spots about Kallodai, Maha-oya, Pullumalai and Tempitiya, on or near the Badulla road, and endeavour to teach them to do tank work; there are promising, abandoned, tanks, which could be restored, and the land settled on the people on easy terms. Plentiful chenas would be necessary to fill the stomachs of the people to get work out of them; maize grows well in Bintenna; it is now imported in large quantities from Uva; large tracts of Bintenna could be turned into maize fields for the supply of the people on the coast also, while Uva could then keep to itself its supplies of this commodity sent down to this district....In addition to the Sinhalese population of Bintenna there are the Veddas,...and bands of gipsies find a good hunting ground there. Some of these have just been prosecuted and imprisoned for violating the Game Laws, and also made to pay road tax, payment of which they have evaded for years; the gipsies have considerable wealth in cattle and other property; they also drink and steal. Since writing the above on the condition of Bintenna I have explored other and remoter parts of that division, and find that whatever prosperity in paddy cultivation it enjoyed in the distant past must have been due to the Rajakariya system, in the absence of which Bintenna will probably remain a wilderness for an indefinitely long period."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 height. Clear rock-strewn streams abound, their banks
brightened by the deep green leaves and the bright red flowers
137 of the *ratmal* (*Ixora coccinea*). Scattered masses of rock often
of great size form convenient shelters for the Veddas, and assist
the rapid drainage of the country, which does not become water-
logged even during torrential rains. This beautiful country is
rich in game. To the east, where many Veddas have drifted,
the jungle is thicker, the land lies lower, and is generally less
healthy. The Nuwaragala Hills to the north of the Nilgala
ranges are perhaps the wildest part of the island and are more
densely clothed in jungle, but there are plenty of streams, while
the slope of the country permits of ready drainage.

The coastal zone north of Batticaloa inhabited by the coast
Veddas is flat and sandy, and the vegetation though dense
is often less tall and less abundant than in other parts of the
country. Salt water marshes are common, and the country
is cut into by numerous lagoons and creeks, often bounded
by a fringe of mangroves which stretches some distance up
the mouths of the rivers. Although this area may now, and
131 for yet a few years, be rightly called the Vedda country it must
161 not be thought that any considerable number of its inhabitants
are Veddas, or that they exercise any territorial or political
563 influence; on the contrary, they constitute an insignificant
fraction of the Tamil and Sinhalese inhabitants before whom
they are rapidly disappearing, partly by intermarriage and
absorption, partly owing to misery and a high death rate
brought about by sheer inability to cope with the new state
of affairs that the increased settlement of this, the wildest part
of the island, has brought about.

Formerly the Vedda country is known to have embraced
131 the whole of the Uva, and much of the Central and North
175 Central Provinces, while there is no reason to suppose that their
territory did not extend beyond these limits. Indeed there is
no reasonable doubt that the Veddas are identical with the
"Yakkas" of the Mahavansa and other native chronicles.

The seventh chapter of the Mahawansa relates the arrival in
175 Ceylon, B.C. 543, of Vijaya who married Kuweni an aboriginal
princess (*Yakkini*) and by her assistance destroyed a great

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

number of her people, and established the earliest Sinhalese kingdom. Later, after she had borne him a son and a daughter, Vijaya being urged by his followers to take a royal bride sent an embassy to Madura, asking for the hand of the daughter of King Pandava. The latter agreed to the alliance. Vijaya "receiving the announcement of the arrival of this royal maiden, and considering it impossible that the princess could live with him at the same time with the yakkini, he thus explained himself to Kuweni: 'A daughter of royalty is a timid being; on that account, leaving the children with me, depart from my house.' She replied: "On thy account, having murdered yakkhas, I dread these yakkhas: now I am discarded by both parties; whither can I take myself?' 'Within my dominions (said he) to any place thou pleasest which is unconnected with yakkhas; and I will maintain thee with a thousand bali offerings.' She who had been thus interdicted (from uniting herself with the yakkhas) with clamorous lamentation, taking her children with her, in the character of an inhuman being, wandered to that very city (Lankapura) of inhuman inhabitants. She left her children outside the yakkha city. The yakkhas, on seeing her enter the city, quickly surrounded her, crying out: 'It is for the purpose of spying us that she has come back!' And when the yakkhas were greatly excited, one of them, whose anger was greatly kindled, put an end to the life of the yakkini by a blow of his hand. Her uncle, a yakkha (named Kumara), happening to proceed out of the yakkha city, seeing these children outside the town, 'Whose children are ye?' said he. Being informed 'Kuveni's' he said, 'Your mother is murdered: if ye should be seen here, they would murder you also: fly quickly.' Instantly departing thence, they repaired to the (neighbourhood of the) Sumanakuta (Adam's Peak). The elder having grown up, married his sister, and settled there. Becoming numerous by their sons and daughters, under the protection of the king, they resided in the Malaya district. This is the origin of the Pulindas (hill-men)."

Such chronicles though interesting tell us little or nothing concerning the habits and customs of those Veddas who did not adopt a Sinhalese mode of life; the same may be said

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 of the earliest foreign records such as that found in the tract *De Moribus Brachmanorum* written about 400 A.D., the author of which professes to have obtained his information from a Theban traveller.

[114] To Robert Knox, who wrote in 1681 after a captivity in Ceylon lasting 20 years, belongs the credit of having first accurately described the Veddas. "Of these *Natives* there be two sorts *Wild* and *Tame*. I will begin with the former. For as in these Woods there are Wild *Beasts* so Wild *Men* also. The Land of *Binton* is all covered with mighty Woods, filled [101] with abundance of *Deer*. In this Land are many of these wild men; they call them *Vaddahs*, dwelling near no other Inhabitants. They speak the *Chingulayes* Language. They kill *Deer*, 175 and dry the Flesh over the fire, and the people of the Countrey 105 come and buy it of them. They never Till any ground for Corn, their Food being only Flesh. They are very expert with their Bows. They have a little ax, which they stick by their sides, to cut hony out of hollow Trees. Some few, which are near Inhabitants, have commerce with other people. They have no Towns nor Houses, only live by the waters under a Tree, with some boughs cut and laid about them, to give notice when any wild Beasts come near, which they may hear by their rustling and trampling upon them. Many of these Habitations we saw when we fled through the Woods, but God be praised the *Vaddahs* were gone.

"Some of the tamer sort of these men are in a kind of Subjection to the King. For if they be found, tho it must be with a great search in the woods, they will acknowledge his Officers, and will bring to them *Elephant-teeth*, and *Honey*, and *Wax*, and *Deer's Flesh*; but the others in lieu thereof do give them near as much, in Arrows, Cloth, etc. fearing lest they should otherwise appear no more.

"It had been reported to me by many people, that the wilder sort of them, when they want Arrows, will carry their load of Flesh in the night, and hang it up in a *Smith's* Shop, also a Leaf cut in the form they will have their Arrows made, and hang by it. Which if the *Smith* do make according to their Pattern they will requite, and bring him more Flesh:

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

but if he make them not, they will do him a mischief one time or another by shooting in the night. If the Smith make the Arrows, he leaves them in the same place, where the *Vaddahs* hung the Flesh. 175 105

* * * * * * * *

"About *Hourly* the remotest of the King's Dominions there are many of them, that are pretty tame, and come and buy and sell among the people. The King once having occasion of an hasty Expedition against the *Dutch*, the Governour summoned them all in to go with him, which they did. And with their Bows and Arrows did as good service as any of the rest but afterwards when they returned home again, they removed farther in the Woods, and would be seen no more, for fear of being afterwards prest again to serve the King.

"They never cut their hair but tye it up on their Crowns in a bunch. The cloth they use, is not broad nor large, scarcely enough to cover their Buttocks. The *wilder* and *tamer* sort of them do both observe a Religion. They have a God peculiar to themselves. The *tamer* do build Temples, the wild only bring their sacrifice under Trees, and while it is offering, dance round it, both men and women.

"They have their bounds in the Woods among themselves, and one company of them is not to shoot nor gather hony or fruit beyond those bounds. Neer the borders stood a *Jack-Tree*; one *Vaddah* being gathering some fruit from this Tree, another *Vaddah* of the next division saw him, and told him he had nothing to do to gather *Jacks* from that Tree, for that belonged to them. They fell to words and from words to blows, and one of them shot the other. At which more of them met and fell to skirmishing so briskly with their Bows and Arrows, that twenty or thirty of them were left dead upon the spot.

"They are so curious of their Arrows that no smith can please them: The King once to gratifie them for a great Present they brought him, gave all of them of his best made Arrow-blades: which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a Rock by a River and ground them into another form. The Arrows they use are of a

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175
105

different fashion from all other, and the *Chingulays* will not use them.

"They have a peculiar way by themselves of *preserving Flesh*. They cut a hollow Tree and put honey in it, and then fill it up with flesh, and stop it up with clay. Which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want.

"It has usually been told me that their way of *catching Elephants* is, that when the Elephant lyes asleep they strike their ax into the sole of his foot, and so laming him he is in their power to take him. But I take this for a fable, because I know the sole of the Elephants foot is so hard, that no axe can pierce it at a blow; and he is so wakeful that they can have no opportunity to do it.

"For portions with their Daughters in marriage they give hunting Dogs. They are reported to be courteous. Some of the *Chingulays* in discontent will leave their houses and friends, and go and live among them, where they are civilly entertained. The tamer sort of them, as hath been said, will sometimes appear, and hold some kind of trade with the tame Inhabitants, but the wilder called *Rawha-Vaddaks* never show themselves."

175
648

From Knox's account it is evident that in his time or a little before this, some of the Veddas were in touch with the court and were even sufficiently amenable to discipline to be of use as an auxiliary fighting force, indeed, there is abundant evidence that long before this a part of the inhabitants of Ceylon, with enough Vedda blood in them for their contemporaries to call them Veddas, were politically organized and constituted a force whom the rulers of the island found it necessary to consider. Upon this subject we cannot do better than quote part of a letter from Mr H. Parker in which this authority states his views on this subject. "At the time when Sinhalese history begins, a part of them [Veddas] had reached a far more advanced state than the others. They were politically organised, and according to the Mahavansa had a supreme king and subordinate chiefs 80 years after Wijaya became king[1].

[1] "He established the yakkhas Kalavela in the eastern quarter of the city [Anuradhapura]; and the chief of the yakkhas, Citta, he established on the lower side of the Abhaya tank. He (the king), who knew how to accord his protection with

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

"The invaders, or rather settlers, from the valley of the Ganges intermarried with these more advanced natives, and became the Sinhalese of the present day (with a later mixture of Tamil or Indian blood). 175 648

"The wilder natives continued to lead the life of their primitive ancestors, and only to a very limited extent intermarried with the Sinhalese.

"Three or four centuries ago the Vaeddas were spread over the Matale district and the North-western Province, and I believe Sabaragamuwa[1]." 175

discrimination, established the slave born of the yakkha tribe, who had formerly rendered him great service, at the southern gate of the city. He established within the garden of the royal palace the mare-faced yakkhini, and provided annually demon offerings to them as well as to others.

"In the days of public festivity, this monarch, seated on a throne of equal eminence with the yakkha chief Citta, caused joyous spectacles, representing the actions of the devas as well as of mortals to be exhibited.....

"This monarch befriending the interests of the yakkhas, with the co-operation of Kalavela and Citta, who had the power (though yakkhas) of rendering themselves invisible (in the human world), conjointly with them, enjoyed his prosperity." *Mahawanso*, Chapter x, p. 44 (Tournour's translation). Further, the same king "provided...a temple [or "tala tree," the readings differ] for the Vyadha-deva" which Mr Parker states must refer to the Vedda God.

[1] Additional evidence for this is given by Nevill who says—"I have unpublished MSS. which represent the Vaeddas as found in the forests north of Putlam at the time of Bhuwaneka Bahu Raja of Kotta (about 1466 A.D.), and another which represents Vaeddas as the chief inhabitants of the Matale district in the region of Raja Sinha, about 1635 A.D." (*Taprobanian*, Vol. II, April 1883, p. 30). With regard to Veddas in Saberagamuwa, Bailey notes that—"Though traces of their former existence there are evident and numerous, there is every reason to believe that many centuries have passed since they were there. Fields, villages and families yet retain the name Veddahs, as Weddeya pangoo, Wedde coombore, Wedde watte, Wedde ella, Wedde gala, Weddage etc.....Indeed, Saffragam, or Habara gamowa, means the district of Veddahs, or barbarous people: and in this form of the word, the former existence of Veddahs again can be traced, as Habara goddage, Habara hadowa, etc. It is traditional throughout Saffragam, that once Veddahs predominated over Sinhalese in that district, and that, as the latter gained ground, the former withdrew towards Bintenne and Wellasse.....Mr Macready, of the Civil Service, has given me very important proof of the existence of Veddahs 'near the Sumanta mountains' [Adam's Peak]. He has given me the translation of some stanzas from a Sinhalese poem, written about 400 years ago, called the Pinwi Sandese, or the dove's message. The poem treats of a message sent, by means of a dove, from Cotta (near Colombo) to Vishnu at Dondera, at the extreme south of the island. The dove takes its course exactly over the district lying below Adam's Peak. The poet addresses the dove, and tells her she will see 'the daughters of the Veddahs' clothed in Riti bark, their hair adorned with peacock's plumes. So wild are they that the poet describes the herds of deer as being startled at the sight of them." ("Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 "A 16th century MS.—the *Wanni Kaplo-is Pota*—records the appointment of a Vaedda chief as Bandara Mudiyanse (a title applied only to high caste chiefs); at the king's orders (Bhuvenaika Bahu of Kotte) he fixed the boundaries of four districts or "Pattas" of the North-western Province. His name was Panikki Vaedda[1], he caught elephants and took some to the king, with another Vaedda chief, a Registrar or Secretary, called Liyana Vaedda. I have an early 17th century MS. which gives an account of part of a civil war in the Matale District, carried on by his nephew against the king who imprisoned Knox. Among the insurgent leaders were first, three Sinhalese chiefs of Matale, and after them are enumerated a number of Vaedda chiefs (including one woman) who are all expressly said to be Vaeddas; of the 'Vaedda wasagama'; one of them was the chief of Bibile[2]."

[m] Ceylon," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* 1869, Vol. 11, p. 313.) Within the last few months the matter has been rendered almost certain by the discovery by the late James Parsons to the E.E. of Ratnapura of quartz implements of the type figured in Plate VIII.

[1] The mention of the existence of a chief called Panikki Vedda is especially interesting since Panikkin Yaka reputed to be the spirit (yaka) of a long dead Vedda chief, who was especially skilled in hunting buffalo and elephant, is honoured among the Henebedda Veddas. This record shows that the memory of this "Vedda" chief has been maintained among the local present Sinhalese, who themselves are partly of Vedda descent, until it recently passed to the Henebedda Veddas. (Cf. Religion, Chapter VI.)

[2] The present day Sinhalese of the Veddas say that such Vedda chiefs as these have recorded were called *mannipu* and required annually to Kandy with offerings of honey, wax, and venison for the king, who might also invite their presence on special occasions when they would attend, each *mannipu* bringing with him a ceremonial feather ornament (still used by the Sinhalese chiefs) called *ensapata* (literally "fan"), with an ornament made of wood or ivory on the top called *Ammaphawa*, or *Ada*. Mr Bibile told us the following story of what happened on one occasion when the *mannipu* stayed near Kandy with one Galabandar who seems to have been a Vedda. The king instructed Galabandar to remove the *Ada* from his guests' *ensapata* without their knowledge. On the day of the audience these *Ada* were missing, and as there was no time to get others the Vedda chiefs had to go before the king without them. The king questioned them: "Where are your *Ada*? Lost?" and the king said "Henceforth only I will have the right to *Ada* and you Vedda chiefs have no right to them." And the king called the Vedda chiefs *bandar*, each *mannipu* being given a name, e.g. Mahabandar, Hantanbandar, Talabandar, Kirilibandar, Rangalibandar, Ratabandar, Pilandar, Hettibandar, Kapurubandar, and so forth, and henceforth the Veddas must annually go to Kandy yearly taking tribute to the king. And their people took their chiefs' names as community names, e.g. Dunigala and Henebedda are Mahabandar. It did not appear that *bandar* names of this sort were generally known to the Veddas, and we confess that we at present attach no importance to the story we

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Veddn AX5

Veddas are also mentioned in an old family record translated by Nevill which he terms the *Nada Kada Chronicle* and which he considers cannot be later than the sixteenth century[1]. 175

The following references to Veddas are taken from the chronicle, for, though they obviously refer to settled and civilised Veddas who may have had little Vedda blood in their veins, they are interesting as showing the social and political influence exerted by these.

The first passage concerns two Pattani soldiers engaged by the Sinhalese chief as guards.

"Then he took them with him, thinking they will be good to guard against the troubles caused by the Vedas. He kept them as a guard against the Vedas of Pala Vekana."

The next reference runs: "The chief of all the Vedas was Karadiyan. What was their service? It was to erect temporary

have cited, which is only given here because we feel that it is possible that in the hands of competent historians it may prove to be of some use.

[1] "Report reached me that a valuable record existed, kept in hereditary and exclusive possession by an old family in the district of Nada Kada. Nada Kada is the modern Tamil name of the Na-dwipa, or Naga-dwipaya, of the Eastern Province of Ceylon, and is situated to the south of Batticaloa. It was, in early times, an independent or feudatory principality, sometimes one, sometimes the other; and it was here Sada Tiss, brother of Dutugemunu, ruled.....The record evidently refers to a time when this district was depopulated of its former Sinhalese land-owners, and all cultivation of rice had been abandoned. It tells us how a band of Sinhalese took up these lands, and redeemed them, preserving friendly relations with the Veddhas, Mahdhoos, and Mahdhoosis, who held the forests and coast.

"This record is said to have been in Sinhalese, but was translated into Tamil by the ancestors of the family from whom I procured it, the hereditary managers of the Thiru Kovil temple. They said that during the guerilla warfare between the English and the Vanni Chiefs and Dissawas of Uva and Velusia, the Sinhalese villagers of the district migrated (? were deported) to the Kandian hills and their place was filled up by emigrants from Jaffna, Tamil Veddhas. Hence the Sinhalese record became useless, and was translated. It bears on its face the proof of this translation, in many odd changes and expressions.

"The writers were a family of Sinhalese nobles of high rank, whose ballas held the hereditary dignity of footo-mother to the royal princes.....

"They were banished to Hathawana, then a deserted site, but anciently the capital of Sada Tiss. We have incidentally an interesting glimpse at the household of a feudal noble, of this period, about the thirteenth century,.....

"The work of cutting down the trees that had overgrown the rice-lands was done by the Veddhas, doubtless for a share of the crop, and the powerful Wanni Rajas were gratified with opposite tracts, reclaimed for their exclusive benefit, just as among their Kandian hills, the nobles had been accustomed to sow the outstrin lands, the crop of which went to the feudal chief." *Tripodamana*, Vol. II, p. 197.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175

buildings and screens; and they were allowed if they erected a dam for Sevuka field at Sunga Ford, and took charge of the land, stacking the crop, to thresh and take each the grain of one sheath. Over every one the Vedas were the chief men."

Again it says: "The Veda Puliyan was the chief of the Seven Wanams of Akkara Pattu. On the way to Akkara Pattu is Puliyan Tivu, he remaining there, used to send to the Muthaliyar and his family, wax, honey and other things...."

"Because he supplied pingos (i.e. presents) for the Seven Wanam, Rajapaksa Muthaliyar gave Kandi in marriage to the Veda Puliyan and he lived at Puliyan Tivu."

The next reference is by no means clear, but it shows how intermarriage between Veddas and Sinhalese might come about. The last few lines of this passage are especially difficult to understand; they seem to show that the Vedda grandfather of the girl given to the washer had recognised rights in his grandchildren, and that he was of enough importance to be propitiated with gifts of cloth.

"Besides this, Nilame Rala and his wife and people, going to Sitawakka, returned by the Bintenne road to Nadu Kadu. Whilst so coming, a Veda woman brought forth a child on the path at Sellapattu, and without cleansing it or securing the umbilical cord, left it on the path. They seeing that child, brought it up. The Veda woman returning for the child could not see it, but found the tracks of many people on the path, and went away thinking they had taken it. They brought up the child with the name of Para Natchi (Mistress Road). She was given in marriage to one Muttuvan and had 16 daughters. Of these fifteen were given in marriage, and the youngest was unmarried. Then the washer who came with them, having lost his wife, was single...they gave him in marriage the youngest daughter of the Veda woman. Children were born to these. The Sellapattu Veda hearing of this, year by year began to sell the children. That custom exists among the Paravar also, and among the Sandar. As he did so, saying they must make gifts to that Veda, buying ten cubits of broad-cloth, tearing it into pieces of four cubits, they gave it to the Veda[1]."

[1] *The Tajavalamiya*, Vol. II, p. 140.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It is clear that in the condition of affairs here recorded there must for many centuries have been a zone of contact between Veddas and Sinhalese, and that contact metamorphosis must have occurred in both peoples. There is abundant evidence of this, and we should not insist further on this point if it were not necessary to combat a view which, if not clearly expressed, nevertheless seems to dominate much that has been written on the Veddas. We refer to the belief that although the Veddas have been much influenced by the Sinhalese, the latter owe little or nothing to the Veddas. The former proposition finds its fullest exposition in the statement so often made to us in Ceylon that "there are no real Veddas left"; but with the exception of Nevill, we cannot find that anyone who has written on Ceylon has held that the Veddas have strongly influenced the Sinhalese[1]. That this influence was, however, of importance is shown by the fact that the families of the present aristocracy of the Vedda country are proud of their Vedda descent, which is equally acknowledged by themselves and the less wild Veddas. Thus Mr W. R. Bibile Ratemahatmaya pointed out to me that long ago his people were Veddas, and that even after certain of his ancestors had settled down and had intermarried so as to be classed as Sinhalese, there were subsequent infusions of Vedda blood into the family. It was clear that this relationship to the Veddas was the reason for the prestige he undoubtedly enjoyed among the Danigala and the Henebedda Veddas. For the same reason one of his relatives was allowed to pasture his cattle on Henebedda

[1] Since the above was written we have learnt from Mr Parker that he regards the Kandyan Sinhalese as essentially Veddas with an infusion of foreign blood, and this view is stated in *Ancient Ceylon* (cf. especially p. 30).

It appears to us that the considerable physical differences which undoubtedly exist between the Veddas and Kandyan Sinhalese do not support this belief in anything like its extreme form, though it is but reasonable to suppose that there is Vedda blood in the inhabitants of the Kandyan districts. We do not think this is the case to any very large extent for, although constantly on the look out for Sinhalese who resembled Veddas, we did not see any except in the present Vedirata, and even there we did not see many. Further, the measurements of the Sarasins show that there is a difference of 61 mm. or nearly 2½ inches in the stature of Veddas and Kandyan Sinhalese. The actual figures which are taken from the tables at the end of the Sarasins' volume are as follows, the average of 24 Vedda men was 1·553 m. and the average of 10 Kandyans was 1·614 m.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 territory in the neighbourhood of Pattiavelagalge cave described
177 in Chapter v. This was about 100 years ago, and may have been connected with the troubles of the revolution which undoubtedly led to an influx of Sinhalese into the wilds of the Vedda country.

Further, the eschatological beliefs of the Kandyan Sinhalese furnish abundant evidence that these have been influenced by the Veddas, and certain of these beliefs can be explained on no other hypothesis, unless it be asserted that the beliefs of the Veddas and those of the invading Sinhalese were from the first nearly identical. We refer particularly to the *bandara* beliefs described on pp. 141 to 145, which have probably attained to the position they now hold because, as pointed out to us by Mr Parker, it is in accordance with Sinhalese Buddhist teaching that the spirits of the deceased may become *yaku*. This of course might merely imply that Sinhalese Buddhism had originally been influenced by the Vedda Cult of the Dead, but that this is not the explanation is shown by the fact—for information concerning which we are indebted to Mr Parker—that the Low-Country Sinhalese have nothing of the Kandyan "hero and ancestor worship" as it is styled by this authority[1].

114 Sir James Emerson Tennant devoted a chapter of his monumental work to the Veddas, but interesting as this chapter is it contains "little else than a comparison of the habits of the people of the island, as observed by the ancient voyagers in the fourth and fifth centuries, with the traditional...customs of the Veddahs as reported by Knox. The accomplished author throws no new light on the wild tribes of the Veddahs as they are. On the contrary, his account of them is in some important particulars defective, and even inaccurate. He glances casually at those tribes which are in the wildest state, touching with precision none of their peculiarities, and dwells in detail upon those only, which, from long association with the Sinhalese and Tamil races, have lost much of their originality. Of the ancient aborigines he has compiled much that is curious. Of the existing Veddahs he has given us little besides an epitome of former notices."

[1] We again quote from one of Mr Parker's letters.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

So wrote John Bailey in 1863 in a footnote to the paper in which his own observations are reported, and no one who knows the Veddas will disagree with him. Indeed, Bailey's paper is a remarkably careful and critical piece of work, concerning which all must agree with Nevill who recognised it as the first scientific account of the Veddas[1]. 114

It was succeeded in 1881 by a summary by Virchow of what was then known of the Veddas, and measurements were given of a number of Vedda skulls. This paper was translated into English and published in 1886 in Vol. IX of the *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. But no original detailed study of the sociology of the Veddas appeared until the extremely valuable observations of the late Hugh Nevill, to which we shall frequently refer, appeared in the *Taprobanian*, to be followed in 1893 by a magnificently illustrated work *Die Weddas von Ceylon und die sie umgebenden Völkerschaften*, published by the Doctors Paul and Fritz Sarasin, which however deals less fully with the sociology than with the physical anthropology of the Veddas[2].

Three articles by Dr L. Rutimeyer, published in 1903[3], describe the author's impressions of parties of Danigala and Henebedda Veddas who visited him at Bibile Rest House and review the then existing condition of our knowledge concerning the ethnology of the Veddas, finishing with a summary of the views expressed by the Sarasins concerning the relationship of the Veddas to other races.

As this volume will scarcely touch on physical anthropology we now give a short account of the chief physical characteristics 142

[1] *Taprobanian*, 1887, Vol. I, p. 175.

[2] It must not be thought, however, that the period from 1863 to 1893 was absolutely barren; Mr B. L. Hutchinson published a paper dealing with the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1876, and papers on the Veddas continued to appear in the *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. One paper, that by C. Stevens (*Proc. Roy. As. Soc. Ceylon Branch*, 1886), must be regarded as absolutely misleading, and the value of many of these communications is reduced by the absence of data concerning the origin and mode of collection of the information given. Thus in Volume VII, 1881, Mr Louis De Zoysa published a number of Vedda songs which would be of great value if a single word were said of where, how, or by whom they were collected. This literature will be found in a bibliography given by the Sarasins on p. 594 of their work.

[3] *Die Nilgalaveddas in Ceylon*. Globus 1903.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
342
516

Plate II

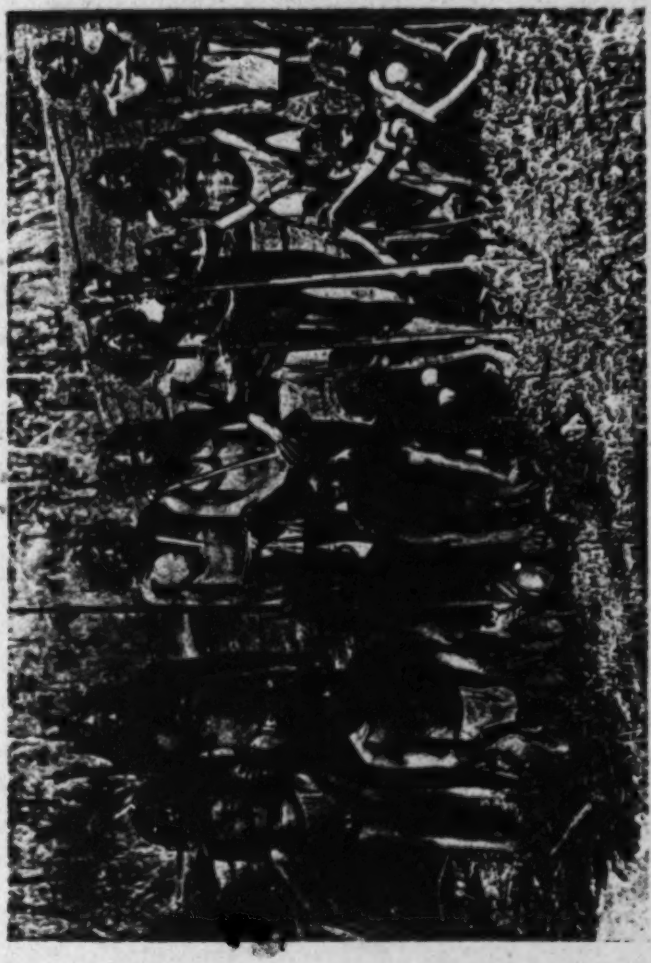
Danigala Veddas on look-out rock

[facing p.16a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
302
411

Plate III



Group of Veddas of Hunbedda and Bingada

[facing p.16 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate IV

142

Porumala (Waiaba), headman of the Henebedda Veddas

[facing p. 16C]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
302

Plate V

Sita Wanniya of Henebedda

[facing p. 16d]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142

Sita Wanniya of Henebedda

[facing p. 16 e]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate VII

142

Poromala, a Henebedda youth

[facing p. 16 b]

140 of the purer Veddas in order that the reader may appreciate the bearing of what will be said in other parts of the book concerning the different groups of Veddas we visited.

The general appearance of the Veddas will be most readily appreciated by examining the photographs of pure, or nearly pure-blooded Veddas reproduced in Plates II and III. The first of these represents four men of Danigala and a half-breed boy. The oldest man is Kaira (1), the "patriarch" or senior of the Danigala group[1]. Of the three other men, his sons, the two in the foreground are Randu Wanniya (2), nearest to the pole supporting the hut, and Tuta (3). Plate III is a group of Henebedda Veddas, the relatively tall man with his hands hanging by his sides is the half-breed Appuhami (4), and the taller of the two men with axes over their shoulders, the Henebedda shaman[2], is also a half-breed. The man to the right of the shaman with bow and arrows in his hands is Kaira (5), the youth in front of him is Poromala (6), on whose left hand Tuta (7) kneels by the side of Kalua who is in the same position. The four men between Appuhami and the shaman all appear to be fairly typical Veddas; the man next to Appuhami is Poromala of Bingoda, upon whose right stand Handuna (8) and Randu Wanniya (9).

141 In stature the Veddas are short: the Sarasins measured 24 men of the "Central Vedda district" whom they considered pure-blooded and obtained an average of 1·553 mm. (60¾ inches) with a minimum of 1·460 mm. (57½ inches) and a maximum of 1·600 mm. (63 inches). There was only one man of 1·600 mm. and 20 of the 24 men measured were below 1·575 mm. (62 inches). Eleven Vedda women of the same district gave an average

[1] Two larger photographs of this man as he appeared some 15 years ago are given by the Sarasins (Plate VII, figure 10), who consider him a "tolerably pure-blooded Vedda." The numbers in brackets refer to the genealogy on p. 60.

[2] Shaman is the title which the Tungus give to their "spirit-conjurers." In *Hobson-Jobson* (1903) it is said that the terms shaman and shamanism "are applied in modern times to superstitions of the kind that connects itself with exorcism and 'devil-dancing' as their most prominent characteristic.....The characteristic of shamanism is the existence of certain soothsayers or medicine-men, who profess a special art of dealing with the mischievous spirits who are supposed to produce illness and other calamities, and who invoke these spirits and ascertain the means of appeasing them in trances produced by fantastic ceremonies and convulsive dancings."

[illegible] – should be 141; see p. xx. – Ann[illegible]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

height of 1·433 mm. (56⅜ inches) with a minimum of 1·355 mm. (53⅜ inches) and a maximum of 1·500 mm. (59 inches). The median of the men was 1·545 mm. (60⅞ inches), that of the women 1·435 mm. (56½ inches). Although Veddas do not become unduly fat they have, when well nourished, sturdy rather than slight figures, and a few of the older men may present rather prominent abdomens. The hair is wavy, sometimes almost curly, and in old age not rarely turns white. There is little hair upon the bodies of the purer Veddas and the growth of hair upon the face can best be described as slight or moderate, usually consisting of a rather thin moustache and sparse goatee beard.

The skin of the Veddas varies enormously, that of the face being generally somewhat lighter than that of the skin of the chest. But apart from these minor variations, the skin colour of any series of individuals will be found to vary from a deep brown-black, through various shades of bronze, in some of which a definite reddish tone can be detected, to a colour which can only be called yellowish-brown. A medium brown-black is perhaps the commonest, but apart from the darkest brown-black every colour, even the lightest, occurs in individuals whose general appearance suggests that they are pure-, or almost pure-blooded Veddas, and we have no doubt that the bronze shades occur quite as often among pure-blooded Veddas as among the less pure. Indeed our experience suggests that the occurrence of a skin colour of the darker shades of brown-black may be taken as evidence of miscegenation. The eyes are always dark brown. The head is long and narrow, the Sarasins give the average cephalic index of 17 male skulls as 70·5 (minimum 64·9 and maximum 75·9, median 71). The length-height index of the same skulls is 73 (minimum 65·4, maximum 79, median 73·4). Generally the face is long rather than broad, but in this respect there is considerable variation. Twelve skulls gave an average facial index of 88·2 (minimum 77·2, maximum 99·2, median 88·5), but ten of the skulls were over 85, the two lowest both giving an index of about 77.

The brow ridges are well marked so that the eyes appear deeply set or even sunken. The chin is somewhat pointed and

[cerebra, should be m.; see p. xx. - Ana'lyst]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142 is rarely prominent. The lips, though well developed, are not tumid (except sometimes in the young); sometimes the mouth is rather flat. This when accompanied by moderately prominent cheek bones gives some faces an expression of considerable energy. The jaw is not prognathous, the nostrils are moderately broad, the root of the nose is depressed but never flattened to any considerable degree. The average of the nasal indices of 17 skulls gave the figure 52·7 (minimum 43·3, maximum 62·2, 141 median 52·3), which is just short of the index (53) at which platyrrhiny is commonly assumed to begin. Nevertheless we believe that the Veddas may more fairly be classed as mesorrhine than platyrrhine, for certainly the impression made on us by the living was that they were not specially broad-nosed. The capacity of the 18 male skulls described by the Sarasins varies from 1012 to 1502 c.c. with an average of 1278 c.c.: none of the three female Vedda skulls from the inner Vedda district have a capacity of less than 1150 c.c., though there is a skull of an adult Vedda woman in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons with a capacity of only 960 c.c.

Summing up the physical characters to which we have briefly referred we may define the Veddas as a short, wavy-haired, dolichocephalic race, with moderately long faces and moderately broad noses. Expressing the results of measurements taken by the Sarasins we may say that chamaeprosopes and leptoprosopes occur in about equal numbers, and that the Veddas are mesorrhine or present a low grade of platyrrhiny.

The latest Vedda literature of any importance is a volume 114 published by the Sarasins which records the work they did 112 in Ceylon during 1907 when they established the existence of a stone age upon the island. This fact had not been realised before, though two naturalists, Mr E. E. Green and Mr J. Pole, both old residents, had already collected and recognised as artifacts the quartz implements which were the typical product of the stone age in Ceylon, and which, as pointed out by the Sarasins, are most reasonably to be attributed to the Veddas. A number of rock shelters were explored; these were situated at Kataragam in the south of the island where no Veddas now exist, and in other parts of Uva, in the present Vedda country.

[[illegible], see p. xx. —Analysis]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Not all the caves investigated yielded evidence of prehistoric habitation, but from a certain number were obtained quartz, chert and shell implements which put the matter beyond doubt and conclusively show that Ceylon formerly possessed a stone age. The greater part of the volume is taken up by an account of prehistoric quartz and chert artifacts, and the excellent reproductions given by the authors show that the quartz implements they discovered belong to the same type as those found by ourselves and described elsewhere[1].

But in addition the Sarasins found hammer stones, a few pieces of worked bone, and a series of shells of the large land snail (*Helix phoenix*), the curve of each shell being occupied by a circular hole large enough to allow of its sharp edge being used as a cutting tool[2].

Plate VIII shows a number of typical Vedda implements. All are of quartz except No. 2 which is of chert. Nos. 1 and 3 are worked on one side only, the unworked side being shown in order to illustrate the well-marked bulb of percussion which distinguishes many of the specimens. The general characteristics of these implements are so well shown in the plate that a description in detail is not necessary. Attention may, however, be called to figures 6, 8 and 9; the first of these shows a large part of the outer surface of the quartz pebble from which it was made. No. 8 belongs to a type of which numerous examples occur among European stone implements, this specimen is thicker than is usual and measures 15 mm. from one surface to the other. No. 9 can scarcely have been intended for anything but an arrow head, two views are given of this remarkable implement which comes from a cave on the Scarborough Estate at Maskeliya, and for a drawing of which I am indebted to Mr Pole. No. 2 is of chert and was found in the same cave; two views of this implement are given. The localities from which the other specimens were collected were as follows: No. 1 was found by Mr Pole at Maskeliya, No. 3 we picked up at Bandarawela, No. 4 was collected by Mr Green

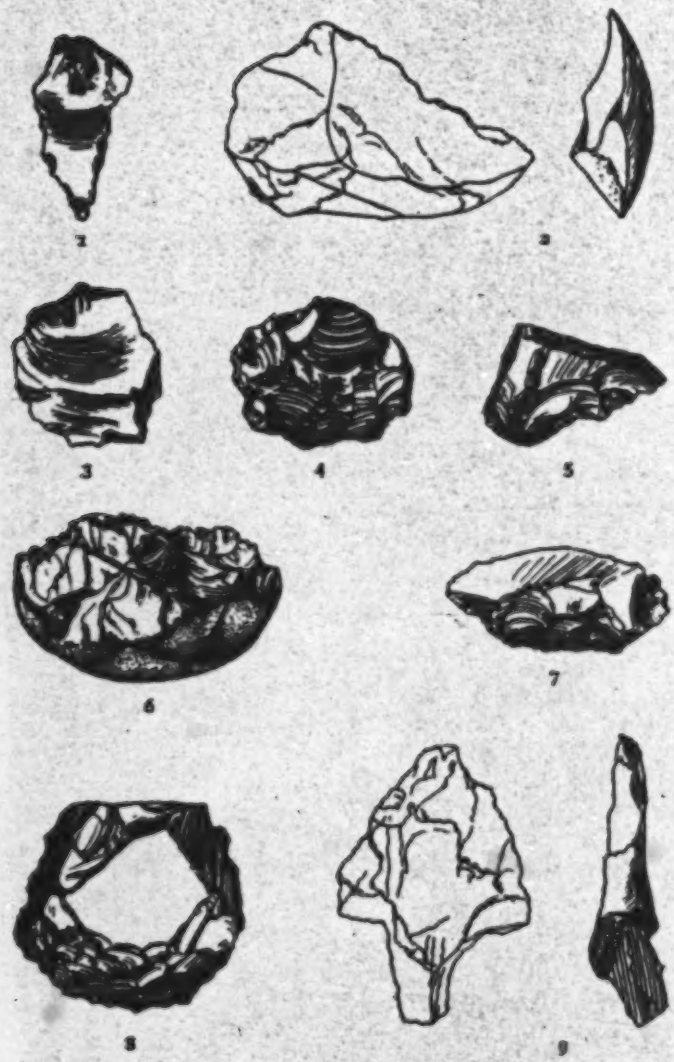
[1] C. G. Seligmann, "Quartz Implements from Ceylon," *Man*, 1908, 63.

[2] These shells in fact constitute a primitive plane or spokeshave and resemble those found in Queensland and some parts of South America at the present day.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate VIII

172
324



Quartz and chert implements

[facing p. 20]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172
324

near Peradeniya, Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8 are in Mr Pole's collection and were found by him near Maskeliya.

The questions raised by the discovery of implements such as those figured are so many and interesting that no excuse is needed for considering some of the issues at length. The data are the caves excavated by the Sarasins in which prehistoric implements were found, and our own work in Ceylon including the partial excavation of the Bendiyagalge caves which are described and figured in Chapter IV.

In the first place if we accept the suggestion that Veddas, the ancestors of those still existing, are responsible for these implements, their distribution will give valuable information as to the former extent of the Vedda country. It may be said at once that the distribution of these implements, as far as it is at present known, agrees with our historic knowledge of the extent of the Vedda domain, and adds to it the heights of Uva up to about 4000 feet (Bandarawela), the country around Kandy, and the hill country to the south (Gampola) and in the neighbourhood of Adam's Peak (Maskeliya)[1]. And since they have been found in the neighbourhood of Matale they add an interesting confirmation to what Mr Parker has said on p. 9 concerning the former occurrence of Veddas in this part of the country. Within the last few months the range of these implements has been extended south to the neighbourhood of Ratnapura, where a number of excellent specimens were found by the late James Parsons, who wrote to us concerning them as follows: "I dug out a cave in Sabaragamuwa in a ravine to the north-east of Ratnapura which was most interesting. I have full notes of the cave—briefly it is sufficiently high above the stream for it to have been impossible for it to enter the cave in

[1] We consulted the late James Parsons, Director of the Mineral Survey, concerning the geological formation of the rounded grassy hills near Bandarawela called *patanas*, upon which we had independently collected many quartz artifacts. He informed us that the capping of these hills usually consists of more or less disintegrated granular quartz rock, but that this did not seem to contain nearly enough clear quartz to produce the flakes even as a "survival of the fittest" in the process of disintegration. Parsons did however find several water-worn pebbles, all broken, but there were not enough to lead him to think they represented a capping gravel, although in the case of the Peradeniya locality there is no doubt that there is river gravel on the hill.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172
324

geologically recent times. To a depth of 8 feet the cave is full of black earth containing many shells of the big tree snail mixed with the river shells, *bellan* (*Paludina ceylonica*), in such abundance that these shells are now occasionally collected and burnt for chunam. A shell is said to occur that is found only in the river at Ratnapura, but I did not succeed in finding it. The tradition is that the molluscs were used as food by 'an ancient Tamil people.' The shells are not calcined, but with them were a number of flakes of clear quartz—mostly made from pebbles, some of them the best I have seen and undoubtedly neolithic.... I do not think there can be any reasonable doubt about them. At a depth of five feet very rotten fragments of the top of a human skull and the region of the ear besides bits of long bones and some pieces of chert not obviously worked. At the entrance of the cave there is a sort of dyke thrown up, which is full of flakes some of which appear to be ground and polished."

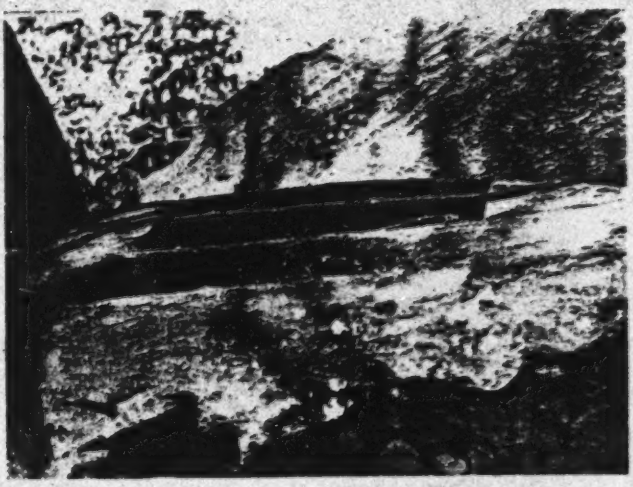
Parsons' premature death renders it unlikely that a full account of this find will ever be published, but owing to the kindness of Mrs Parsons we have been able to examine a number of the implements excavated by her husband. These include a number of cores, worked flakes and scrapers, and one flake of chert showing a bulb of percussion, but none of the specimens that I have handled show any signs of polishing[1].

[1] Since the above was written we have received the following account of the cave from Mr W. D. Holland on whose property we understand the cave is situated. "The cave is situated about a mile from my bungalow on the N. bank of a small stream and some 10 to 15 feet above present water level. The cave has been formed by the weathering out of a soft core of rock from gneiss of the ordinary kind and may have been assisted by the action of the stream when running at a higher level. The cave is a fairly large one and would accommodate several families, say 15 or so individuals, and is quite dry inside. It appears to have been banked up in front, but this may have been caused by debris falling from the cliff above. The strike I believe coincides with the stream S.W. N.W. We dug a pit about 5 feet in diameter and about 7 or 8 feet deep, and came upon a lot of shells of the *bellan* or water snail and some bones: a much shattered portion of the latter we thought to be a portion of a human skull, and Mr Parsons subsequently informed me by letter that this had been confirmed in Colombo....The quartz flakes were not found in the cave, but on the entrance bank where they had been exposed by the drip from the rock above washing the earth away and leaving them. The old inhabitants would actually work at the entrance for the sake of light. I know only of this one cave in this neighbourhood. The stream flows S.W. to the Kalugange (eventually), and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

M2

Plate IX



Steps cut in the rock at Bendiyagalge

[facing p. 22]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172

With regard to the distribution in time of these implements, it seems that they are of respectable, but of no great antiquity. They are found abundantly on the surface of the open grassy *patanas* at Bandarawela and also on the surface of the soil near Kandy and scattered everywhere in the neighbourhood of Maskeliya over the ground planted with tea. Considering that Ceylon is a well vegetated country with an abundant rainfall, these facts do not point to any high antiquity even if it is allowed that in the tea country the cultivation of a century has lowered the level by 9 to 12 inches, the estimate given by planters whom we questioned.

The evidence from the caves seems to point in the same direction. The Bendiyagalge caves present well marked drip ledges and many signs such as the steps (Plate IX) hewn in the rock, between the upper and lower caves, which show that they were used by the Sinhalese during the efflorescence of Buddhism before, or about the beginning of, the present era. This date is made perfectly certain by the occurrence in one of the caves, a few miles from Bendiyagalge and used by the same Veddas, of a typical drip ledge associated with an inscription of which Mr H. C. P. Bell, archaeological commissioner, says, "The Brahmi [characters] are of the oldest type, therefore B.C." This inscription has been read by the same authority as,—"(cave of) the chief...son of the chief Vela." It is therefore clear that these caves were at one time—about 2000 years ago—inhabited

rises about 1½ miles (bee line) to the east in the range which forms the watershed of the Kalugangs and Wallawe rivers. The elevation is approximately 1500 feet and the cave faces S. (about). The Sinhalese have used this cave for a mine for the shells of the *kalu*, which they burn into lime to eat with betel leaf. A large number of shells must have been removed but notwithstanding there must still be an enormous quantity left. We were also informed by the natives that there are two kinds of *kalu* shells found in the cave, only one of which is found in the neighbouring streams and the other must have been brought from some distance in the Ratnapura direction, 15 or so miles, and they inferred that these had been brought by whoever had lived in the cave, presumably for food. We also found some fragments of pottery (shattles) with the quartz flakes, which the Sinhalese said were of a thinner kind not made now; these however were no doubt left by Sinhalese gemmers or refugees at a later date, as caves in the jungle are still used by them if no houses are near. The rainfall of the district is heavy, some 200 inches. The cave would I think well repay a thorough exploration, but it should be undertaken by someone who has experience in such work and would be expensive."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

by Sinhalese who, as the results of excavation showed, had left behind them abundant evidence of their occupation of the cave. This will be clear from the following short account of our partial exploration of these caves. 172

The nature of its bottom made the lower cave the easier to examine, accordingly a longitudinal trench about a foot wide was dug in the long axis of the lower cave. The first six inches yielded fragments of pottery and a number of bones, a much rusted catty, and an areca nut cutter, both of the pattern in common use. A good many fragments of charcoal were found in the upper 12 to 18 inches, and several pieces of iron slag—perhaps six in all—as well as a number of land shells lying in groups, were found at a depth of from 1 to 2 feet. Bones and fragments of pottery continued to occur until a depth of about 2 feet was reached. Massive rock, which was taken to be the bed rock of the cave, was reached at about 2½ feet, and within a few inches of this were found many fragments of quartz—some milky, some ice-clear, some faintly opalescent, some smoky and some amethystine. A few of these were as big as hens' eggs, the majority varied from the size of an apricot to a haricot bean, some were even smaller. From the large number of pieces of quartz—nearly 300—collected at the depth mentioned from this trench, and a small trench driven at right angles to it, as well as the absence of pieces of country rock, there can be no doubt that these pieces of quartz were brought to the site in which they were found by man. They were not water-worn, and the variety of colour and opacity they presented make it certain that they had not weathered out in situ, in spite of the fact that quartz (but not as far as we could determine ice-clear quartz) occurs in segregation masses in the gneissic rock of the neighbourhood. Further, when all the fragments were carefully washed and examined it was found that some three per cent. of the pieces of quartz obtained from this cave showed signs of working. Additional proof that the fragments of quartz had been brought by man to the site on which they were found were afforded by some irregular digging done in the upper cave formed by the same rock mass as the lower cave, and separated from it only by a few feet. The floor of this

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172 cave was so rocky that a regular trench could not be dug, but a number of holes, the largest perhaps 6 feet by 4 feet, were dug down to what was apparently the country rock at the bottom of the cave. Fragments of pottery and the bones of animals were found in plenty in these holes, but altogether they yielded only four pieces of quartz, namely two water-worn pebbles and two broken pieces of clear glassy quartz. As in the lower cave a few small pieces of slag were found some 18 inches to 2 feet below the level of the surface. Most of the fragments of pottery found in both caves in the first 2 feet are decorated and are certainly not the remains of Vedda pots, and since fragments of iron slag are found associated with this pottery, the deposit in which it occurs must be regarded as formed not earlier than the Sinhalese occupation of the cave. As already stated massive rock was found six inches lower, and from these last few inches were obtained quartz implements and many unworked pieces of quartz. Clearly then the people responsible for these occupied the caves before the Sinhalese, but there is no obvious reason for holding that the makers of these implements antedated the Sinhalese by any long period. All that can be affirmed is that no pottery was found associated with the quartz fragments either by the Sarasins or by ourselves, but this is no sign of great age considering the extreme roughness of the pots made by the Veddas at the present day, and the fact that the art is believed, doubtless correctly, to have been adopted from the Sinhalese. One of us has already stated in *Man* his beliefs that these implements are neolithic and this is also the opinion of Mr Reginald Smith. Considering the refractory nature of the material, and allowing for the fact that it does not occur in large masses, the better formed implements must be regarded as neolithic in type, and in this connection it is significant that the bones found associated with the implements by the Sarasins are those of existing forms. These authors, however, believe that the implements they found are paleolithic, arguing that the absence of pottery and stone adze heads proves that they cannot be neolithic, though they apparently admit that in many respects the best implements approach neolithic forms.

174 The mention of these stone implements naturally brings

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174

us to the consideration of the advent of metal in Ceylon. We know of no fact indicating that this was not worked in the island before the advent of Vijaya, on the contrary, Vijaya and his band were obviously only one of many parties of settlers who came from India in prehistoric times. Perhaps the record in the Mahavansa of the coming of Buddha to Mahayangana refers to one such immigrant party, and the legend of Rama may with even more probability be taken to refer to an invasion from the mainland. It is quite certain that Vijaya found some sort of stable political organization on his arrival in the island to which he came after his followers had been repulsed from Jambudipa on account of their lawless character. The account in the Mahavansa by no means suggests that Ceylon was absolutely *terra incognita*, and the readiness with which communication with the mainland was kept up, and the facility with which other bands of adventurers arrive, confirms this.

Although these bands probably came from the valley of the Ganges there is evidence that there were highly civilised maritime powers in Southern India 2000 years ago. The Mahavansa states in the most matter of fact way that Vijaya sought and obtained the hand of a Hindu bride, the daughter of the king of an important Tamil state, and nothing is said as to difficulties encountered by his ambassadors in proceeding to the court of the Pandyan king, or by the princess in coming to Ceylon. Again a Pandyan king twice sent ambassadors to Rome to Augustus Caesar, B.C. 26 and 20, and Strabo records that the annual exports to India reached the large sum of 55,000,000 sesterces (nearly £500,000)[1]. There is therefore every reason to believe that the early colonists from India were metal workers. Indeed, the matter becomes almost a certainty when it is remembered that no authenticated polished stone adze or axe head has been discovered in Ceylon, although many

[1] For these facts I am indebted to a work *The Tamils eighteen hundred years ago*, by Mr V. Kanakasabhai Pillai (Madras and Bangalore, 1904). Mr Pillai further states (p. 3) that from a "careful study of ancient Tamil poems" he is "led to think that some of the earliest works were undoubtedly composed more than two thousand years ago, and that the Tamil people acquired wealth and civilisation at this early period by their commercial intercourse with foreign nations such as the Arabs, Greeks, Romans and Japanese."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 ancient sites have been excavated in certain districts, and gemming operations involving the digging out and examination of thousands of tons of gravel have taken place.

Probably the Nagas referred to in the Mahavansa are an immigrant race, and Mr Parker suggests that they may have been an offshoot of the Nayars of South-west India. Whether this is so or not the Nagas, according to Sinhalese historical works, drove the aborigines out of North and West Ceylon and "all Ceylon down to about Madawachchiya was known as Nagadipa (the Island of the Nagas) for many centuries after Christ[1]." Further, the compiler of the Mahavansa who wrote about the end of the fifth century A.D. relates that after appearing to the "yakkhas" at Mahayangana, Buddha visited Nagadipa where he composed a quarrel between Mahodara and Culodara a maternal uncle and nephew concerning the ownership of a "gem-set throne." It is further recorded that "the maternal uncle of Mahodara Mani Akkhika, the Naga king of Kalyani" near Colombo, was visited by Buddha at Kalyani on which account the Kalyani dagaba was subsequently built[2].

[1] This information is taken from one of Mr Parker's letters.

[2] The general tendency at the present time seems to be to regard the Nagas as mythical beings connected with the water. We cannot regard this belief as well founded, although it is only necessary to look through Brigade Surgeon C. F. Oldham's book (*The Sun and the Serpent*, London, 1905), to appreciate how many Nagas are regarded as demigods or heroes at the present day. But considering the extensive distribution of ancestor worship throughout India, this cannot be taken as an argument against the existence of human beings called Nagas, who must be distinguished from their deified dead.

There are at the present day powerful tribes called Nagas in Assam yet, as pointed out by Brigade Surgeon Oldham, the folklore of Northern India is full of legends connected with the supernatural powers of the Nagas. "These demigods are still propitiated, before any other deity, when the country is suffering from drought or excessive rain. And tradition says that human sacrifices were common, on such occasions, in days gone by." (*Op. cit.* pp. 49, 50.)

Burnouf (quoted by Oldham, *op. cit.* pp. 146, 147), records that in the time of Asoka the Nagas were numerous and powerful, for when "this king wishing to divide the relics of Buddha amongst the new stupas which he had built, went with an army to remove the relics from the old stupa at Ramagrama, the Nagas refused to allow him to do so. And Asoka, powerful as he was, did not persist.

"In the Vishnu Purana (IV, xxiv, 479, cited by Oldham, p. 147), it is said that nine Nagas will reign in Padmavati, Kantipura, and Mathura," and Oldham quotes Sir A. Cunningham to the effect that "these serpent chiefs, whose names he gives

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

All these facts suggest that metal must have been known in Ceylon before the invasion by Vijaya, and once introduced, there is no doubt that within a few years metal would have been distributed throughout the whole island.

Although the Veddas are all agreed that they were never otherwise in habits and culture than they are at the present time, every Sinhalese in the Vedirata believes that they once had great, powerful and wealthy chiefs and that they possessed hoards of gold and gems. Nevill, who takes somewhat their view, says: "Sinhalese, who are old and intelligent, and who have lived among Vaeddas, all agree that in ancient times Vaeddas...were often very rich and powerful. In such cases their wealth was put into gold cooking vessels, and strings of gems, etc., for their women. Poorer men had copper cooking vessels. The last of these gold vessels were lost by them during the long guerilla wars between the Kandians of Velasse and Dumbara, and Europeans, especially the English. The tradition is positive, and seems reliable. Nigala Banda, a splendid old Kandian chief, now Ratemahatmaya of Lower Bintenne, whose ancestors have lived amongst the Vaeddas of Nilgala from time immemorial, assures me there is no mistake in this, but their former use of gold cooking vessels is clearly true, and that people now-a-days have no idea how proud and powerful they were, until the *maha kaeraella* (the long war with the English)."

We could discover no reason for this belief, which seems to be effectually disposed of by the evidence of the very old Sinhalese informant whom we quote at the beginning of the next chapter. It is, however, firmly rooted in the minds of the majority of the Kandyan Sinhalese and is probably in part due to confusion between Veddas and Kandyans of mixed Vedda descent who until recently called themselves Veddas or were known as Veddas to their neighbours. Many such men living in the Vedirata took care to keep in touch with the

from their coins, held most of the country between the Jumna and the Narbada; and that they ruled as independent princes during the first two centuries of the Christian era" (*loc. cit.*). Mr Vincent Smith points out that the defeat of a Naga chief, Ganapati Naga, is recorded on one of the pillars set up by Samudra Gupta who reigned in the fourth century A.D. (*Early History of India*, 1908, p. 268).

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 Veddas, who to some extent looked upon them as chiefs and protectors, and to whom they made presents of game and honey. Another factor leading to the belief in the former glory of the Veddas is the persistence in popular form of the legend of Vijaya and Kuweni, which though absolutely unknown to the Veddas is firmly established among the Sinhalese.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER II

PRESENT CONDITION OF THE VEDDAS

WE propose to treat the Veddas under three headings :— 101

(i) Veddas.
(ii) Village Veddas.
(iii) Coast Veddas.

Although it may not be easy in every case to say into which group a given person falls, and although the proposed classification rests on no natural or known physical basis, it seems that at the present day the Veddas fall into these three groups characterised by different sociological features. The term "Rock" or "Jungle" Vedda will be avoided; it has been applied by some authors to the wilder specimens of that class which we propose to call simply Veddas.

The coast Veddas are briefly described in Chapter XII.; they live in scattered villages on the east coast and are chiefly to be found north of Batticaloa. They have much Tamil blood in their veins, and though often taller than pure Veddas, some still retain an appearance which suggests their Vedda origin. This is far more marked in the males than in the females, and it appeared to us that any of the latter might have been local Tamils, whereas some of the men clearly differed from the surrounding population. [563]

Before giving an account of the present condition of the different Vedda communities, we propose to give the substance of a number of conversations with a remarkable old Kandyan who in his boyhood, youth and manhood was closely associated with the Veddas of the Eastern Province, and whose memory certainly goes back for 80 or 90 years. In order to make his 115

[p. 29]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 account intelligible we must anticipate certain later chapters to the extent of defining the terms *marage* and *yaka*, that is we must refer briefly to the essential features of the Vedda social system and religion.

614 Every Vedda belongs to a *marage* or clan, as the term may be translated, and among a large number of the Vedda communities still existing, exogamy is the absolute rule. Further, with exogamy is associated descent in the maternal line, so that the fundamentals of the social system of the Veddas may, perhaps, be summed up as a clan organization with female descent. There is no evidence, as far as we can determine, of any dual organization of the clans, but perhaps they had originally a territorial distribution. Ignoring for a moment such debatable matters, the Vedda clans are:—

(1) Morane *marage*.
(2) Unapane *marage*.
(3) Namadewa or Nabudan *marage*.
(4) Aembela *marage*.
(5) Uru *marage*.
(6) Tala *marage*.
(7) A number of other so-called *marage* of minor strength and importance, which perhaps may be local groups that have forgotten their origin and have assumed a name (sometimes obviously a place-name) as a convenience.

Turning now to the Vedda religion the word *yaka* (feminine
769 *yakini*, plural *yaku*) is used to denote the spirits of the dead, and since the Vedda religion is essentially a cult of the dead, it is not surprising that the propitiation of the spirits of dead relatives, called the Nae Yaku, is at once its most obvious and important feature. With this is associated the cult of the spirits of certain long dead Veddas who may be regarded as legendary heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka, the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya, a celebrated hunter who lived many generations ago and whose assistance is invoked for good hunting. Kande Yaka especially helps in the tracking of sambur and spotted deer, and with him is often associated Bilindi Yaka, the *yaka* of his younger brother Bilindi. When a deer has been killed the head is set aside, and with rice and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

coconut milk (when procurable) dedicated to Kande Yaka, after which it is eaten with the rice. An essentially similar ceremony often spoken of by the same name (*kirikoruka*), but in which no meat is offered, is held after a death in order to propitiate the spirit of the dead man. The majority of Veddas believe that the Nae Yaku go to Kande Yaka, and become in some sense his attendants, and Kande Yaka, sometimes accompanied by Bilindi Yaka, is generally invoked at the beginning of the Nae Yaku ceremony. It was stated more than once that the Nae Yaku could not come to the offering unless accompanied by Kande Yaka, who was even spoken of as bringing the Nae Yaku. Some of our informants also said that the spirit of the deceased resorted to Kande Yaka and obtained his permission to accept offerings from his living relatives, in return for which the Nae Yaka would assist or injure them according to their behaviour, so that Kande Yaka, besides being of the greatest assistance in hunting, has also become the Lord of the Dead. 769

The Kandyan already mentioned, whose full title is Karagahavella Adenayaka Mudiyanselage Tissahami, visited us at Bandaraduwa; he lived at Bakiyella some ten miles from our camp. Mr Bibile, who was distantly related to the old man, told us that he must be nearly a hundred years old, since he had been brought to the wild country of the Eastern Province by his mother during the rebellion of 1818, his father having fallen in the fighting. His hair, of which he retained a fair quantity, was absolutely white and worn short, his complexion was pale with age, he had a slight unilateral facial paralysis and he walked with the aid of a stick, his back being bowed and both knees somewhat flexed; but he was withal an extraordinarily active old man, extremely intelligent and with an excellent memory, the play of the muscles of his face showing how well he realised the import of the questions addressed to him and how much they interested him. Further, his frank replies when he did not understand a question and the emphatic manner in which he delivered his answers carried conviction of the value of his evidence, and we believe that no one who listened to the old man would have considered him other than a good witness. 115 145

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 226 water of pools with the bark of *dawba*, *nahapata*, *pusilpala* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kuhuruman* (*Adinanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadis* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 662

The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802

The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437

The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantaho*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 582 584 583 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *warugs*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. There were people of Uru *warugs* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of 614 554 [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *maruge* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangulla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 836 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

shorter ceremony *rawuka*, this being an older name than *kolamaduwa*[1]. 535 751

It appeared that the invocations at present in use among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas were those used in the old man's youth, for although he had not, as he stated (truthfully we believe), been closely associated with the Veddas for many years he recognised a number of Vedda invocations which were sung to him, as identical with those sung in his youth, and named the occasions on which each was used. *Maligi* was recognised as sung when honey was taken; the invocation at the beginning of the *kirikoraha* ceremony (cf. p. 285) was promptly named, and the occasions of its use pointed out, but the charm used when driving monkeys was not recognised. A song sung for amusement by the Veddas beginning *Mamini mamini ma deyo* was immediately recognised, as were two of the invocations of the Kolamaduwa ceremony, but considering how Sinhalese in substance this ceremony is this is perhaps not of much importance. 782

At the present day the number of Veddas living their natural forest life is necessarily few, for their territory has been gradually encroached upon by the Sinhalese who are inveterate poachers. The Veddas, who were never numerous within recent historic times, are now rapidly dying out, while many have settled among the Sinhalese and so lost their identity. We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgala but among the Nuwaragala Hills. At Nilgala itself there are no Veddas at the present day, though the local peasant Sinhalese doubtless have much Vedda blood in their veins. The Henebedda and Danigala Veddas are the descendants of those recorded by Bailey in 1863, and the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are the descendants of those known and described by the old Kandyan who visited us at Bandaraduwa. 161

Hennebedda. At Hennebedda we met a number of families living together in the Bendiyagalge caves. They had come to this their largest cave, from several settlements all within a few hours' journey. The genealogies show that at least 166 563

[1] These ceremonies are described in Chapter IX.

342
361

Fig. 1. A chena settlement of the Henebedda Veddas

516
302
291

Fig. 2. Henebedda Veddas of the Namadewa clan inhabiting the chena settlement

[facing p. 36]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

166 In one instance there had been intermarriage with Sinhalese,
563 and we suspected this in other cases, though the majority appear to be reasonably pure-blooded.

361 These people make chenas[1] on which they live temporarily
231 in bark-covered huts; Plate X, figure 1, represents the chena settlement of the local group of the Namadewa *warige*, some of the members of which are shown in Plate X, figure 2. They gather honey and hunt, several of them possess guns, and some
[222 of them rear cattle for the Sinhalese villagers. Indeed, for
224] Veddas their lot is singularly happy, since they live in the heart of the park country where game is still abundant. Bailey first induced some Veddas in the Nilgala district to make chenas about the middle of the last century, before which all the Veddas in this district were probably living their natural hunting, honey-gathering life.

361 It is not often that a community that has taken to the semi-
511 civilised life of chena cultivation is seen, in which its members are so healthy and well fed, for Veddas dislike settling down and do not generally do so until they find they can no longer subsist on the game in the country, when they either drift into Sinhalese settlements, or make extremely rough chenas for themselves, the produce of which is seldom sufficient to feed the community. Besides which, as is the case with the Sinhalese peasants themselves, the crop is often pledged to Moormen pedlars before it is reaped. The poor Veddas then subsist as best they can on yams, honey and berries, and usually fall
[164] a prey to fever. Several Veddas in this wretched condition were seen between Namal Oya and Bandaraduwa, while those at Godatalawa were scarcely better off.

In the Nilgala district the conditions are different. Chena making and cattle rearing had been introduced while game was still abundant, families are still able to leave the chena settlement and hunt and gather honey, living during such times in rock shelters within their own hunting boundary. However, the

[1] Bailey defines a chena as "a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again: it is reclaimed again after intervals of from five to ten years," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.* Vol. II, 1863, p. 282.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

342
133

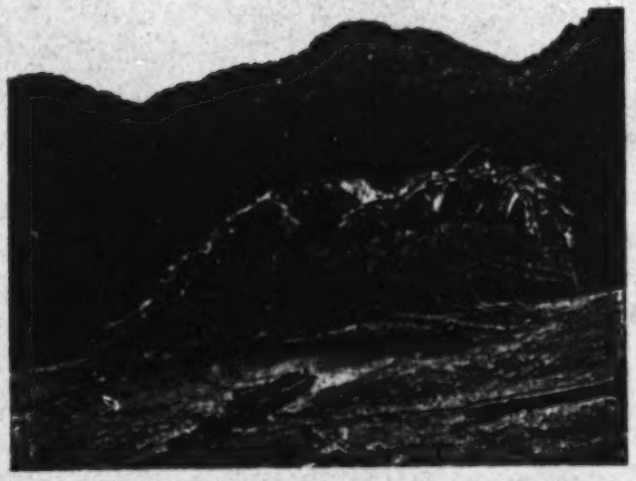


Fig. 1. Rough shelter on the Danigala rock dóme

142
516

Fig. 2. Veddas of Bandaraduwa

[facing p. 38]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

23 custom of the country and also selling those they have bred themselves. However, all this was unknown to us when we first met the people, nor would it have been possible to guess their prosperous condition from the first sight of their settlement.
123 It was well known throughout the Vedirata that investigations were about to be made among the Veddas, and all the village headmen had been given instructions to render assistance. They therefore told the Veddas to expect us, and would have sent for them to come to the Public Works Department bungalow on our arrival had we not expressly stated that we preferred to visit the people in their homes. A very rough track led to the top of
361 the Danigala Hill, about 1200 feet high, where, on a rounded
342 shoulder of rock, stood the skeleton hut of the Danigala Veddas shown in Plate II. This was built on the pattern of the ordinary village Vedda habitations but entirely lacked the slats of bark which make the sides moderately weather proof. By its side was an even rougher shelter consisting of a large bough with the smaller branches trimmed and overlaid with banana leaves. Kaira the patriarch or "senior" of the group sat outside the hut with three other men; there were also present three women, a boy of about 12, and two younger children, and although both of the latter had many teeth they suckled persistently. This hut and some of its occupants are shown in Plate II, the rough shelter by its side in Plate XI, figure 1.

609 Although Mr Bibile, whom all these people knew quite well,
123 was with us, they were quite apathetic, their attitude was clearly not the result of shyness, but simply due to the fact that they took no interest in our presence; the women continued to suckle their infants and the men squatted or lay upon the rocks and chewed in gloomy silence, and when addressed they grunted "yes" or "no." One of the infants who smiled and cooed and tried to gain our attention was the only member of the group who seemed to take the least notice of us. Kaira told us that the people we now saw represented all that remained of the Danigala Veddas. We noticed some bananas (which do not grow wild in Ceylon) on the further side of the ridge and we asked to see their plantation. A prompt denial of its existence was the result, though Kaira afterwards told Mr Bibile that he

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

would show him his chena but that he did not wish the white people to know anything about it. Further talk with these people showed that it was impossible to obtain reliable information from them, they had been utterly spoilt as the result of being frequently interviewed by travellers. 609 123

The Veddas have long been regarded as a curiosity in Ceylon and excite almost as much interest as the ruined cities, hence Europeans go to the nearest Rest House on the main road and have the Danigala Veddas brought to them. Naturally the Veddas felt uncomfortable and shy at first, but when they found that they had only to look gruff and grant replies in order to receive presents they were quite clever enough to keep up the pose. In this they were aided by the always agreeable villagers ever ready to give the white man exactly what he wanted. The white man appeared to be immensely anxious to see a true Vedda, a wild man of the woods, clad only in a scanty loin cloth, carrying his bow and arrows on which he depended for his subsistence, simple and untrained, indeed, little removed from the very animals he hunted. What more easy than to produce him? The Nilgala headman sends word when strangers are expected, then the Veddas repair to their very striking hut on the rock dome and often post a look-out on a big rock about half way up, for on our second visit the leading man of our party who was carrying the camera stated that he saw a Vedda bolting from this rock as we came up. These folk, who when we saw them [291] wore their Vedda loin cloths and were smeared with ashes, are reported to wear ordinary Sinhalese clothes when not in their professional pose, and Mr Biblia, who has himself seen one or more of them in sarongs, points out that the imposture is kept up for two main reasons; firstly, they fear that their cultivation might be stopped (evidently an echo of the chena difficulty of the Eastern Province), or that they might be taxed if they did not appear to be poor fellows living on hardly won jungle produce; secondly, their pose of poverty interests strangers and procures them visitors, whose generosity is the greater the more primitive their mode of life appears to be.

As a matter of fact the Danigala Veddas like those of 231
Henebedda (with whom we became really friendly) keep cattle

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

231 for the Sinhalese of Potulliyadde, receiving every fifth calf that is born. The community has, or recently had, ten or more head of cattle of their own and have sold bulls to the brother-in-law of our *tavalam*[1] leader for as much as 30 Rs., indeed, our *tavalam* leader stated that he had himself visited the Danigala chena and had also seen the cattle. On this occasion Kaira and his sons
291 wore a coloured cloth as the Sinhalese do and their women wore a *kambaya* and coloured breast handkerchief. Mr Bibile was
621 able to confirm some of these statements from his own know-
177 ledge and on making investigations among the local villagers
609 discovered that there was a whole community living on the chena settlement, some of whom had married Sinhalese. Indeed it appeared that not only have members of this community learnt to play the part of professional primitive man, but there has even been specialisation, for as far as we could learn, the men we met at the look-out hut are those who always receive visitors or come to Bibile when sent for, while the others whom we did not see do not pose as wild Veddas. Probably the part they now play had only recently crystallised into a professional rôle, but it must be remembered that so long ago as 1863 Bailey discussing these Veddas, or their fathers, says "they were brought in from the forests to be 'looked at'" and he adds, "I never saw that contempt for money which Tennant supposes is still existing[2]."

101 **Kovil Vanamai.** In the Eastern Province in the neighbourhood of Devulani tank the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are found, this term being applied to a number of groups of Veddas living in this neighbourhood. The name Kovil Vanamai means temple
[340] precincts and seems to have arisen from there being one or more temples in this part of the country, while some of these shrines are traditionally associated with Veddas, apparently with old settled coast and village Veddas, for we have no reason to think that the ancestors of the folk we saw at Bandaraduwa, or the other wilder Veddas of fifty years ago, were in any way guardians of the temples or dependent on their
511 bounty. Although at the present day the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are represented by scattered groups, for the most part

[1] A *tavalam* is a train of pack bulls.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 283.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AZ5 Vedda AX8

badly off and in varying conditions of ill health and malnutrition, 511
there is abundant evidence that only a generation back these communities were composed of a large number of families who, although they made chenas, led a healthy hunting life for a great part of the year. Plate XI, figure 2, represents some men and children of the Bandaraduwa chena settlement; from 144
this photograph it is evident that in spite of their prosperity even twenty-five years ago, there must have been much miscegenation, and the appearance of a couple of old grey-headed men alleged Veddas whom we saw in this neighbourhood certainly suggested that they possessed only a fraction of Vedda blood[1].

The following account of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas as they 115
existed some 20 or 25 years ago was given us by Tissahami, Arachi[2] of Potuliyadde, a man who on account of his long association with Veddas is often spoken of as the Vedda Arachi. This man though presenting the appearance of a typical Kandyan Sinhalese has Vedda blood in his veins, for his ancestors were [144] Veddas of Moranegala in the Eastern Province, his great grandfather being a Vedda shaman who settled at Damenegama in Uva Province. Although this man's descendants intermarried with the local Sinhalese (who are themselves in part the descendants of Veddas) and adopted the Sinhalese mode of life, one man at least in each generation continued to act as shaman (S. *kapurale*), and the father of the Arachi was a devil dancer and *wederale* (native doctor) of some note. This man's son, the Arachi, now a man of between 40 and 50, exerts a great deal of influence over the peasants in his neighbourhood, who all recognise that he is in more or less constant communication with the spirits, to which fact his neighbours attribute much of his success. In this manner was explained the quickness with which he recently learnt blacksmith's work. We had not heard of his re-

[1] Some of the "Veddas" living in the neighbourhood of Bandaraduwa and the sea are comparatively tall, stoutly built men with no appearance of Vedda ancestry. Two men from Uhene in Nadukada Pattu measured 65 and 65½ inches respectively. Two men, who looked like Tamils but called themselves Veddas, lived on big Sinhalese chenas at Kotellada; one of them said that his wife's parents had belonged to the Galmada group.

[2] *Arachi* is the title applied to the headman of a Sinhalese village settlement.

361

Fig. 1. Mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chum at Bandarawela

516
415

Fig. 2. Uniche Veddas

[facing p. 42]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakkan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *maruge*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirukadai*, "nothing," is said

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *kodoi*, *tire* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure i) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

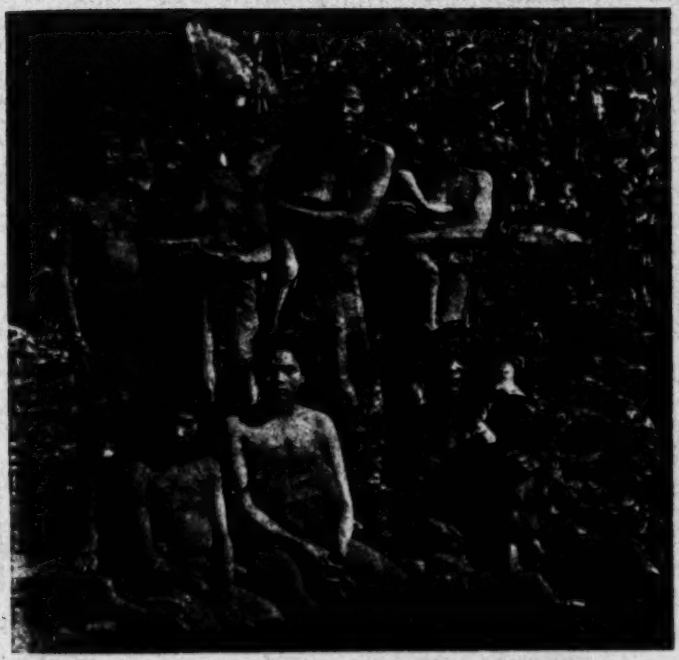
The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *waruge* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *waruge* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Arachi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XIII

142
291
854



Women and girls of Sitala Wanniya

[facing p. 44]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to
439 take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on
141 which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 m. (60¼ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 m. (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they
609 stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and
576 did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen
166 at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately
115 pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very
651 poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as
[illegible]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they had been called upon to pay a chena tax as well as 1·50 Rs. per adult male road tax. Of course they were unable to collect this money and they dreaded the ensuing penalty, that of serving on the roads, for should the two young men leave the settlement the old man and woman and the girl must starve, the first being too old to work and the woman a cripple. Their plight would have been just as bad had the young man gone to work on some Sinhalese rice fields in order to earn the money[1].

Degenerate Veddas in the neighbourhood of the main Badulla-Batticaloa road[2]. The main road from Badulla to the east coast passes through country that was once the centre of the Vedirata, and on either side of it at a distance of some 2—6 miles are various settlements of half-bred and degenerate Veddas who will soon be entirely lost among the Sinhalese. Plate XIV, figure 1, represents two men of this class: it is obvious that the young man would pass for a Sinhalese, indeed in spite of his bow and arrows and traditional scanty Vedda garb the condition of his hair shows that he has at least been following a Sinhalese mode of life. It is possible that the whole Vedda get-up may have been assumed for our benefit, though in view of the comparative skill with which he handled his bow we do not think this likely. The old man was doubtless one of the last degenerate Veddas of the district.

Before passing to village Veddas a word must be said concerning the Omuni folk and those of Unuwatura Bubula. Sir James Emerson Tennant, in his work *Ceylon* published in 1859, states that Mr Atherton, A.G.A., in conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, attempted to civilise the Veddas[3]. In 1838 "cottages were built for them in their own district, rice land assigned to them, wells dug, coconuts planted, two communities were speedily settled at Vippammadvo." A

[1] This is a not uncommon practice at the present day.

[2] This road is only some forty or fifty years old, Mr Warren tells me that "the old road from Badulla to Batticaloa joined the road from Alutowara. It crossed the present cart road about Kallodi and must have worked its way in the neighbourhood of the present road to Tampalancholai and so to the ferry into Batticaloa." Part of this track is still used as a short cut. "There was another road from Passara through Medagama past Makakandiyaweva to Mandur; *Aswilam* travel that way now."

[3] Tennant, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 447.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
144
411
291

Fig. 1. Men of mixed Sinhalese and Vedda blood from the neighbourhood of Maha Oya.

142
291
854

Fig 2. Women of Ommi

[facing p.46]

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 school was founded and two other settlements fromed at
621 Oomany and Villengelavelly. However, the enterprise was soon
797 abandoned owing to the misconduct of some of the teachers. "But," continues Tennant, "the good effects of even this temporary experiment were apparent; not one of the Veddas returned to his cave and savage habits... The other colony at Oomany continues to the present day prosperous and successful, twenty-five families are resident around it, rice and other grains are produced in sufficiency and coconuts are planted near the cottages. The only desertions have been the departures of those in search of employment, who have removed to other villages in quest of it. The school was closed in 1847 owing to there being no more children at the time requiring instruction..."

177 The colony can no longer be called "prosperous and success-
62 ful," indeed, we found it in a state of semi-starvation. Before 1838, when these people were induced to settle, there can be little doubt that they were living in a somewhat similar condition to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas of the present day, but since then there has been a considerable infusion of foreign blood, for it has long been the habit of criminals and others desirous of concealment, to seek refuge with the village Veddas, who usually receive them kindly and accept them as members of their community. Since the artificial origin of this settlement is known it cannot be regarded as belonging to the village Veddas, but rather to a colony of degenerate settled Veddas.

511 Omuni. At Maha Oya three half-bred Veddas from Omuni
687 were seen who had been brought in by the Sinhalese headman to work on the road as they had not paid their "road tax." It was unnecessary for them to plead they were poor and hungry, for their miserable condition showed this all too clearly. Happily Mr. S. W. Woodhouse, the district judge, was then in Maha Oya and realising that while these men were absent from their village, their women and children would be in a worse plight than ever, he excused them their tax and sent them back to
511 Omuni. About a week later we visited Omuni and although we were met with the customary gift of honey to which were added a few berries, it was obvious that the settlement was really short of food and this in spite of a number of families having left some

months previously to wander into Tamankaduwa where they 511
hoped to get yams and perhaps some game. A number of women left the village immediately after our arrival, explaining that if they did not go and find some yams they and their children would get nothing to eat that night. Some of the men possessed bows and arrows but game was scarce, and their [262]
living was obviously precarious, yams, monitor lizards, honey and berries forming their staple diet. Fowls were kept and were 231
taken down to the road (10 miles distant) to sell. Like all Veddas they possessed dogs, invaluable to them in catching monitor lizards when there is no bigger game to hunt, and their care for them was shown by a small shelter which they had built in order to shade a bitch with a litter of puppies.

In physical characters these Veddas[1] somewhat resembled the 142
neighbouring Sinhalese, but were less stoutly built; this appearance may however in part have been due to malnutrition. Their headman is a short, well-nourished, exceedingly active and intelligent individual, whose only Vedda characteristic is his short stature. Plate XIV, figure 2, represents a number of Omuni women.

Unuwatura Bubula. The position of the Unuwatura 101
Bubula Veddas is extremely difficult to understand, they occupy 177
two small groups of huts (one of which is shown in Plate XV, figure 1) a little distance from the huts of some peasant Sinhalese. They formerly lived at Mudugala and have doubtless been in close contact with the Sinhalese for many generations, but whether they are the remains of village Vedda settlements or are settled wild Veddas cannot be stated with certainty, though the latter seems more probable. It must be explained that though this community has mixed much with the Sinhalese and has doubtless been much influenced by them, they have their own shamans and they perform their own rites quite apart from their Sinhalese neighbours. Unfortunately the shaman of these people who knew most about the customs and rites of this community was ill, having overtaxed his strength at the first ceremony performed for us, and was not able to talk much, but he was present at most of our conversations and was thus a check on the younger man, but for the reason indicated many

[1] I.e., Veddas of Omuni. — Analysis]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
361
417

Fig. 1. Vedda settlement at Unawatuna Bubala

142
342

Fig. 2. Village Veddas of Dambani

[Facing p. 48]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours'
177 influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut
[562] because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the
[783] women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura
144 Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded,
141 since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

184 The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to
361 describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *kile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is 184
evidence that a hundred years ago there were organized com- 361
munities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century.

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the 621
jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here [177]
was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the sur- [142]
rounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure 2), though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, [609]
people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility.

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this [197]
condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always 622
speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an 156
extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1908
AX5 Vedda AX5

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
[ff] who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had actually been to the village. They had been sent for often to see others at Wewatte and Alutnuwara bungalows, and for even greater folk had been taken to Kandy. And so they had learnt to shake hands and had picked up exaggerated ideas of their own importance and the value of their information, and expected a present for every remark they vouchsafed. It was a horrible change from the courteous behaviour of the Sitala Wanniya cave Veddas. 574 609 431

As the Dambani folk were so very unfriendly we began to hope the carriers would not come at all that night, there was nowhere for them to sleep, and we thought the Veddas might resent their presence. They told us repeatedly that "Sinhalese men would not dare to come to their village," in spite of the fact that there were two petty Sinhalese traders in the village at the time, who did not even trouble to go away before dark, but seemed naturally to expect a night's lodging, which was granted them without any fuss, and there appeared to be no difficulty about language with them. About six o'clock our servants and the carriers arrived, and curiously enough instead of resenting the intrusion the Veddas seemed very impressed by their number, and presumably our importance, in having so many dependents, for they became much more friendly. 609

The next morning early, we set the phonograph going with a Vedda song: immediately the whole village crowded round us, intensely interested. They recognised the song and said it was very good. The Vidane then sang a song into the machine and was quite excited to hear it repeated, but again began his demand for presents although besides a rupee we had now given white cloth to him and the other men from whom we had got vocabularies. Having obtained records we realised that it was impossible to do any good work among such spoilt people and decided to go to Belligala. We offered some beads to the headman's wife, but she said the string was not long enough; this annoyed us and we asked her if she would prefer not to have any, and on her repeating they were not enough we put them away. 126

The Dambani men said they did not know to which *warige* 614

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 they belonged, which suggested to us that perhaps they belonged to Uru *waruge* or one of the other clans which are considered of inferior status. Although the Arachi of Belligala did not know their *waruge* and believed that they had really forgotten them themselves, our opinion was confirmed by information obtained later from the Arachi of Alutnuwara who said that they were of the Uru and Namadewa *waruge*, while a Vedda of Horaborawewa told us that his mother came from Dambani and she was a Namadewa woman.

576 As the Arachi of Belligala assured us the Bulugahaladena
609 Veddas lived in a condition precisely similar to those of Dambani, we did not visit their village but arranged for two of them to visit us at Belligala; they greeted us in the same way as the Dambani folk, with loud and guttural voices, accentuating all the "chs," and shook hands. They brought some honey and yams. They said they could not bring *bambara* honey (for it was too early in the year) so they had brought honey from the stingless bee. After a little while they gradually dropped their
[194] guttural tones, especially when they were speaking to the villagers and not to us, their voices, naturally deep, assumed a sing-song tone not unlike that of Nila of Sitala Wanniya. We consider that the gruffness of these Veddas is almost entirely affectation. They have been expected to be sullen and morose and never to laugh. For thirty years the Arachi of Belligala has acted as "show-man" to the Veddas of his district, and he always speaks to them in their "language" in similar or even fiercer tones, and he has shown them so many white men that he has quite lost count of their number. He has thus helped to keep up the fiction of "wildness," for these Veddas are not wild since they are not shy but come up, shake hands, ask for presents, and offer to dance.

178 We believe that they keep up few, if any, of the old Vedda customs; they cultivate chenas and keep cattle, their bows and arrows are probably more for show than use, for the Arachi told us that some of them possess guns while others go to the Sinhalese and borrow them. Deschamps says that Veddas never
157 laugh nor have they ever been seen to smile. Of course this is not true of the Veddas of Nilgala, nor do we think it is true of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

these village Veddas, though they seem to be of a somewhat morose disposition. He also said they take no interest in things unknown to them. However, the phonograph attracted as much attention and interest as it always had from Veddas and Sinhalese alike, and we distinctly saw one Vedda smile when his song was reproduced. 157

The chena settlement at Wallampelle was seen, but here it appeared that much intermarriage had taken place with the Sinhalese. 144

Malgode. There are a number of people very mixed blooded, but calling themselves Veddas, living at Malgode on the shores of Horaborawewa, a beautiful tank traditionally associated with the Veddas. They have dropped their old Vedda customs so entirely that the local Sinhalese no longer look upon them as true village Veddas, an attitude that has perhaps been fostered by the fact that here in Uva where the Veddas are exempt from all taxation these people pay road tax. Such at least was the point of view of the Arachi of Alutnuwara, "how can these people be Veddas?—they pay road tax." In spite of this there is no doubt that they are largely of Vedda descent and in many instances remember their *wariyas*. They live in very poorly built houses and depend largely on the seeds of the lotus for food. They still pose as pure-blooded Veddas to white visitors, and have been recently described by Drs H. M. Hillier and W. H. Furness, 3rd. "We followed the jungle path along the eastern shore of the lake, sometimes over outcrops of granite, or down by the lake side...and after following our guide through thick undergrowth for half-an-hour, suddenly, and without warning, we came out into a cleared space, where there was the merest excuse for a hut, and beside it a man and woman squatting side by side and cooking something in a blackened earthen pot, which rested on a fire of twigs and branches; a little beyond them were more huts and more women and children—lo! the Village Veddahs. The elderly man and woman whom we first saw had between them scarcely a yard of coarse cloth as clothing, their hair hung loose in dishevelled twists and strings about their faces, and they both squatted so low that their knees stood up above their shoulders. But the most impressive thing about 144 177 361 [651] 511

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 them was their unhuman apathy and utter lack of interest.... Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

"At the time of our visit there were but three men and
511 seventeen women and children in Makulugulla; these were
342 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but
[184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like
622] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any
[356 shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

"The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place
511 consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by
[352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the
359] Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry
364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were fond, but the place was free from smells, and really
361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp 361
within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords.

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. 301
Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through 304
the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter.

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had 415
rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of [531]
artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of coconut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]."

Village Veddas of Tamankaduwa.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in 144
Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of inter- 621
marriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils.

Elakotaliya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-bred. Their mode of life is similar to 105
that prevalent at Dambani and Bulugahaladena, i.e. they are occu- 621
pied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their *waruge* and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaku.

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve mud huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1901. [113]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XVI

142
291
[854]

Fig. 1. Men of Yakure

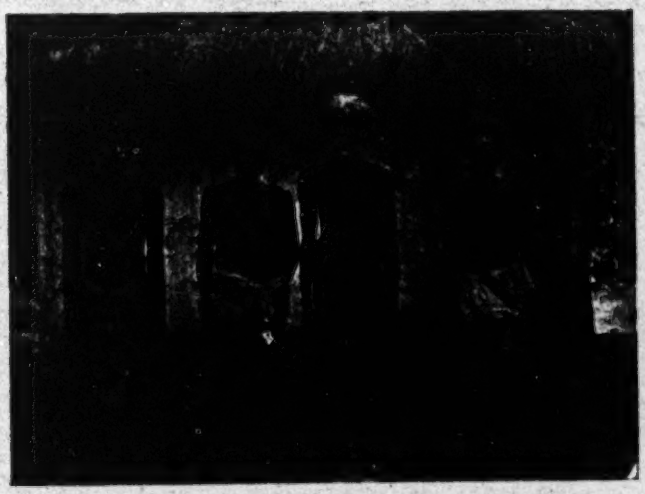


Fig. 2. Veddas of Ulpota

[Facing p. 56]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

105 on their chena. We waited here a little while and two Veddas
62 passed, one carrying a gun; we asked them to return to their chena and fetch some of the other villagers. Soon some twenty
[431] men and about as many women and children arrived bringing us presents of honey, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. Scarcely any of them presented the Vedda type, they were all distinctly larger and more heavily built. Except their knowledge of their *waruge* and recognition of the Nae Yaku all remains of Vedda customs seemed to have been lost.

Yakure. The inhabitants of Yakure, a village about six miles from Kalukalaeba, call themselves Veddas, though physically (Plate XVI, figure 1) they would pass as Tamils or mixed
[194] Tamils and Sinhalese, and show even less evidence of Vedda blood than do the Kalukalaeba people. Their village consists of about 40 mud houses and is compactly built; a great number of cattle was seen grazing outside the confines of the village. Like the Kalukalaeba folk they know their *waruge* and invoke the Nae Yaku, but they have a temple, a simple mud hut, and worship a number of Sinhalese gods. Some men (Plate XVI, figure 2) from a village called Ulpota near Gunner's Quoin were
[197] seen here who also appeared to have mixed blood; they knew the "Vedda language," that is to say we were able to get from them about the same number of words as we obtained at Dambani. When one of them was asked when this dialect was used he replied "only when we are sent for by the Government agent or any other white man." Among themselves they speak
[191] Sinhalese though they can also speak Tamil as it is largely the language of Tamankaduwa.

Rotawewa. There is a settlement of alleged Veddas at Rotawewa about six miles from Minerriya tank. Concerning these we were told that they cultivated rice, and were in no respect different from the neighbouring Sinhalese, while Mr Jayawardene writes: "There is only one village of Veddas in Sinhala Pattu of Tamankaduwa District, and that village is Rotawewa, about six miles from Minerriya. These Veddas lived on the chase and subsequently took to chena clearings, and when the place began to be frequented by the low-country Sinhalese and other traders, some of them were able to sell their meat to them and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they saved a little money and bought a patch of land of about 11 acres from Government, which land they now cultivate with paddy.... There are sixteen houses in the Vedda Settlement of Rotawewa, and the householders in every case are descendants of Veddas. They are Sinhalese without any signs of Tamil admixture." 105 121

They say they are of the Morane *warige*, and they seem not to know any other *warige*. Mr Horsburgh however states that "there is one other Vedda village in Sinhala Pattuwa besides Rotawewa, viz. Gallinda, with about three families who are the same people as those of Rotawewa." [619]

As a matter of convenience we have prepared a tabular summary of the conditions prevailing at the various settlements of wild and village Veddas that we visited. Besides those mentioned, many other families and even isolated individuals exist scattered throughout the Vedirata, especially in the neighbourhood of the Badulla-Batticaloa road near Maha Oya and Kallodi. These folk are in the last stage of degeneration, having given up their own wandering life and habits; they have mostly drifted into Sinhalese villages there to die out miserably. 105 177 511

195
177
511

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Place	Health	Game	Chena	Cattle	Foreign Influence	Remarks
Henebedda	Good	Plentiful	Good	Kept for Sinhalese	Slight among the old men, considerable among the young	A thriving and vigorous community
Danigala	Good	Plentiful	Good	Kept for themselves	Considerable	Live much as Sinhalese, but pretend to live by hunting and honey alone
Kovil Vanamai	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Considerable	Fast dying out, or at the best losing their Vedda identity; all live on chenas and always we believe in association with Sinhalese
Uniche	...	Scarce	?	?	Foreign influence is principally Tamil	We did not see these people in their own settlement
Sitala Wanniya	Good	Plentiful	None	None	Very slight	The older men of this community had never made chena
Galmeda	Poor	Scarce	Very poor	None	Probably slight	We only saw a colony of this group who had settled at Godatalawa
Omuni	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Dominant	A few chickens were kept for sale, these people were wretchedly poor and most of them decidedly ill-nourished
Unuwatura Bubula	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Dominant	
Village Veddas						
Dambani &c.	Good	Scarce	Good	Many tame buffalo	Considerable	An anomalous but thriving group (cf. pp. 49 to 53)
Elakotaliya	Good	Scarce	Good	Cattle	...	These groups live in well built mud huts on flourishing chenas and appear to be prosperous and comfortable. They appear to possess more Tamil than Vedda blood
Kalukalaeba	Good	Scarce	Good	Cattle	...	
Yakure	Good	Scarce	Good	Large herds of cattle	...	These people live in well built huts in a compact settlement which might almost be called a town. They have a Sinhalese headman.

[258]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

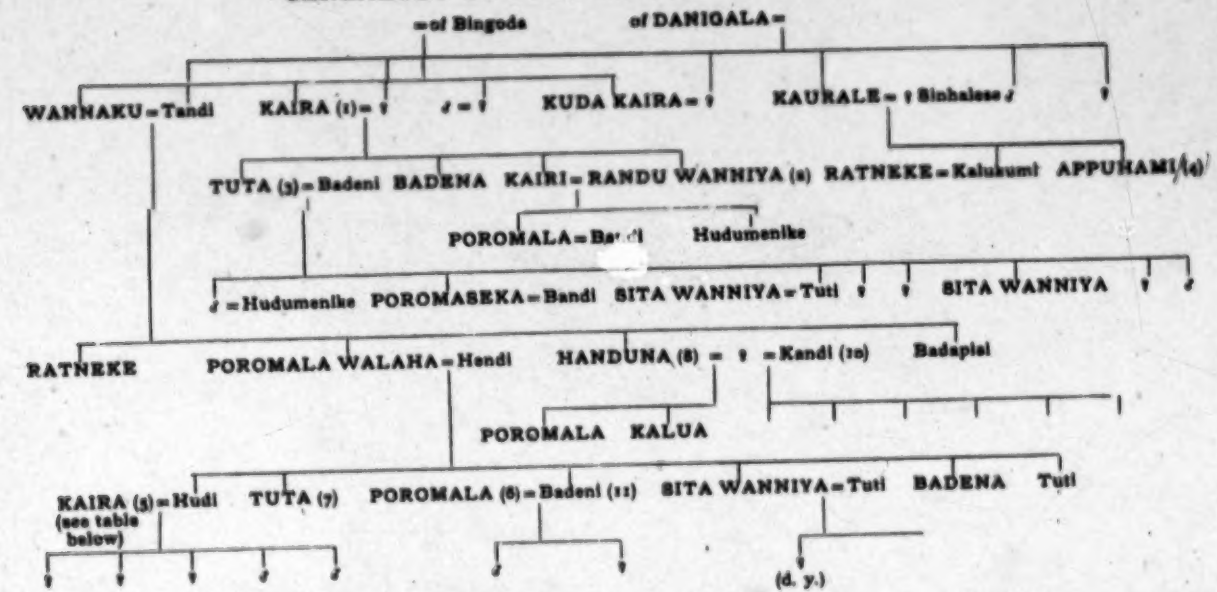
GENEALOGIES.

THE genealogies on the next two pages show the relationship existing between the various individuals of the three Vedda communities, which still retain enough of the old Vedda mode of life to make a study of their organization valuable. At the first glance it is obvious that these genealogies do not go back beyond the memory of middle-aged men of the present day. We are convinced that this is due, not to any general distrust of our inquiries, but simply to certain peculiarities of the Vedda habit of thought which is directly dependent on their mode of life. The first of these is the extraordinary lack of memory shown by every Vedda for the names of individuals of more than one generation older than himself. This may perhaps be due to the fact that the number of individuals whom any one knows well is really small, being necessarily limited to the community to which he himself belongs. The genealogies show how small are these communities and, since every Vedda should marry a first cousin, marriage does little or nothing to enlarge the number of his connections. Further, each of the people with whom he comes in contact is related to him in a definite manner and is called and spoken of by a definite kinship term, so that personal names come to play a very small part in the daily life of the Veddas. It is this, doubtless, that has led to the frequent persistence of the baby names Tuta and Tuti, "little one" in its male and female forms, as the only names by which many individuals are known, and this together with the number of children called by

601 [153] [582] 601 55

[p. 59] [text continues on p. 62]

GENEALOGY OF SOME HENEBEDDA VEDDAS.

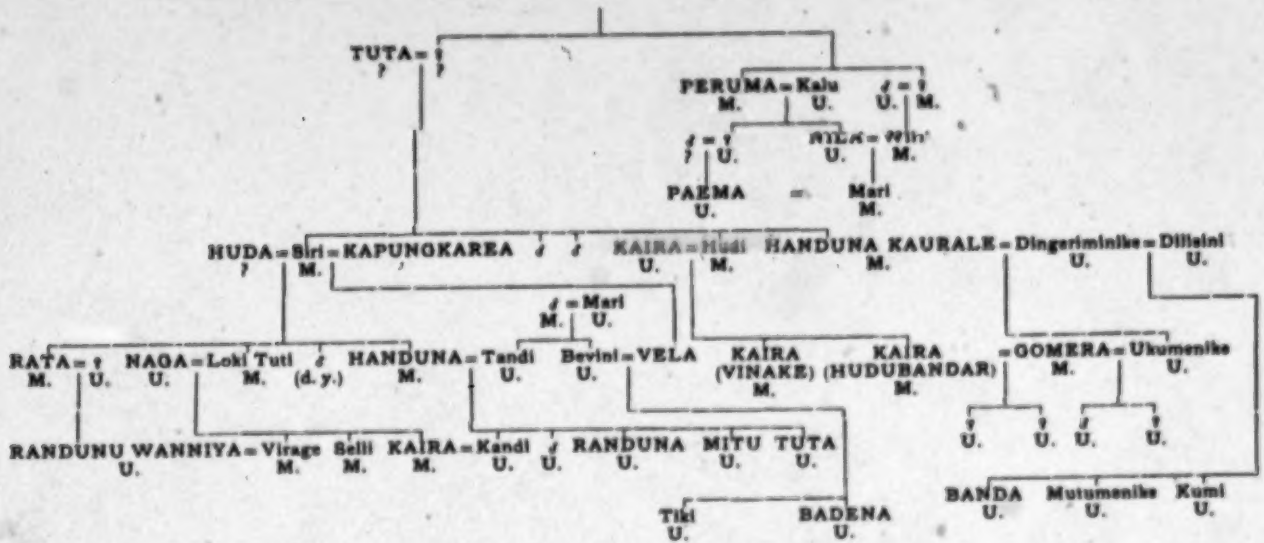


(Numbers in parentheses refer to the text (cf. especially p. 18).)

601

GENEALOGY OF VEDDAS OF SITALA WANNIYA AND GODATALAWA GROUPS.

(ONLY THE IMMEDIATE ANCESTORS OF PAEMA AND MARI ARE GIVEN.)



Names in Capitals are males, as TUTA; names in small type females, as Biri.
M. = Morane Clan; U. = Unapane Clan; d. y. = died young.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

such favourite names as Kaira, Poromala and Handuna leads to confusion, not only in the minds of strangers, but also we believe in the minds of the Veddas themselves.

Sinhalese who come in contact with the Veddas find the same difficulty, and the individuals of certain communities, e.g. Danigala, have each a Sinhalese name by which they are known to the peasant Sinhalese, and which in many instances they themselves recognise, so that some Veddas actually know each other by these Sinhalese names, and give them when asked their own names or those of their companions. This is the explanation of the majority of Sinhalese names occurring in the genealogies. Again, the fact that among the Veddas there is no system of hereditary chieftainship, or any other custom such as the vendetta, forcing a man to know and remember his grandfathers, cannot but have assisted to bring about the forgetfulness of previous generations, which with the rarest exceptions makes everyone entirely ignorant of his grandparents. In the case of the Danigala and Henebedda Veddas there was an additional difficulty to be met in conducting our investigations. The men of these communities who for the most part belonged to the Morane and Unapane clans, traditionally the proudest and most important of the Vedda *varuge*, had to a certain extent intermarried with Sinhalese and also with the Veddas of Namadewa clan, a *varuge* which in this part of the country is regarded as of inferior status. They are most anxious to conceal instances of both these classes of marriage and lied freely concerning them and this is the reason for certain lacunae in their genealogies, which in the case of the Danigala community could not have been given at all had not Mr Bibile's position as Ratemahatmaya, i.e. hereditary overlord or "laird" of this part of the country, enabled him to make inquiries from the surrounding peasantry, and thus check, and in many instances correct, the information we obtained from the Veddas themselves.

A Vedda community consists of from one to five families who share the rights of hunting over a tract of land, of gathering honey upon it, fishing its streams, and using the rock shelters. But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

members of single families or small groups of two families living and hunting together. 621

Each family consists of parents and unmarried children to whom are generally added married daughters and their husbands. It is rare to find a married son with his father and mother, and a widow often marries the brother of her dead husband. We may now give some examples of the communities we actually met, premising that where a community such as that of Godatalawa consists of a single family only, this is probably due to depopulation and "hard times." 596 587

By consulting the genealogies on pp. 60 and 61 it will be seen that the Godatalawa family consisted of an old white haired man, Handuna, the "senior" of the group, his wife Dilisini, their daughter Kumi, a girl scarcely past puberty, and another daughter, Mutumenike, whom we did not see. Besides these there were Kaira (Hudubandar) and Kaira (Vinake), both sons of the old man's sister Hudi, and therefore actual or potential sons-in-law, and the two young children of the dead Ukumenike, a daughter of Handuna by his first wife Dingerimenike. 596

The Sitala Wanniya community when we first met them consisted of two families, those of Handuna the "senior" of the group, and his half brother Vela. Handuna had with him his wife Tandi and his two boys, his married daughter Kandi, and her husband Kaira with his sister Selli and the two young children born to Kaira and Kandi. Vela had only his wife Bevini (sister of Tandi) and his two young children. After a few days they were joined by another family consisting of Nila and his wife Wiri, with their daughter and her husband Paema, an unmarried girl and a small boy. The relationship between Handuna and Nila was that their grandmothers were sisters and their mother and father cousins who reciprocally called each other *akka* (elder sister) and *maleya* (younger brother). 621 596

KINSHIP.

The system of kinship was studied by means of the genealogies, and the following list of relationship terms compiled from the genealogies shows that the Vedda system of 601

601 relationship is a late form of the kind known as classificatory. Further, since the Vedda system closely resembles the Sinhalese the one may have been borrowed from the other.

Mutta, father, grandfather.
Atta, mother, grandmother.
Puta or *tuta*, son, sister's son (fem. loq.), brother's son (m. loq.).
Duwa or *tuti*, daughter, sister's daughter (fem. loq.), brother's daughter (m. loq.).
Munubura, grandson.
Miniberi, granddaughter.
Aiya, elder brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.
Maleya, younger brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.
Akka, elder sister, daughter, paternal uncle's daughter.
Naga, younger sister, maternal aunt's daughter, paternal uncle's daughter.
Mama, maternal uncle, paternal aunt's husband.
Nendamma, paternal aunt, maternal uncle's wife.
Lokuappu, paternal uncle (older), maternal aunt's husband.
Kuduappu, paternal uncle (younger), maternal aunt's husband.
Lokuamma, maternal aunt (older), paternal uncle's wife.
Kuduamma, maternal aunt (younger), paternal uncle's wife.
Hura, paternal aunt's son, maternal uncle's son.
Naena, paternal aunt's daughter, maternal uncle's daughter.
Baena, sister's son (m. loq.), brother's son (fem. loq.).
Yeli, brother's daughter (fem. loq.), sister's son (m. loq.).

It will be noticed that none of these terms, except *hura* and *naena* when used between individuals of the same sex, are reciprocal.

The working basis of the Vedda kinship system is the
582 marriage of the children of brother and sister, but not of two
601 brothers or sisters. Thus, when a woman's son marries his mother's brother's daughter the man's maternal uncle (*mama*) becomes his father-in-law and his maternal uncle's children (his *hura* and *naena*), except the girl he has married, become his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. None of these relatives, however, change their kinship term on this account, *hura* and *naena* being only applied to individuals with whom intermarriage is actually possible, or would be possible if the sex of the speaker permitted it. On marriage the girl's paternal aunt (*nendamma*) becomes her mother-in-law, but as before marriage this woman's children remain her *hura* and *naena*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

The words *lage eto*, *lato* or sometimes *leto*, the two last being abbreviations of *lage eto*, were often added to relationship terms; as examples of this we may record *mutta lage eto*, *atto lato*, *maliya leto*. We were told that the term in its various forms had the sense "of" or "from my own people," and it would only be used of near relatives, thus Poromala of Henebedda added some form of this word to the terms by which he called almost all his relations. This was not the case at Sitala Wanniya where Handuna (being then in our camp) said that he might use the term *maliya lage eto* when speaking of his brother who was up in the cave. 601

A man usually spoke of his wife as his "woman," *guni*. Addressing her he would probably say *thopi*, "thou." At Henebedda the term *meli* was used. We have no record as to how a Vedda woman of the Sitala Wanniya group addressed her husband; at Henebedda we were told that a childless woman addressed and spoke of her husband as *wani lage eto* but that after children were born he should be addressed (as among the peasant Sinhalese) as "father of so and so" using the name of the youngest child.

At Unuwatura Bubula it was said that not all *naena* and *kura* should marry, the correct marriage being for a man to marry the daughter of his mother's younger brother. We were not able to satisfy ourselves that this rule is especially observed at the present day. Of fifteen marriages between cousins—none of which are marriages of village Veddas—nine are marriages in which the man married his mother's brother's daughter, five are unions between a man and his father's sister's daughter, and one man married a woman who was equally his mother's brother's daughter and his father's sister's daughter, according to whether the relationship was traced on the mother's or father's side. 582

The number of cousin marriages of which we have details is too small to allow the definite statement that marriages between a man and his mother's brother's daughter were especially frequent, though as far as they go they support this idea, which becomes all the more probable when the specially close relationship existing between a man and his mother's brother (cf. p. 67) is considered.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

his mother so should he treat his *mama*. A man's father and his father's brothers are less important than his *mama* who receive the largest share of all game killed by their actual or potential sons-in-law. 606

The love and comradeship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law was often very marked, and sometimes the voice of Handuna of Sitala Wanniya took on a special tone of tenderness when speaking of his *baena*; indeed, the importance of the relationship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law is shown in many ways. Thus not only do they very generally hunt and move about together, but whereas when a girl marries she is often given pots and gourds by her mother, a man receives wedding gifts, which—as is shown in the chapter on land transfer—often consist of tracts of land, not from his father but from his father-in-law, who should be his mother's brother.

Again, although a man presents part of his kill to his father's brothers and mother's sisters, a larger share is given to his actual or potential father-in-law and mother-in-law, and before marriage these may get a specially large share. A man would assist his potential father-in-law and mother-in-law in house building and chena cultivation as a matter of course, but he would only help his other uncles and aunts if asked. When hunting, a son-in-law will usually carry his father-in-law's kill, but he would show the same consideration for his own father and probably for any older man. [482]

We may perhaps fairly sum up this matter by saying, that whereas before marriage a man paid at least as much regard to his future father-in-law as to his own father (and in theory he should pay more), after marriage his father-in-law becomes more important, and the association between father-in-law and son-in-law becomes far closer and more intimate than that existing between father and son. There are, however, certain matters in which father and son are more closely associated than *mama* and *baena*: (a boy's bringing up is essentially a matter to which his father attends, and in which the *mama* takes no great part unless the father dies.) (Again, in theory, sons should take at least as large a part in looking after their aged and infirm fathers as do the latter's sons-in-law.) 593 606

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

606 All Veddas of a group are so nearly related that, with the exception of the bond of the *mama* and *bama* relationship, the only duties which clearly fall to any individual on account of his relationship to others are certain ceremonial avoidances. These are limited to members of opposite sexes and practically include all the men and women whom an individual of either sex might not marry. There is the most rigid avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law, and at Godatalawa we had an opportunity of seeing how sternly this rule is carried out. Dilisini is the oldest woman of the community, the wife of the patriarch or "senior" of the group; she is physically unattractive and apparently long past the menopause, nevertheless her son-in-law Kaira who was standing a few paces off would not assist her to rise from the ground, although she had an acutely inflamed knee which was obviously extremely painful. In fact no man may come into any physical contact with his mother-in-law or even approach her closely. Thus, if a man met his mother-in-law in the jungle he would move aside off the track. He may however speak to her in the presence of others, though if he found her alone in the rock shelter he would not enter it until there were others present. Similarly though a man may eat food prepared by his mother-in-law he would not take it directly from her, it would be passed to him by someone else, most probably by his wife. A man avoids his son's wife in precisely the same way, as also his brother's wife, and a woman her sister's husband. It was said that if a man attempted to speak in private to any of these women, she would probably suspect him of endeavouring to make improper advances to her which her kinsmen would resent. A man should also avoid touching the daughters of his mother's sisters and his father's brothers as well as all those girls whom he calls "sisters" if these have attained puberty; he may, however, speak to these relatives. We are not quite clear what is the correct attitude of a man towards his wife's sisters or those of his *nana* whom he does not expect to marry, but we believe that generally speaking any close contact is avoided between adults of opposite sexes, and that practically no man may come in contact with any woman of about his own age except his wife. At Unuwatura Ilubala these rules were so

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

rigidly observed that we were told that a man might not assist his sister to rise from the ground if she had fallen down and injured herself. Further, it seemed that he should not see much even of the girl whom he was about to marry until she was handed over to him, though according to our Unuwatura Bubula informants it was not really bad for a man to touch any of his *naena* and he was allowed to do this in an emergency. At Sitala Wanniya it was said that adult *hura* and *naena* should not speak to each other even when it had been arranged that they should marry, and at Omuni we were told that if in the old days a man was seen speaking to an unmarried girl, her outraged relatives would seek to kill him. Children may of course come in contact with their parents to any extent and at any age.

Second marriages are, and always have been frequent, a man often marrying a sister of his deceased wife and a woman marrying one of her dead husband's brothers. We believe that such unions were regarded as both a privilege and a duty, though according to Handuna of Sitala Wanniya a man married his dead wife's sister principally because if he married any one else his children would not be looked after so well. If a widow does not marry one of her dead husband's brothers she may return to her parents, though it seemed that if these were no longer living she would generally stay with her late husband's group, whose duty it would then be to look after her and her children.

With regard to name avoidance, a man does not speak the name of his mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and they also refrain from speaking his name, relationship terms being used instead. Nor does a man commonly speak of his son-in-law or father-in-law, or his brother's wife or sister's husband, except by the appropriate relationship terms; beyond this we would only point out that, as already mentioned, neither man nor woman commonly speaks of his or her spouse by name, and there is a general tendency to avoid the use of names and where possible indicate an individual by a relationship term. In no case did we notice any hesitation in giving the name of any adult which we sought to obtain in the course of our inquiries. The objection to saying a young child's name and the reason for this is referred to on p. 103.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

601 576 Terms of respect were commonly used in addressing the aged, thus although *siya* or *mutta* really mean father or grandfather, these words might be used as terms of respect in addressing any old man, and in the same way the terms *kiriamma* (grandmother) or *atta* might be used to any old woman, and we were told that *siya* was constantly used by members of the group in addressing the "senior" or patriarch. An individual of either sex would call his or her father-in-law's father *siya* or *kiriappa*, and a mother-in-law's mother is addressed as *kiriamma*.

Clan Organization.

614 178 It has already been mentioned that the Veddas at the present day are divided into clans (*waruge*); almost every man who calls himself a Vedda can give the name of his *waruge* and this applies even to many village and coast Veddas in whom there is a minimum of true Vedda blood. The clan organization of the Veddas was first pointed out by Nevill, who says: "The Veddas north of the Mahawaeli Ganga have lost their original divisions... and reduced to a few isolated families....The Vaeddas known as coast Vaeddas have abandoned most of their ancestral customs and I cannot even ascertain from them their original name. Vaeddas of the forest districts do not preserve any tradition of relationship with these Vaeddas of the coast." Nevill then gives 614 the following nine names as those of the Vedda clans, to which he adds the Veddas of Tambalagama Pattu, Kattakulam Pattu and Anurajapura as true Veddas though their *waruge* names seem lost.

1. Morana waruge.
2. Unapana waruge.
3. Bandara or Rugam waruge.
4. Namada, Namadana or Nabadana waruge.
5. Ura-wadiya waruge.
6. Uruwa waruge.
7. Kowil waname.
8. Aembala or Ambala waruge.
9. Tala waruge.

(1 *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 176)

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

In this list no account is taken of the coast Veddas, of whom Nevill says that they "evidently belong to several distinct sections....Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda.... The Vaeddas say they never were related to these Coast Vaeddas, and do not know when they came to the coast, or where they came from, nor did they ever hear that they belonged to any *waruge* of the race.

"The Coast Vaeddas do not know when they came, or how they came, but they say that long ago their ancestors came from the Gala, far beyond the hills to the west[1]."

The Doctors Sarasin state that they attempted to map the territorial distribution of the clans given by Nevill, but on account of the vagueness of his statement were unable to do this. With regard to Nevill's clans we must point out that his 5th, 6th, 7th clan names are open to criticism. *Kovil wanamu* is a descriptive term meaning "temple precincts" and, as has already been stated, is the general name for certain Veddas who live in the Eastern Province in the neighbourhood of Devulani tank and who belong to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*. It was formerly the general name for the Veddas who lived in the neighbourhood of the Kataragam temple in the extreme south of Uva.

As for Nevill's Ura-wadiya *waruge* and Uruwa *waruge*, these are not two *waruge* each having one of these names but are other names for the Uru *waruge* mentioned on p. 33. The nine clans given by Nevill are thus reduced to seven and, as will be shown later, there is every reason to believe that this number must be still further reduced by the exclusion of Rugam, i.e. Bandara *waruge*, from the list.

We may now give the distribution of the *waruge* as determined by ourselves.

Morane. This clan is found at Nilgala, Henebedda, Bandaraduwa (Kovil Vanamai Veddas), Sitala Wanniya, Godatalawa (Galmede Veddas), and among the Mudugala Veddas now settled at Unuwatura Bubula, as well as among many of the last

(1 *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 183.)

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 remains of the Veddas who lead a miserable existence in the neighbourhood of the Badulla-Batticaloa road between Kallodi and Maha Oya. The Morane clan probably also exists at Bingoda near Mullagama, and a few Morane people are to be found among the village Veddas of Tamankaduwa. There is, however, reason to believe that this clan has been recently introduced from Omuni, where there are many people who in spite of the Sinhalese blood in their veins say they belong to Morane *waruge*.

Unapane. The distribution of this clan is the same as Morane, and judging from the fact that all the Bingoda people we met said they were Unapana, it must be especially strong there.

Namadewa. This clan is found at Henebedda where that part of the jungle known as Kolombedda was pointed out as their property, and among the village Veddas in Uva Bintenne (Dambani, Bulugahaladena, Girandura). It also occurs in Tamankaduwa where it was one of the chief *waruge* of Elakotaliya, Kalukalaeba and Yakure.

Uru. This clan is found at Uniche among the village Veddas of Bintenne and Tamankaduwa and among the coast Veddas. Its name was known to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas and to many of the small settlements in the neighbourhood of Maha Oya.

Aembala. Some of the coast Veddas say they are of this clan which is also found in Tamankaduwa, at Yakure and Ulpota. The name of this *waruge* was known to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas.

Tala. This clan was only known at Yakure.

The distribution of Namadewa, Uru, Aembala and Tala *waruge* described above agrees with that given by Nevill.

Besides the *waruge*, the distribution of which has just been described, certain other alleged *waruge* were mentioned to us. In some instances it was certain that these were merely groups of people who were named after the locality they now live in or formerly inhabited. The most important of these territorial names was Rugam. The Rugam *waruge* was accounted an offshoot of Morane, and since Rugam is the name of a large and important tank some 12 miles from Maha Oya where Veddas

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

were formerly numerous, it seems reasonable to suppose that Rugam *waruge* was originally a local group called after the territory they inhabited. 614

Dehigama is another *waruge* name given as one to which a small number of Veddas of Uva Bintenne belonged and is avowedly a place name.

Bendiya was also given as a *waruge* name and perhaps is also a place name.

With regard to the origin of the names of the genuine Vedda *waruge*, the only hint that any of them are recognised by Veddas as springing from place names was that conveyed by the statement of a number of Morane men that their ancestors came from Moranegala in the Eastern Province, but no Unapane man ever suggested that his clan had originally come from the place of that name near Kallodi. Moranegala is a hill name, and probably the hill has been named from the *mora* trees (*Nephelium longana*) which it may be assumed grew there, so that Moranegala means "the hill of the *mora* trees," and it might be argued that Morane *waruge* derived its name from the *mora* tree. Some support for this argument might be adduced from the fact that in songs collected at Sitala Wanniya both men and women of Morane *waruge* are addressed as "*mora* flowers." We were unable to discover that any Veddas had legends of the origin of their clans, but this is not to be wondered at in view of the almost total absence of myths among them. The Sinhalese on the other hand have legends of origin for four of the Vedda clans, and these legends, varying only slightly in form, can be collected from the Sinhalese all over the Vedda country. This, as well as the fact that Mr Bibile heard most of them many years ago from his father, show that they are not of recent origin, or invented for the benefit of European inquirers. [773]

With the exception of the legend of the origin of Morane *waruge* given by Mr B. Horsburgh the accounts here given of the origin of the Vedda clans were obtained from the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde, but the same stories with only slight variations were also obtained from the Lindegala "Veddas" and the Arachi of Belligala. 614 773

Mr Horsburgh obtained his account of the origin of Morane

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 *waruge* from the "Veddas" of Rotawewa—a rice-growing village
773 in Sinhala Pattuwa of Tamankaduwa, the inhabitants of which say they are descendants from Veddas—although all accounts show that they are indistinguishable from their Sinhalese neighbours. "When Kuveni was abandoned by Vijaya she returned with her two children, a boy and girl, to her own people, who killed her. Her children fled to the jungle and lived on the fruits of the '*mora*' tree. One of their children came to Minneriya and founded the Minneriya (now Rotawewa) Veddas of the Morane Waruge." We have not visited these people but it may be assumed that they are at least as sophisticated as the "Veddas" of Yakure.

Unapane. Unapane *waruge* is an offshoot from Morane. A chief's daughter was given to another chief's son. When going to the bridegroom's cave the girl got thirsty on the way and the only water available was a minute trickle down the face of a rock. The man allowed this to soak into a piece of cloth which he squeezed into a bamboo from which the girl drank. This is the origin of the name from *una* "bamboo" and *pane* "water," and the descendants of this couple were called Unapane.

Uru. A Morane girl became pregnant and refused to give the name of her lover. She was beaten and driven away from the group and brought forth her child in a hole dug by a wild boar, *uru*, hence the name Uru *waruge*.

Aembala. Aembala *waruge* has sprung from Unapane. An Unapane girl's husband died while she was pregnant, and all her other relations were dead. When her child was born she left it under a tree while she went to dig yams. On her return she found that red ants (*aembaleo*) had blinded her child, whence the child was called Aembeli, and her descendants formed Aembala clan.

Namadewa. An Aembala woman brought forth a female child under a *namada* tree; this girl was therefore named Namadi and from her descendants arose the Namadewa clan.

582 Exogamy prevails among the Veddas of Bintenne and
611 Tamankaduwa and clan descent is matrilineal. These conditions also prevail at Godatalawa and therefore must be assumed to have existed at Galmede whence the Godatalawa family had

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

come, but strangely this and the nearly related Sitala Wanniya Veddas were the only communities to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road in which exogamy prevailed. The Henebedda and Kovil Vanamai Veddas all married freely within the clan. It is, however, probable that this is a recent though not quite modern innovation, since at Henebedda it was said that it was particularly fitting that Morane and Unapane should intermarry. 582 611

Nevill recognised the existence of exogamy, and presumably it was of the Bintenne Veddas that he made the following very definite statement, which applies equally well to the condition of things existing at the present day, even among such sophisticated folk as those of Omuni, where genealogies were taken in order to make quite certain of this matter. "The rule for marriage was stringent. The daughter represents her mother's family, the son also represents his mother's family. In no case did a person marry one of the same family, even though the relationship was lost in remote antiquity. Such a marriage is incest. The penalty for incest is death. Thus the daughter must marry either her father's sister's son, or her mother's brother's son, neither of whom would be of the same clan name. Failing these she may marry any of their name, and should no such bridegroom be available, marriage into a third family becomes necessary[1]." 582

If the distribution of these Vedda communities in which exogamy prevails be studied on the map it will be seen that with the exception of the Sitala Wanniya and Godatalawa (Galmede) groups all the Veddas to the west of the Badulla-Batticaloa road are exogamous, whereas those to the east of the road contract marriage within the clan. [184]

As a matter of convenience we now give a list complementary to that on pp. 71 to 74 showing what *waruge* were represented in each of the communities we visited. Danigala: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the last not acknowledged). Henebedda: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the latter properly forming the Kolombedda community and settlement). Kovil Vanamai (Bandaraduwa): Morane, Unapane, Uru (the latter forming the settlement at Uniche). In all these settlements marriage occurs within the clan. 614 582

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 **Sitala Wanniya.** The Sitala Wanniya people said that Morane and Unapane were the only *waruge* of which they had any first-hand knowledge. They had, however, heard that formerly three other *waruge* called Uru, Kabela and Aembala existed, and that the folk of these *waruge* were of lower status than the people of Morane and Unapane.

Godatalawa (Galmede). These people all belonged to Morane and Unapane *waruge*.

Unuwatura Bubula. The *waruge* of this settlement were Morane, Unapane and Bandara *waruge*. Exogamy was strictly adhered to, and the children took their mother's *waruge*. As far [58a] as we could determine, all the poverty-stricken Veddas settled 611] on chenas in the neighbourhood of Kallodi and Maha Oya on the Badulla-Batticaloa road belonged either to Morane, Unapane, Bandara (Rugam) or Uru *waruge*, the Morane and Unapane Veddas of the large chena settlement at Rerenkadi holding the last to be of inferior status.

Lindegala. Three men, the last remains of the Lindegala Veddas, visited us at Kallodi. The oldest of these, the possessor of the *aude* with inlaid silver work referred to on p. 171, was a rather tall stoutly built man who looked like a Sinhalese. He, however, remembered his *waruge* Morane and stated that his wife belonged to Bandara *waruge* and one of his companions who [611] belonged to this *waruge* had a wife belonging to Morane *waruge*. It was stated that children took their mother's *waruge*.

Elakotaliya. The *waruge* of this settlement are Namadewa, 614 Uru and Rugam; exogamy was insisted on, and in all the nine 582 marriages of which we have notes the contracting parties were of different *waruge*. In seven cases Uru and Namadewa *waruge* intermarried, in one instance Namadewa and Rugam *waruge*, while in the last instance the *waruge* of the woman was uncertain. Although it was clearly stated that the children should [611] take their father's *waruge*, it was certain that in some cases they took their mother's *waruge*.

It was said that a man should marry his father's sister's daughter and not his mother's brother's daughter but we could not establish this.

Kalukalaeba. Morane, Namadewa, Uru and Rugam *waruge*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

are represented in this settlement. Although in conversation no importance was attached to exogamy this must be taken to exist since all of the ten marriages recorded are exogamous. These include six marriages of Morane with Namadewa *waruge*, two of Morane and Uru *waruge* and one each of Morane and Rugam *waruge* and of Rugam and Namadewa *waruge*. Children take their mother's *waruge*. 614 582

Yakure. The *waruge* existing here are Namadewa, Aembala, Bendia, Rugam and Tala. Uru *waruge* was known by name but not otherwise, Dehigama was recognised as belonging to the Uva Bintenne and Morane *waruge* as existing in the neighbourhood of Omuni. Exogamy was the rule and occurred in every marriage (8) of which we have records. *Waruge* descent should be in the female line but in some instances children took their father's *waruge*. Seeking to elucidate this matter it was said that whereas girls took their mother's *waruge* boys took their father's, but this rule certainly did not hold in all cases[1]. Cousin marriage was said to be the old custom, but it was admitted that at the present day this custom was more often neglected than observed. 614 582 611

Ulpota. This is said to be the most important of four small settlements of village Veddas in the neighbourhood of Dimbulagala (Gunner's Quoin). These settlements are Ulpota, Kohombolewa, Alagonagoda and Gonandamene all of which, according to Mutua our informant, consist of a small number (Kohombolewa eight, Gonandamene three) of huts. Mutua, who said that he was headman of the Tamankaduwa Veddas, gave the *waruge* of these settlements as Rugam, Aembala and Morane; the last being to his mind less numerous and less important than the others. The conditions as regards *waruge* descent and exogamy are the same as at Yakure. Of fifteen marriages recorded eleven are between individuals of Rugam and Aembala

[1] We may here refer to a statement made while we were investigating this matter at Yakure. "Properly speaking there are no *waruge* among the Veddas, who are only classified into *waruge* for the purpose of marriage." We could not determine what was in our informant's mind, and although we were subsequently told the same by the Ulpota Veddas we could not obtain any light on the subject from either community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 *warugé*, the remaining four between Morane and Aembala (2) or
582 Rugam (2) *warugé*.
611 **Dambani.** These extremely sophisticated Veddas probably belong to Namadewa *warugé* and descent is probably matrilineal.

Malgode (Horaborawewa). Our informants knew of
614 Namadewa, Dehigama and Kapatu *warugé* and no others, but when Morane *warugé* was mentioned to them one man stated that he had heard of a *warugé* of that name.

Girandura. Here too exogamy prevailed though children
[582 took their father's *warugé*, and we could discover no exception to
611] these rules. The marriages we could trace took place between Dehigama and Namadewa *warugé*, and between Dehigama and Uru *warugé*, we consequently assume that these are the *warugé* represented in this community.

THE COMPARATIVE STATUS OF THE CLANS.

614 The members of the Morane and Unapane clans generally considered themselves superior to the Namadewa, Uru and
554 Aembala *warugé*. This feeling was so strong at Henebedda that much difficulty was at first experienced in collecting genealogies. Representatives of the Morane, Unapane and Namadewa clans were for the time living together at Bendiyagalge caves, and the difference in status between the Morane and Unapane on the one hand, and Namadewa on the other, was felt so strongly that the members of the last-mentioned *warugé* invariably denied their clan, while the Morane and Unapane folk said the Namadewa were their servants. It seemed clear
[582] that in the old days Morane and Unapane folk never married into one of the servile clans, but two or three such marriages had taken place within recent years, and in every case these marriages were at first denied. The most striking proof of this feeling was evinced when we had come to know all the members of the community and pretence had been largely given up; Sita Wanniya and Poromala our usual guides, both Morane men, led us one day to the Namadewa chena. The Namadewa men immediately began an angry protest. "These people," they said, meaning Poromala and Sita Wanniya, "call us Namadewa; it

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

is not so, we are as good as they," and again on leaving they declared that even if they were not Morane folk they were certainly as good, for had not the eldest born of Kaira the patriarch of Danigala, a Morane man, married a woman from their family? This last statement was proved to be true by the genealogy. As neither we nor our guides said anything to provoke these remarks the intensity of the feeling cannot be doubted. At Bandaraduwa there were only Morane and Unapane men, but they said that Uru *waruge* were their servants, and that some people of this clan lived near Uniche; Wannaku seen later was doubtless one of these. At the chena settlement at Rerenkadi one woman said the Uru *waruge* were "dirty" people. This was one of the first Vedda communities we visited, and the significance of the remark was not realised at the time. At Dambani the people professed to have forgotten their *waruge*; we therefore surmised that they might belong to one of the inferior clans, and later at Horaborawewa a Vedda boy said his mother was a Namadewa woman from Dambani. Additional evidence in support of this view was furnished by the statements of the Alutnuwara Arachi recorded on p. 52.

The services that the inferior clans were said to render to other clans were as follows: when big game was shot and fish caught the Namadewa men must carry it, and they must make the creeper ladders for gathering rock honey. How much of this work was really done by Namadewa people is extremely difficult to say, it is scarcely credible that when living apart from the servile clans the Morane and Unapane men would send for them to carry a kill, but when Poromala of Henebedda (Morane) had killed a deer and cut it up on the *talawa* near our camp, it was noticed that Kalua, a Namadewa boy who had not been hunting, came down from the cave and carried back the greater part of the meat.

The Territorial Grouping of the Clans.

Although at the present day it cannot be said that a territorial grouping of the clans certainly exists, or ever existed, there is considerable evidence that this once prevailed. We

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 would in the first place refer to what we have already stated to be the geographical distribution of the clans at the present day. The fact that Unapane *waruge*, so important to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road and in its immediate vicinity to the west, is absent in Tamankaduwa is extremely suggestive, as is the limited distribution and importance of Morane *waruge* in Tamankaduwa. The existence of only one known Tala *waruge* centre (Yakure) and the limited distribution of Aembala *waruge* which, as far as we can determine, only exists in the country round Gunner's Quoin and among the coast Veddas who have avowedly come from inland, points in the same direction, as does the name Rugam *waruge* derived from the country round the tank of that name and often applied to a sub-group of Morane who are also called Bandara *waruge*. Turning now to evidence of a rather different nature our old Kandyan informant, whose statements have been quoted at length on pp. 29 to 34, was very emphatic in assuring us that the local representatives of Morane and Unapane clans, the two *waruge* with which he was well acquainted in his youth, each had their own territory and caves, and even at the present day the information we were able to gather strongly pointed to Bingoda being an old centre of the Unapane clan, while Danigala was probably a Morane centre. Again Kolombedda was quite definitely said to be the Namadewa territory, and the Bandaraduwa community stated that a certain area in the neighbourhood of Uniche was the domain of the local group of the Uru *waruge*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER IV

FAMILY LIFE

THE family life of the wilder Veddas centres round the rock-shelters which are truly their homes, and even among those Veddas who practise chena cultivation, but have not formed permanent settlements, these rock-shelters play an important part, the movements of the community or family group from shelter to shelter being regulated according to season and available food supply. Our experience leads us to believe that the wilder Veddas so greatly prefer rock-shelters to huts that they seldom build the latter, preferring rather to face the inconvenience of travelling some distance daily in search of food, and even to camp for the night under some temporary shelter. Except in this particular Nevill's description of the movements of a Vedda family still holds good if it be remembered that he applies the term "Village Vaedda" to any Vedda who makes even the roughest chena. "The Forest Vaedda forms a home two or three times a year, as the season demands. Thus in the dry hot months when brooks and ponds dry up, the game collects in the low forests around the half dried river beds. He then takes his wife and children, aged parents or crippled relatives, and settles them in a hut close to a place where water can be got. From this he makes his hunting forays, and returns to it with his game. The rain sets in however, and the iguanas, deer, pigs, etc. are scattered over the country; the elk then seek rocky hills, and are followed by the Vaedda. The little household goods, the children, and family party, again are moved up to the high ground, avoiding the malaria that now hangs as a shroud over the forest-clad lowlands. Here, if possible, a cave is chosen for the home, and improved by a slight roof in front, if

342
221
[592]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
221

too exposed, and around this the food winner ranges.... Besides his high-ground residence, and his low-ground residence, if a tract of forest burst suddenly into flower that attracts vast swarms of bees, or into useful fruit, the family will make a little pic-nic party, and go there for a week or month, if it be too far from the home for daily visits. He cannot, however, be called 'nomadic,' any more than the European who has a town house, and country house, though the climate during the dry season calls for so trifling a shelter, that a permanent house is not required....

"The village Vaedda was originally, and indeed is still, distinguished as one who had added grain cultivation to hunting, honey collecting, and yam digging. When he moved into summer quarters, he set to work and felled a suitable lot of forest and burned it off, in the intervals of hunting. When the rain approached, he put up a hut that would keep his family dry, on this cleared space, and scattered grain seed over the charred surface. Leaving such food as they had stored for use then, in charge of his family, he would go off for days together to the high ground in search of elk, lodging as before in caves. When the weather cleared, and the grain ripened, they collected it, paid away small shares to other less provident clansmen, who had during the wet season sent the family little presents of flesh, while the father was away, and then away they went to another dry season division of their territory, where the mininnas and iguanas abounded. There is thus little difference between the forest and the village Vaedda, except that the latter makes his dry season home sufficiently substantial to keep out rain as well as dew, and that he leaves his family there, and does not take them to the high ground. He has never yet learned to make his clearing into a field or garden, or his six months' hut into a permanent home. We now come to the dwellings themselves. Where an overhanging rock can be found, it is of course sufficient. Otherwise any rock is chosen, and some sticks being laid sloping in front of it, it is roughly thatched with twigs, rushes, and large pieces of bark. A few elk hides, if not bought up by pedlars, will form a screen at one end. If it is only to exclude dew a very few branches or bits of bark suffice[1]."

[1] *Tapovanam*, Vol. I, 1886, p. 186.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342

The protection from the weather offered by the majority of rock-shelters (for they are all so shallow that they scarcely deserve the name of caves) is somewhat scanty, and the drip

Fig. 1. Plan of cave at Bendiyagala, the amount of overhang of the roof is roughly indicated by cross-hatching. A, circular holes cut in rock; B, drip ledge; C, termite heap; D, steps cut in rock; E, F, carefully worked and smoothed portions of cave floor; H, boulder upon which lines have been cut; J, face of boulder from which a portion has been detached.

ledges often cut in their rock walls show how fully this was realised by the Sinhalese who formerly lived in them. Nor are they in any sense capacious, as the plans of Pihilegodagalge

342 (figure 2) and the Bendiyagalge caves (figure 1) show. In the former the shelter was constituted by the weathering back for about five feet of a horizontal stratum softer than the rest of the rock mass. The shelter thus formed was about five feet high at its front and three feet at its back, and from personal experience we can testify that it afforded comparatively good shelter from the wet. This can hardly have been the case with such caves as Bendiyagalge which appear to have been formed by the weathering of a stratum with a dip of about 45 degrees, or by the oblique tilting and subsequent weathering of a rock mass such as appears to have formed Uhapitagalge (Plate XVII, figure 2). Indeed we were told that such shelters as Punchiamagalge and Bendiyagalge sometimes became uncomfortably wet. Plate XVII, figure 1, is a view taken to show as much as possible of the rock mass in which the Bendiyagalge shelters are formed, and this figure and that of Uhapitagalge when examined in connection with the plan of Bendiyagalge will give a good idea of the possibilities of a Vedda rock-shelter as a home. As will be seen from Plate XVIII, figures 1 and 2 of Pihilagodagalge (Sitala Wanniya), no care is taken to keep the cave clean. At Bendiyagalge we noticed an unpleasant odour about the cave due to the lack of sanitary precautions taken by the members of the comparatively large community then living in these caves. Plate XIX, figure 1, shows the general appearance of these caves including the steps (Plate IX) hewn in the rock between the lower and upper caves and the worked edge of the upper cave forming a drip-ledge. Plate XIX, figure 2, is an early morning scene in the cave, and was taken soon after its occupants had awakened.

[364]

The love of the wilder Veddas for their rock-shelters, as well as their disregard for climatic conditions, is well illustrated by a remark made by Handuna the oldest and most influential man among the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, "It is pleasant for us to feel the rain beating on our shoulders, and good to go out and dig yams and come home wet and see the fire burning in the cave and sit round it."

152 Such a remark is in itself evidence of a cheerful disposition, and before going any further we must describe the Vedda

342

Fig. 1. General view of the rock shelters at Bendiyagalge

Fig. 2. Uhapitagalge rock shelter

[facing p. 84a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
516
415

Fig. 1. Pihilegodagalge rock shelter

Fig. 2. Part of Pihilegodagalge rock shelter

[facing p.84 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
516
411

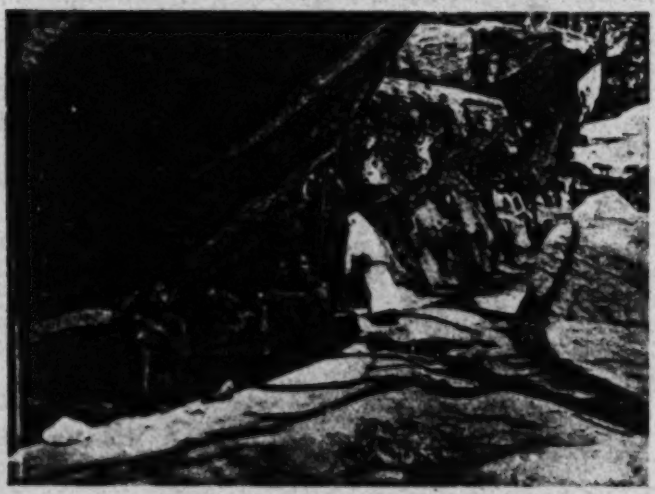


Fig. 1. Lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge

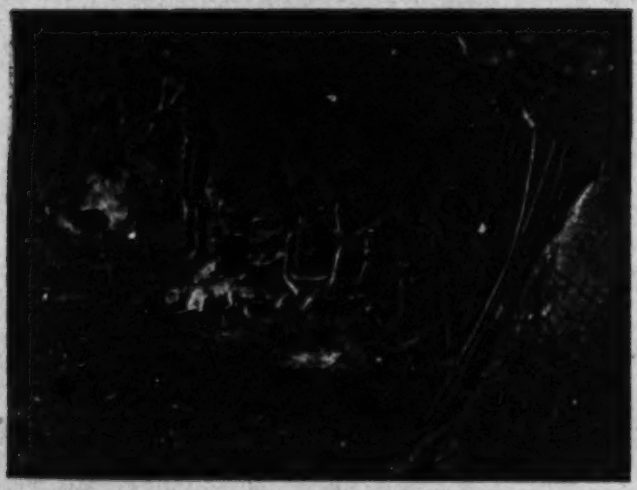


Fig. 2. Early morning scene in lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge

[facing p. 814c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

temperament. Travellers have called the Vedda morose, and stated that he never laughs; this belief has doubtless been strengthened by the disagreeable behaviour of the "show" Veddas (see p. 50), yet Veddas have told us how they throw leaves in the air and laugh and dance for joy. Nevill was certainly right when he said, "They are a merry people, delighting in riddles, songs and jests. Mr Hartshorn observed some Vaeddas who never laughed in his presence. They must have been either terrified, or sulky and offended, for those I have seen, of all clans, laugh often and merrily, a habit very strongly contrasted with that of the Sinhalese, who scarcely ever go beyond a smile. They burst into a verse of song, now and again, apparently from sheer exuberance of spirits, and any ludicrous incident amuses them[1]."

At Bendiyagalge we were particularly well situated to observe their behaviour, our camp being out of sight of the Vedda cave but within 200 yards of it, here we could listen to their unrestrained chatter and laughter which was especially noticeable at sunset. It is true that their faces express no emotion of pleasure or gratitude when they are given exactly what they expect. Thus, white cloth, which the men like to wear, is well known to them, they buy it themselves from the Moormen pedlars, it is the usual present for a European to make to Veddas, and they receive it with perfectly stolid faces, and are hence dubbed sullen. We had an excellent example of this at Henebedda when we gave a piece of white cloth to Poromala the senior of the group, whom we knew well and who had frequently smiled and laughed in our presence. When, however, a sharp pruning knife was given him his face beamed like a schoolboy's, he ran his thumb along the blade and tried its edge on pieces of grass. Things new to them which we showed

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 192. Veddas often dance for a few moments when pleased, thus a Henebedda Vedda on being given a piece of sacking to cover himself with after complaining of cold, immediately held it over his head, bowed his body forward and went through a few dance steps, singing the while. On another occasion this man and three companions (all young men) began to dance spontaneously. This was about 9 p.m. one night in the courtyard of the Ambilinne Rest House, where they had visited us, their sense of well-being in this case may have been stimulated by a liberal feed of curry and rice which had been given them, but we do not think they danced in payment for this.

Things new to them which we showed

them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and
152 most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by
[522] a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character, but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous, and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman, but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela, half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well as the other men. Kaira, *Aanas* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *Aanas* to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives, keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately, it did not seem that any food was private property. One other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely, that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own division, but always put them all together in a particular

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251

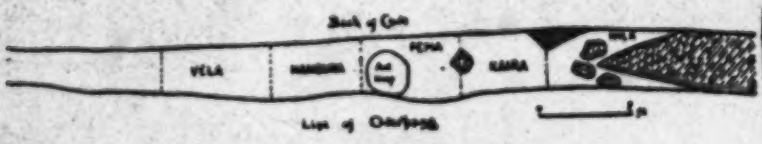


Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

[342 423 592]

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [595] 837

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

837 whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was very careful in my inquiries on this subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Sinhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it[1]."

The only case of suicide of which we heard took place in
762 connection with a breach of the common rule of conjugal fidelity.
837 Tissahami, the husband of Kumi, younger sister of the headman of the Bandaraduwa Veddas, carried on an intrigue with his *nanna*, an unmarried girl named Kirimenike. When his wife who was not one of his *nanna* discovered the intrigue, she scolded her husband most unmercifully, "Why go to another woman while I live?—better to have gone to your mother than her." Although his intrigue with Kirimenike was of old standing, Tissahami was so upset with the disgrace of publicity that he killed himself in the compound outside his own hut early one morning. He had a gun, and holding the muzzle to the suprasternal notch, he pulled the trigger with his toe. The dead man's
[626] relatives were very angry with Kumi for driving him to desperation but they did not threaten her, nor in any way molest her. Kumi and Kirimenike belonged to the same *warugo* (Morane) but were unrelated. Kirimenike subsequently married a Vedda, and went to live at Syringawala where she remained until she died.

562 In every respect the women seem to be treated as the equals
609 of the men; they eat the same food; indeed, when we gave presents of food the men seemed usually to give the women and children their share first; the same applies to areca nut and other chewing stuffs. The women are jealously guarded by the men, who do not allow traders or other strangers to see them, and those at Sitala Wanniya were too shy to visit our camp, though they welcomed us to their cave, and the dances performed for our benefit took place in the dense jungle so that the women might be present and partake of the food offered to the *yaku*. We had offered to clear a space by our camp where the light would have been better for photography; however, the

[1] J. Bailey, "Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon," 1863, *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* Vol. II, p. 291.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

men explained that though the ceremonies themselves might be performed anywhere the women would not come to our camp, so the dances must take place at the usual dancing ground in the jungle. The day after hearing the phonograph at our camp, the men came to us to request that we should take it to the cave as they had told their wives about it, and they all wanted to hear it too. From these examples the position of Vedda women will be understood.

Writing in 1887 Nevill notices a similar state. "As a rule, among the purer Veddas, the younger women are rigorously excluded or rather protected from contact with strangers. They occupy, however, an honourable and free position in the society of their relations. I only once saw the good-looking girls of the pure Vedda family. My guide was then ahead of our party with me, and abruptly, without explanation further than the word 'my house,' dived into the forest, beckoning me to follow. We had only gone a few hundred yards from the path, when we reached a glade with a little shed. Here a party of girls and women and children were collected, and at sight of us the younger women began to slip away into the woods, but at a word from my guide stopped. They then advanced and one by one stepped up to me with graceful courtesy, each making a Sinhalese bow with both hands when quite close to me, and then stepped aside, with or without a few words of simple welcome. There was no haste or reluctance, nor any approach to curiosity shown. I stopped talking with some of the elder women for a short time, and then went on. Three or four of the women had most exquisite figures, like statues of Psyche, and a clear brown skin. They were bare to the waist, and from the knees down. I never saw Vaedda women at all comparable to these, and then only did I realise the stories I had heard from Sinhalese, of the former great beauty of the Vaedda women. On our return, the clan met us by official appointment; but these girls, and one equally statuesque young mother, were conspicuously absent, and I saw it was understood I should regard my interview as a confidential honour, intentionally arranged to make me feel I was personally trusted and distinguished.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

762 609 "It is probable good-looking women have often been kept back by others who had not equal confidence in me[1]."

855 Veddas are affectionate and indulgent parents, never refusing a small child anything it wants and giving it always of the best. We have frequently seen men save for their children food which had been given to them and which they considered specially good, such as bananas or coconuts. The babies are generally happy, but should they cry their wishes are immediately gratified by either parent. We saw a naked boy of about two and a half years strut proudly up and down outside Pihilegodagalge with his father's axe hung on his shoulder, he was extremely happy and all went well until he threatened one of the dogs with the axe, then his mother was obliged to interfere and the child tried to hit her with it; the father seeing this got up and tried to coax the child into giving up the axe, but the boy was now excited and would not give it up, at last he flung it at his father and hit his leg. The man was obviously annoyed and threw the axe from him into the jungle, but he did not attempt to scold or punish the child who was now howling with rage, indeed, after a little while some food was given him to pacify him.

Another time a woman who had been cutting yams with a knife put this down, when her baby snatched it up, and although she was obliged to watch lest he hurt himself, she allowed him to play with the knife. Yet when a child is old enough to wear a little rag in the way of clothing, possibly from 858 six to eight years old, he is expected to behave himself properly and strange to say he does so. One day it was raining heavily, and we were all sitting in the rock shelter at Pihilegodagalge; at the further end of the cave we noticed a lad of seven or nine years old having a heated argument with his mother, suddenly he turned round and went out into the rain, when he returned he had controlled his temper; later we remarked on this and were told that the lad was considered old enough to behave as a man; a boy of this age would not hit his mother as a little 855 child might do and yet be excused. It may here be mentioned 291 that children of both sexes go naked until about six or seven years old, though perhaps the general age for the assumption of

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 192.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clothing is younger in the case of girls than boys. The boy 855
assumes a piece of rag attached to a string in the same manner 291
as men, while girls wear a piece of stuff fastened round their hips like a sarong. A child's first cloth is put on by its mother without any ceremony. The only toys seen were bows and arrows, and these are possessed by every male child. We never 524
saw a little girl play with a bow and arrow, but mothers make 857
them for the baby boys while these are still crawling about. Such toys of course are small and roughly made, but bigger boys of five years old and upwards make quite neat little bows, and shoot with them tolerably well; they do not feather their arrows. Other children were seen playing with clay and sticks; and girls frequently play with broken pots with which they pretend to cook.

As women take the children with them when they go out to 868
dig for yams little girls soon learn to do this, and boys would begin to be taken out hunting when about ten years old. It was difficult to find out whether the fathers' or mothers' brothers took the greater part in training the boys and it seemed that a lad eager to go out hunting would be taken by any grown man, who in the very small community is usually a relative. Lads would be encouraged by their elders to shoot at a mark with their bows and arrows, and later they would stalk small birds and shoot fish[1].

When a child tells a lie he may be told "Go away, I do not believe what you say," but it appeared that even young children were usually truthful. One thing is taught the lads systematically, that is the method of collecting honey from the combs of the rock bee. Whenever the caves are conveniently situated a ladder of creepers is suspended from a tree in the jungle 524
above and hangs over the end of the face of rock which forms 857
the cave. On this the youths play at "honey getting." At 868
Pihilegodagalge the lads were quite willing to demonstrate to us how it was done, and the elder men showed clearly that this

[1] Nevill, in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. I, 1886, p. 189), says ".....a pellet bow is used occasionally by small boys, and birds are often shot with it, though the aim seems very uncertain." Pellet bows were seen at Henebedda, they are used regularly by the Sinhalese in the neighbourhood, and we do not doubt that the practice was introduced by them. [411]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

was a game which they encouraged. A lad of about thirteen collected some green leaves and tied them together with creeper, then taking an arrow, a toy *mastiya*, and a broken gourd tied with creeper, which hung over his arm, for a *maludema*, he set fire to the leaves and climbed the ladder[1]. While lowering the smoker and letting the smoke blow into the crevice in the rock where the comb was supposed to be, he pretended to cut round its sides with an arrow and thrust at it with his *mastiya* (figure 3), from which he transferred the honey into the gourd. As he descended from the ladder he beat his chest and sides as though driving off the bees, and directly he reached the ground rushed into the jungle to escape from them, all the smaller children imitating him with great glee. Obviously this was a well-known and favourite game, for even the elders took part in it, throwing their cloths over their heads and running into the jungle.

At Henebedda (which we visited before Pihilegodagalge) there were no children present when we spoke about honey getting, but four young men were eager to show us how it was done and acted the scene with great spirit. They took from our camp a piece of white and a piece of brown paper, and fastened them with some wax to the roof of their cave, then as there was no tree above the cave around which to fasten a creeper, one man crouched on the top of the rock and held the ends of the ladder in his hands, another stood above and lowered a smoker of green leaves while a third climbed the ladder and collected the honey from the white paper and the grubs from the brown. Afterwards the collector divided the spoil equally and amid much laughter they all sat down and pretended to eat, one actually going through the pantomime of washing his hands after the meal. They eat the grubs as well as the honey.

As regards clothing, pedlars have brought them cloth for so long that no Vedda living knows what was done when they could not buy it, but it is generally stated that they made bark

[1] The *maludema* is the vessel made of deerskin in which honey should be collected and the *mastiya* the wooden four-pronged implement with which the comb is broken up and transferred to the *maludema*. For figures of *maludema* and *mastiya*, see Plate LXV and figure 3 (p. 92) respectively.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cloth of the *riti* (*Antiaris innoxia*) of which material the Sinhalese still make rice bags. Men wear a rag of "white" cotton about 9 inches wide passed between their legs, and held in place by each end being passed over a waist string. This cotton material they prefer to anything else for two reasons, firstly, it very soon becomes a dull brown, and hence is less obvious when hunting than a coloured cloth would be, secondly, it is thin machine-made material from which they can easily tear narrow strips for tinder, when they make fire. The women wear coloured cotton cloth of the kind that is woven at Batticaloa, it is a strong material and is not easily torn. A single width forms the length of their skirt from waist to knee and is fastened round their waists like a sarong. Thus, the men's preference for "white" and the women's for coloured cloth is purely economical, depending on the kind of material it has been the pedlar's habit to bring. These pedlars visit the wilder Veddas once a year after the honey collecting season; they never approach the caves, but when within about a quarter of a mile of them they shout till a Vedda comes to them, then they expose their wares and the Vedda returns to the cave to fetch as many pots and gourds of honey and as much dried flesh as he is willing to exchange. The "silent trade," mentioned by Knox[1], is now a legend among the Sinhalese of which no tradition lingers among the Veddas. We have Bailey's evidence that it had ceased before 1863, and the old Kandyan we met (see p. 31) remembered it only as a tradition in the days of the rebellion in 1818. "They are not now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough

Fig. 3. Toy machya × $\frac{1}{10}$ (about).

[1] Cf. p. 6.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XX

343
841

Rough shelter built for isolation of women at Unawatura Bubula

[facing p.94]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

437 with the Sinhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter,
439 they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests[1].

"I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The 'wilder sort' have had too little communication with Sinhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessities of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrowheads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax, and honey, elk flesh and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Sinhalese, or 'the ubiquitous Moors'[2]."

881 There are no puberty ceremonies for either sex, except among certain Veddas who have been much influenced by Tamils or Sinhalese, among whom the girls are isolated for a short time at puberty. Thus although the following ceremony is observed at puberty by the Uniche Veddas, there is no doubt that it has [177] been borrowed from the local Sinhalese who have a similar ceremony, though according to our information the latter people do not break the pot. When a girl becomes unwell for the first time one of her *naena* places a pot of water on her head and goes with her to some place where there is a *nuga* tree. Here the *naena* takes the pot from the girl's head and dashes it on the ground so that the pot breaks. The girl is then secluded in a specially built shelter in which she stays until the end of the period, when she washes and returns to her parents' house. [602] During her seclusion she is attended by a girl, always one of her *naena*, who brings her food in a vessel set apart for this purpose but which is not cooked at a special fire. Among the 841 wilder Veddas no special measures are taken when a woman menstruates, she is allowed to eat the ordinary food, and to [184] sleep in the cave as usual. But among all the village Veddas, 177 and most of those who have mixed at all with the Sinhalese, the menstruous women are strictly isolated, a little shelter being built for them a few paces from the family hut (Plate XX). At Bendiyagalge, where the Henebedda and Kolombedda people were staying at the time of our visit, menstruous women stayed apart at one corner of the cave, they were fed from the pot in

[1] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285—286. [2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 291.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

which the food for the community was cooked, but we do not 841
think they would touch it or assist in any way in the cooking. At Omuni a menstruous woman is isolated under a rough shelter where she is waited upon by a younger unmarried sister or cousin who, it was stated, should not herself have attained puberty. During her seclusion she may eat any food cooked at the ordinary fire, but a special platter is kept for her use. The girls who look after her suffer no restrictions. This happens every time a girl or woman menstruates.

Marriage takes place at an early age; it was said that girls 582
sometimes married before puberty, and as we heard of this at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, and Omuni, we see no reason to doubt the truth of the statement[1]. At Omuni it was pointed out that a certain amount of breast development was necessary [856]
before marriage, so that it is probable that connection does not antedate puberty by more than a short time.

With regard to the frequency of such child marriages, we 836
can only say that we never saw any very young girls with babies. Perhaps at the present day prenuptial connection is more common than marriage between the very young, though it is obviously difficult to decide when prenuptial love-making [585]
between individuals destined for each other gives place to marriage, among people whose marriages are accompanied with but slight ceremony. It must be remembered that the marriage gift of landed or personal property to a son-in-law, which was [583]
formerly customary, is obsolescent at the present day, and this not only makes it more difficult to determine whether marriage has taken place, but probably actually tends to make the exact time of the assumption of the married state less clearly defined.

On account of these considerations we are unable to express any definite opinion as to the frequency of prenuptial connection, the few instances we heard of were between individuals occupying the relationship of *kura* and *naena*, who would in any case marry each other. Thus Kaira of Henebedda and his wife grew up in the same group, and as they had played together as

[1] We are indebted to Mr Frederick Lewis for the information that this is a common practice among Tamils.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

836 children so they came together as they grew up. The community came to know of what had occurred, the couple were considered married, and now go about together. We were told that no resentment was felt or expressed by the girl's parents or the community, and there was no formal giving over of land or property to Kaira by his father-in-law, because, as was pointed out, the fathers of Kaira and Hudi both belonged to the same group and together moved about over the same land.

We think it may be said that among most Veddas at the present day, especially such as have come in contact with the Sinhalese, there is no violent feeling against premuptial connection of the sort here described, but we believe that formerly public opinion was definitely and strongly against the practice, though on this point we do not attempt to dogmatise. There was no doubt as to the attitude of public opinion towards connection between people who were not allotted to each other. This was, and still is, strongly disapproved, and there is no doubt that in the old days the guilty parties risked their lives. 835 It was, however, clear that intrigues of this sort did sometimes 684 occur, and we heard of two instances of what are regarded as incestuous unions which occurred among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas some fifty or sixty years ago. In both cases the girls cohabited with their mothers' sisters' sons, and in both instances the guilty parties were promptly killed by the outraged group. The men were set upon in the jungle, their own fathers it was said taking a prominent part in the assault, while the girls were killed in the huts in which they were living[1].

582 As already mentioned the correct marriage among the Veddas, as among the Sinhalese, is for a man to marry his

[1] The matter has been well stated by Revill who writing more than twenty years ago says: "The Vaeddas marry young, and are strict monogamists. Consequently the husband and wife are watchfully jealous, each of the other, and love-intrigues are few and far between. Nothing short of murder would content the injured party. This strict morality extends to unmarried girls, who are protected by their guardians with the keenest sense of honour" (*Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 178). We do not, however, agree even partially with his statement as to the considerable liberty allowed to widows, we believe that among the wilder Veddas their morality was as strict as that of the maidens and it must be remembered that it was, and is, unusual for any but old women to remain widows for any length of time.

[835]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

father's sister's daughter. The children of two sisters or of two brothers could not marry, and such a connection would be considered incestuous. The man goes to his future father-in-law with a present of honey, yams, grain or dried deer's flesh tied to his unstrung bow which he uses as a carrying stick. Whether he generally repeats this visit or receives his bride immediately was not clear, and probably the custom varies in this particular. Handuna of Godatalawa told us that he did not take his bride away until he had twice taken a present of food to his mother's brother (father-in-law). The bride gives her spouse a waist string of her own making which he never removes until it is worn out, when he replaces it with another made by his wife. In these particulars the marriage ceremony was essentially similar fifty years ago when it was described by Bailey. "The bachelor Veddah who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgement to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest 'delicacies of the season,' for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguano, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and bind it round him[1]."

When a girl married, her father usually made over to his son-in-law a tract of land, generally a hill known to be inhabited by colonies of the *bambara* or rock bee (*Apis indica*), or gave him a piece of personal property such as a bow or one or two arrows. The instances in which land was given are described in the section on land transference, so that here it is only necessary to mention instances in which personal property was given. Handuna received a bow and one arrow from his father-in-law who when presenting them accompanied his gift with the remark "With this bow you must get food for my daughter." Sometimes a dog is given, and Knox was certainly right when he

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 155.

Plate XXI

302
431
585

Locks of hair presented to brides at marriage

[Facing p. 98]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

583 said "For portions with their Daughters in marriage they give
431 hunting Dogs." Among the village Veddas of Bintenne we heard that an axe or catty was sometimes given, though the Arachi of Belligala, who has been much in contact with the Dambani Veddas, stated that these sometimes presented land to their sons-in-law.

In one settlement of village Veddas, Bulugahaladena, we were told that the bridegroom takes a first present to the bride's father and leaves his bow and arrow in his hut until his second visit with further presents some four days later. At the same place the waist string is sometimes charmed to ensure constancy. Among many of the village Veddas the custom of the gift of the waist string is dying out, and the bridegroom gives the bride a cloth as is the custom among the Sinhalese.

Another custom now dying out appears to be the gift from the bridegroom to the bride of a lock of hair, presented at the same time as the food to the girl's father.

We discovered at Bendiyagalge that it is a common practice
302 for women to wear false hair. Here we were told that it was merely worn in order to make the knot look important, but only by married women. It is improbable that the habit should have arisen among a people so careless of personal appearance as are the Veddas had it no other significance than adornment, for it must be remembered that these folk never brush or oil their hair, or even wash it; indeed, some consider the last operation extremely dangerous, so that the ornamental value of a very small wisp of hair may reasonably be doubted. Extra locks of hair are worn by Sinhalese women, and we have seen some hanging in the verandah of a mud hut in a small jungle village, but among them it is a very different matter. They are usually, and very rightly, proud of their masses of long glossy hair, which they comb and oil carefully. A naturally large knot is considered a beauty, especially when stabbed with a jewelled pin, and girls as well as married women will wear an extra lock to produce this effect, but that the custom should have been introduced from the Sinhalese with no other object than that of personal adornment, about which the Veddas seem to care so little[1], seems as improbable as does the

[1] The Vedda attitude towards ornament generally is treated on p. 103.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

hypothesis that it should have arisen among them solely for that object. 302

We believe that a lock of hair, either from his own head or from his sister's, was a customary present from the bridegroom to the bride, and therefore to be considered part of the wedding ceremony. The evidence obtained at Bendiyagalge, though not directly bearing out this point of view, supports the hypothesis when considered in conjunction with the information given us at Sitala Wanniya. The wife of old Poromala at Bendiyagalge wore a piece of hair which Poromala had given her. He had not cut it off his own head but had saved the hair which had come out when combing his hair with his hands, and Handi his wife considered this tail of hair as a valuable possession and said she would leave it to her eldest married daughter when she died. She told us that a woman would burn her lock of hair if she had no daughters. She also said that women would only wear hair from their husbands' heads and laughed at the idea of a man wearing an extra piece of hair, although the men usually wear their hair in the same way as the women. 302 431 585

At Sitala Wanniya each married man was questioned separately.

Handuna, the oldest man and our best informant, said that in former days a lock of hair was always given by the bridegroom to the bride, and if he did not offer it, the young girl might ask for it and insist upon having it. In that case the prospective bridegroom would have to cut it off his own head, if his sister happened to be away at the time or if he had no sister, for it was her duty to give one to her brother if she knew that he wanted it for a wedding gift. A man would always be loath to cut his hair, and there are special regulations against this for shamans, so if the girl is willing to accept him without his present, and he is unable to obtain it from his sister or *naena*, the gift will be allowed to lapse. This happened when both Handuna and Vela married. No man would give hair to anyone except his wife. Kaira gave his wife a lock of hair when he was married, and he obtained it in the following way. He said that when discussing the matter of his future marriage at home, and feeling sore at having no hair to give his bride, his younger 302 431 585 593

Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

302 431 585 593 sister said, "Don't be sorry, I will give you a lock of my hair." She cut a lock from her own head, which he kept until his marriage when he gave it to his wife while she was still at her father's cave. Then he took her to his own cave where she made him a waist string on the second or third day after marriage. To his sister who was then unmarried he gave an axe out of gratitude. Nila cut a lock from his head to give his wife, as his sister was away at the time he was married, otherwise she would have given him one. Pema did not give his wife any hair as her mother had given her some.

302 431 585 184 Among the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula the custom of giving hair as a wedding gift was not known, yet the shaman's wife had a lock which her mother had given her. She assured us that only married women might wear it.

586 Anything like a formal divorce is unknown, but we heard of one instance occurring three generations ago, in which a woman who had gone to live with her husband left him and returned to her parents. The daughter of a Bingoda man, whose nickname Kupunkaree is still remembered, was given to a boy nicknamed Kankuna "Sore Eyes." As he was lazy and took no trouble to support his wife, so that she was frequently obliged to go to her parents for food, they kept her with them. Kankuna was very angry, but he did not threaten violence or attempt to bring back his wife by force. Later she was given to a Vedda of Bandaraduwa and after his death she went to live with a Sinhalese. It was said that she was an unusually pretty girl.

595 It is quite certain that polyandry never existed among uncontaminated Veddas, but at Henebedda we met with one case that must, we think, be called by this name. Before relating this we may, however, call attention to the fact that polyandry is a tolerably common practice among the Sinhalese peasants of the Vedirata, as it is among the less educated classes in other parts of the island[1].

[1] Cf. *Papers on the Custom of Polyandry as practised in Ceylon*, Government Record-Office, Colombo, in which Mr R. W. Lewis, speaking of the Kegalla district, says:—"Having been for six years in charge of a Kandyan district (Kegalla), and having to deal with land cases involving rights of inheritance, and having, as Registrar of Kandyan Marriages, to hear divorce cases, I have found that the custom of polyandry was almost universal; and that in the case of a marriage registered under

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The individuals concerned in the polyandrous marriage at Henebedda are Handuna (8), the Vidane Appuhami (4), and Kandi (10)[1]. It will be seen from the genealogy that Handuna and Appuhami are the sons of a brother and sister, both have intercourse with Kandi, though the latter is nominally the wife of Handuna who is the older man. Kandi is an unusually pretty woman and considerably younger than either. We were told that Appuhami at one time lived with Badeni (11), his father's sister's grandchild, but was compelled to give her up on account of the jealousy displayed by Kandi. 595

We have already pointed out that a man spends much of his time with his father-in-law, i.e. with his wife's people, hunting and wandering with them and having perfectly free access to his father-in-law's hunting ground and fishing pools; at Sitala Wanniya we were told that after a few days spent in a shelter on the territory in the man's community to which the bridegroom carried his bride on first receiving her, the young couple should return to the bride's group. Even at the present day this is the case to a great extent, though among settled communities as at Bandaraduwa there is a tendency for the women to come to the man's community and stay there with him[2]. 591

Pregnancy is diagnosed after two menstrual periods have been missed. The change in the breasts is not noticed. Birth takes place in the cave (unless labour should come on suddenly and occur in the jungle); no screen is put up, and any woman will assist the parturient woman; the cord is cut with an arrow—the common tool used for all cutting purposes—and the afterbirth is thrown away. The umbilicus is treated with cloth and ashes, and the portion of the umbilical cord which drops from the navel is not preserved. We never heard of a case of twins. [843] 844 [845]

During labour the patient leans back with one shoulder or

the Gallmance the name of the elder brother was given as that of the bridegroom, but everyone was aware that the girl would regard the other brothers as being equally her husbands."

[1] The numbers in parentheses refer to the genealogy on p. 60.

[2] Both *binna* and *diga* marriages occur among the pastoral Sinhalese but, according to Mr Bibile, *diga* marriage is the commoner practice.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

844 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at
843 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *madu*, which fruits are
262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard
853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would
262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wandura*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The
844 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round
[184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's
262] flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be dangerously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *katandirala* (devil dancer)
[165] would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who
834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa
551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

or five years old. Before this they were called Tuta (male) and Tuti (female), i.e. "little one," and these expressions may persist and replace their proper names which in many instances seem to be forgotten, so that some children appeared to have no name at all. Small babies may be called Goraka or Gorakki, because they are reddish in colour, and so resemble the *gorakka* fruit (*Garcinia cambogia*). Apparently these names are not applied for more than the first few months after birth. It was said that the reason the names of young children were avoided was that to mention their names might attract the attention of evilly disposed *yaku* who might make the child ill or even kill it. We did not ascertain what were the names of the *yaku* who it was feared might injure the children, but it must be assumed that these spirits belonged to the third stratum of the Vedda religion defined on p. 149, and are either foreign spirits who have been adopted without losing their dangerous attributes, or the spirits of remote female ancestors (*kiriamma*) who sometimes steal children.

At Bandaraduwa, where there was much foreign influence, we had an example of the belief in the inadvisability of bringing children too closely in contact with the *yaku*. This is recorded on p. 216.

At Omuni we were told that in the old days there was no fixed time for the naming of a child. The father and mother give the child its name, usually choosing that of an ancestor, for there is no harm in speaking or using the name of a dead relative when the name is given to a child; thus our informant, the headman of Omuni, calls his second child by the name of his own dead father, though in his lifetime he would have addressed his father by his kinship term. Our informant gave his father's name to his second child, not to his first, because his father was alive when his first son was born. A woman's name is generally given to a granddaughter born after her death. Children are also commonly named after their maternal and paternal aunts and uncles.

The following lists of the names of males and females were given me by Mr Bibile and Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi; they were all said to be good Vedda names, and many of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

551

them were avowedly the names of dead Veddas, but with the exception of those printed in italics, they are none of them common Vedda names, as tested by their occurrence at the present day.

Names of males: *Peromala*, Sulliya, Karakolaya, *Nila*, Kiuwa, Boda, Mola, Pubbara, Kona, Dinga, *Kaluwa*, Hakkendaya, Hapuwa, Bammuna, Peruma, Gobira, *Badewa*, *Kaire*, Kudahanniya, Naga.

Names of females: Bemmini, Tikki, Nagi, Suwadi, Mittu, Viyani, Tandi, *Hendi*, Pinchi, Kalu, *Selli*, Burati, Milalani, Kalumal nangi, Nilmal nangi, Kanni, Kalati, Poiomali, Aembali[1], Nambadi[1], Uri[1], Kendi, Gobire, *Badawi*, Kiri.

In addition to the above the following occur in our notes.

Males: Randu Wanniya, Sita Wanniya, Poromasaka, Handuna, Kanda, Wannaku, Vela, Rata (?), Tiki (?), Hereta (?).

Females: Kandi, Bevini.

Nicknames are common among men, but we did not learn of any instance in which a woman was given one. Nicknames generally refer to physical peculiarities of the individuals to whom they are applied. Poromala, the half of whose face had been torn away by a bear, is usually called *Walaha*, i.e. bear. An old man of Namadewa clan was called Ukusa, because his hair appears ruffled like the feathers of an owl (*kusa*), and Randunu Wanniya, the shaman of the Henebedda community, was nicknamed Uchia from the verb *uchenawa*, to raise up, because after falling down in the shamanistic dances in which he is protagonist he must be raised up by his fellows.

Other nicknames of the immediate ancestors of living Veddas we met were: Mahakata, "big mouth"; Ogapalua, "loud talker," literally, one who yells; Nakakuna, "stinking nose," applied to a man with ozæna; Nemma, "bent"; Kankuna, "sore eyes"; and Kapunkarea, "man who cuts down trees." Although nicknames did not altogether replace their owners' real names, men were often called by them, and the frequency with which certain names such as Poromala and Handuna occur, often made them a real convenience.

[1] These only mean woman of the Aembala, Namadewa and Uru clans respectively.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Adoption is not practised, for the custom of a near relative looking after children who have lost their parents cannot be called by this name. 597 768

Dances play no part in the domestic life of the Veddas, for, although Veddas may perform a few steps of a dance as a sign of pleasure, their dances are mostly if not entirely ceremonial. 535

CHAPTER V

PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

421 All Veddas have a keen sense of ownership, and this is equally developed with regard to the hunting land of the group and the possessions of the individual. It was clear that of old the boundaries of the former were accurately known to all the men of the group and were seldom disregarded except in pursuit of a wounded animal, a contingency especially provided for by the Vedda game laws, and many writers have borne testimony to the unwillingness of Veddas to trespass on the territory of another group.

423 This was noted by Knox, whose remarks on this subject have already been quoted on p. 7. The next mention of 601 this important feature in the organization of the Veddas is made by the Dutch Governor of Ceylon, Ryklof van Goens (1664—1675), the following account being taken from the Drs Sarasin: "The jungle is so divided among the Veddas that every one can easily recognise his boundary...they leave, however, comfortable roads through the interior of their country, for their own purposes as well as for strangers who are obliged to travel from the hills to the plains and vice versa. Don Juan de Costa has told us of such a journey made in the service of Rajah Singha. It was 45 years ago (consequently in 1630) that he descended from the mountains to these Veddah districts. There he was stopped by an archer who was accompanied by others who, armed in a similar manner, stood under the trees. The first enquired his business, whither he intended travelling and what was his mission, whereupon he explained his purpose. He had then to wait there between one and two hours until

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

word arrived from the elder of the district. Then one of the archers accompanied him to the boundary which took between two and three hours' walking. Here he had once more to wait until word arrived from the elders of this district, whereupon the first guide handed him over to a second and then returned. In this way the second guide brought him to a third, and the process continued until he had had more than twelve guides, being over seven days on the way before he reached the province of Batticaloa and the flat district which extended to the coast, and is inhabited by Tamils. He and his ten or twelve companions never suffered any want on the way, as the Veddahs supplied them with food, consisting of good dried venison which was preserved in honey, ground nuts (probably yams) and fruit. But none of the Veddahs spoke a word with him or his companions because it was so prescribed by their customs[1]."

423 609 [574]

Nevill's account of the life led by both the wilder and the more sophisticated "forest" Veddas has been quoted on pp. 81 and 82, in the chapter on Family Life. Nevill's experience was chiefly gained among the Veddas of the Bintenne, but if rather less emphasis be laid on the hut built "close to a place where water can be got," and it be realised that even during the hot dry season rock shelters are the common homes of the wilder Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road, all that he says on this subject can be implicitly accepted.

Commenting upon Nevill's account, the Sarasins point out that since trespassing on land belonging to another group leads to fierce quarrels, the condition described by Nevill must be taken to imply that the territory of each group includes the whole or a part of one considerable hill or rock *massif*. Our experience enables us to confirm this suggestion, and it will be shown later that not only are hills the property of particular groups, but that subject to the rights of the group there is also personal property in hills. Text figure 4 is a sketch map of the territory of the Henebedda Veddas, and roughly shows the position of their caves, which are named Bendiyagalge, Pattiavelagalge, Hitibeminigalge, Punchikiriammagalge, Uhapitagalge, Maladeniyagalge and Kirawanbalagalge. The last is almost

423 423 361 [103]

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 179.

1/Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423
361

too small and too exposed to be called a shelter, consisting as it does of a small space under an overhanging slab which offers scarcely any protection from the weather, for which reason it seemed that it was never used. Bendiyagalge, situated about the centre of the Henebedda territory, consists of two rock

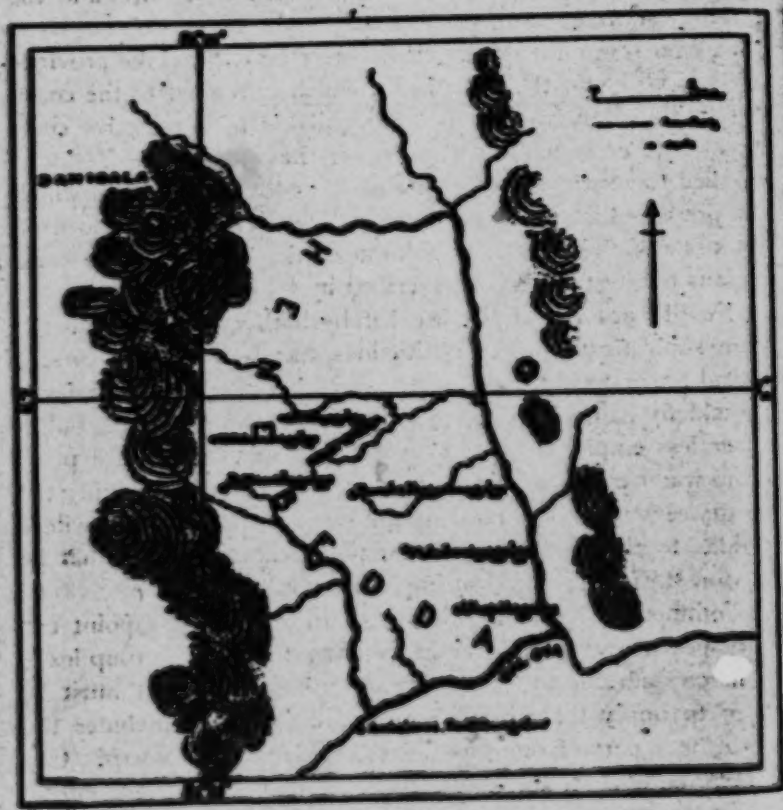


Fig. 4. Plan of the Henebedda territory.

shelters formed by a single mass of rock, broadly speaking, rectangular in shape, with its long axis running roughly from north to south. The rock mass is somewhat tilted so that its southern edge is high above the *talus* towards which its northern extremity slopes, and the whole rock somewhat resembles an immense wedge. Its eastern face has weathered

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423
361

so as to form two rock shelters, each of which has a well-cut drip ledge in no respect differing from those admittedly cut by the Sinhalese about the time that Buddhism was introduced to the island, and the lower cave has in addition two square sockets cut in its roof resembling those discovered by Mr F. Lewis at Nuwaragala and figured by him[1]. Further, there are three steps cut in the solid rock shelters, and other smaller steps and signs of ancient working are to be found in the caves, though there are no inscriptions on the rocks of either of these caves, as there are below the drip ledge of Uhapitagalge.

Pattiavelagalge lies at a distance of rather less than an hour's walk to the S.W. of Bendiyagalge, at the base of the rocky hills forming the boundary of the territory of the Henebedda community. It was said that the name of this cave was derived from *pattia*, a place where cattle were tied, and *vela*, a field, the reason for the name being that about 100 years ago a Sinhalese chief, recognised by the Veddas as being partly of Vedda descent, was allowed to come and live here and pasture his cattle. This man may have been a fugitive during the rebellion of 1818, but this could not be determined with certainty. Hitibeminigalge lies a short distance due west of Bendiyagalge.

[103]

Punchikiriammagalge is a small shelter situated almost due south of Bendiyagalge and near the main track across the country. At the present day it is often used by Tamil gall-nut gatherers. Maladeniyagalge, about two miles from Ambilinne rest-house, is also much used by gall-nut collectors. Uhapitagalge, shown in Plate XVII, figure 2, has a well-carved drip ledge, beneath which is the inscription in Brahmi characters referred to on p. 22.

The natural boundaries of the Henebedda territory as well as the fact that they still have as neighbours the Danigala Veddas, who exercise a jealous supervision of the border on that side on which there is no well-marked natural boundary, made this particularly easy territory to map out. The Sitala Wanniya territory, which we have attempted to delimit in text figure 5 was more difficult and its boundary is only an approximation.

[1] *Proc. Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, Vol. XIX, 1905.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423
361

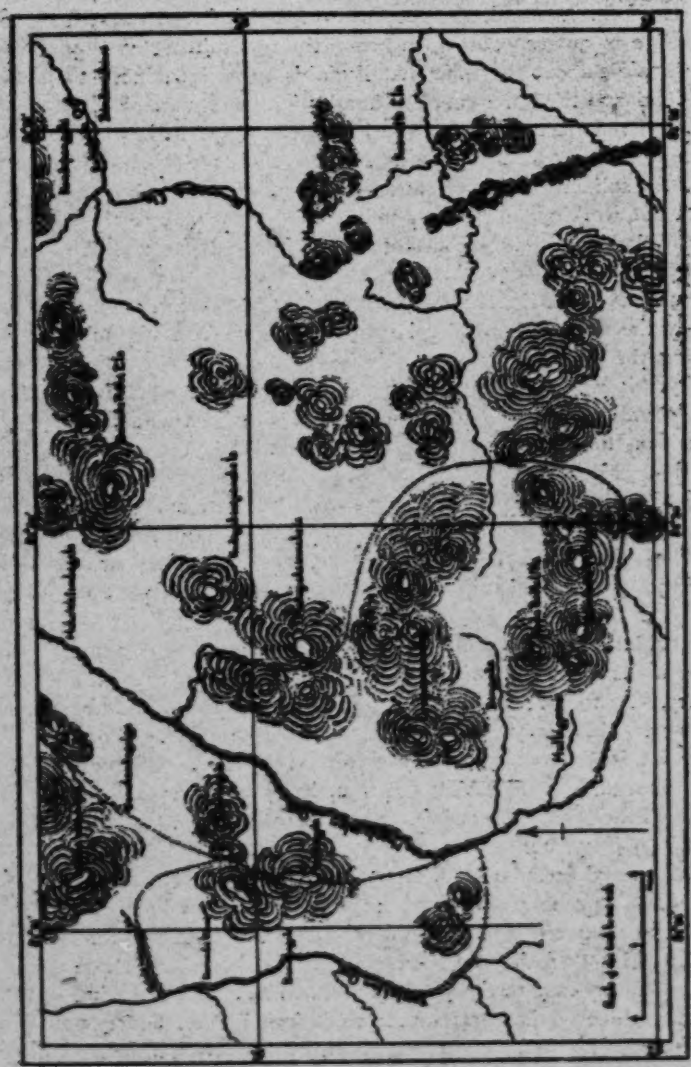


Fig. 5. Plan of Sitala Wanniya territory. All the country to the west of the dotted and broken lines is the property of the Sitala Wanniya community. The land belonging exclusively to Handuna and Nila is outlined |–|–|–, their common boundary line passing through Marinagala and the western portion belonging to Handuna. The land claimed by Kaira is indicated by —··—··, and where the boundary is doubtful by ·····. The country to the east is the property of the Veddas of Kovil Vanamai (Bandaraduwa).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nevill has pointed out that besides the territory of the group which is common land, every Vedda has "within this...a subdivision of his own which compares with the manor." In this he is no doubt right, though it was only at Sitala Wanniya that we were able to trace even approximately the hunting grounds belonging to individuals, which are theirs for the whole of their life, and descend to their heirs unless voluntarily alienated with the full consent of the group. So well is private ownership in a portion of land belonging to the group recognised in this community, that a man would not hunt even on his brother's land without the latter's permission; and if game started and wounded on his own land were killed on another man's domain, the man on whose territory the animal died would be given a portion of the flesh, apparently that side of the animal which touched the ground as the animal lay dead. Among other Veddas it was said half, or more generally a quarter, of the animal belonged to the man on whose land it died.

At Sitala Wanniya we not only found particular hills regarded as the property of individuals, but besides the big cave Pihilegodagalge, which was the property of the whole group of five families, there were smaller caves which were the property of the heads of individual families to which no others would have been welcomed, even had they thought of intruding. An exception was, however, made in the case of a man's *hanna* (son-in-law), who we were told would naturally come and go as he pleased.

As has been shown in the chapter on Family Life, presents are often given at marriage, and these may take the form of personal property or hills or pools. In this section we shall deal with such transfers of real property, which in normal circumstances were made only to children and sons-in-law, and even then were not made over without the assent of every adult male member of the group. As this difficult subject does not lend itself to a general description, we shall limit ourselves to giving actual instances of land transfer with which we became acquainted.

When Vela of Sitala Wanniya married a woman of Bingoda his father-in-law gave him a piece of land in Marniya *pangu*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425 with a hill on it containing a cave called Marnlyugalge and a
431 number of *Asuhara* colonies. He was also given a number of
583 pools in a river in Damenagama[1].

Handuna of Godatalawa on his marriage was given a hill with a cave in it called Balagalagalge. This was handed over to him by his father-in-law and the gift carried with it the sole right to take rock honey on the hill, which was known to be the home of six swarms of *Asuhara*. Kaira Huduhandar son-in-law of Handuna of Godatalawa received on his first marriage a big pool in the Tota Oya river.

When Kumi the sister of the Vidane of Bandaradawa married Tissahami, the bride's parents made over to her the hill Rajahale near Wallimbagala, upon which there were about ten *Asuhara* colonies. Kumi also received Nalla Kotanwala, a stretch or pool—we could not determine which—in the Kalugal Oya. They also gave her husband the hill called Kuda Rasahale upon which six combs of the rock bee were known.

When Badapiai married, her father gave her husband Sinawa a hill called Bala Attahale on which there were known to be eight *Asuhara* colonies and a pool called Adanewala in the Kalugal Oya.

Tissahami the Vidane of Bandaradawa received on his marriage the hill Maha Yakini Hela, upon which there were over twenty known *Asuhara* colonies[2].

With regard to these gifts of land we must record that although a man divides his landed property equally between his children in preparation for his death, property given at marriage to a son-in-law is counted as the daughter's share when the time comes for a man to make his final disposition.

When the land belonging to a Vedda group was not defined
-428 by natural features, such as a stream or hill, a mark representing a man with a drawn bow was cut upon the trunks of trees along the boundary line. It is doubtful whether these marks are

[1] We believe this was a small stream, and the right to fish in it was not highly valued, partly perhaps because not many fish were caught, but also because Veddas do not often eat fish when they can get other flesh.

[2] The numbers of colonies of rock bees mentioned in these accounts are probably inaccurate, except perhaps in the case of the Bandaradawa hills, for most Veddas hesitate, except perhaps in the case of the Bandaradawa hills, for most Veddas hesitate combined when attempting to count above five or six.

[402]

423
[342]

Fig. 1. Portion of Pihilagodagaiya belonging to Kaire

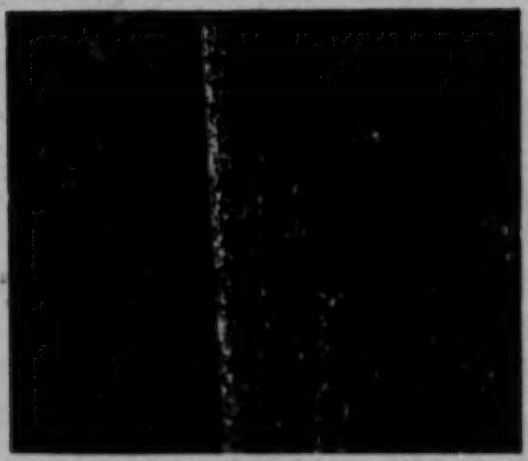


Fig. 2. Boundary mark cut by Handuna of Sitala Wimaiya

[facing p.112]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

made at the present day, but Handuna readily cut with his axe the mark shown in Plate XXII, figure 2, and of which a drawing to scale is given in text figure 6. 423

The sign of transfer of a hill, pool, or piece of land, was a stone; we heard of this from so many independent sources that we have no doubt that this was formerly the universal custom, 425

[423]

Fig. 6. Boundary mark.

but it was not until we reached Sitala Wanniya that we found people among whom this sign of land transfer was still in vogue. Here Handuna showed us a stone—a water-worn quartz pebble about the size of a filbert—which he assured us represented the "seisin" of his hunting ground. Besides one or more stones a tooth was commonly given to the new owner by the man handing over the land, but this was not essential, and if the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

425 donor had not kept his old tooth as they fell out no attempt was made to find a substitute[1].

425 It was said that sometimes the donor would add his flint and steel to the stone and tooth; we believe, though we are not certain, that this was only done when land was passed as the result of a death, in which case a lock of hair from the head of the dying man was added to the other objects and became a most important part of the "seisin." The lock of hair would only be cut from the head of the sick or dying man at his own request by the man to whom his land would pass, who would cut the lock with an arrow. It was necessary that the sick man should be conscious and that he should himself give the lock to his heir, to whom he might say, "If there is any dispute after my death show this to whoever gives you trouble." Plate XXIII represents the "seisin" of certain land at Damenegama given by the last Vedda of the group to whom the land in question belonged, to the father of Tissahami the Vedda Arachi referred to on p. 41. The "seisin" here shown consists of a lock of hair, a tooth, a metal strike-a-light and a piece of milky quartz. All these objects were sent for our inspection in an old Kandyan embroidered betel bag in which it was said they were always kept, but we had no opportunity of discussing their significance with the Arachi and thus cannot say whether the quartz stone belongs to the strike-a-light or is an essential part of the "seisin." It was explained that a Vedda would not give land to a Sinhalese under ordinary circumstances, but only when a Vedda is the last of his folk and knows not where to turn for food and shelter. The father of the Arachi only obtained the Damenegama land because the last of the local Veddas was a very old man, so forlorn and feeble that he could no longer provide for himself and his wife. He accordingly made over his land to the father of the Arachi, in return for food and shelter for the rest of his and his wife's days. Probably the fact that the man who took over the land had Vedda blood in his veins and had always associated with the Veddas made the transaction easier.

[1] Teeth are generally kept. Some of the older Veddas were literally very "long in the teeth"; as the gums recede in old age the teeth loosen and fall out (*ayurvedic abandavi*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425
428
372

Plate XXIII

Seisin consisting of hair, tooth, quartz fragment, and strike-a-light

[facing p. 114]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The near relations, including sons-in-law of the dying man, would come to him when death was expected, and it was a matter of duty for the sons or other near relatives to send information of a man's dangerous illness to his sons-in-law, and the latter would be justly angry if this information were withheld from them. We were never able to determine whether a son-in-law actually benefited by being present at his father-in-law's death, we believe that his presence was only an act of pious duty, and that he derived no increased right to the dead man's property by this. Certainly the land which came to a man at his marriage from his father-in-law would not be given to anyone else by the latter on his deathbed; we have, however, some reason to think that the unmarried sons of a man's sisters might, as the result of their attendance at their potential father-in-law's death-bed, be given land which otherwise would not have come to them until their marriage, or perhaps not at all. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya thought that a sick man might sometimes give his son-in-law a lock of his hair, but unfortunately it was not possible to discover under what circumstances, if any, this occurred. That land was commonly given to sons and not to sons-in-law by a dying man was clear from the very explicit statement made by Handuna, "My sons will naturally take my stones as evidence of their right to possess my land." With regard to the division of land between a man's children, it was pointed out that most people made their wishes on this point clear during their lifetime and it must always be remembered that no landed property passed without the consent of the grown men of the group.

It seemed that the borders of each group's territory were so well known to all the members that quarrels concerning land were very rare, trespassing upon another man's domain was almost unknown, though when it did occur it was strongly resented. Knox's account of something very like a pitched battle between two parties of Veddas which has already been quoted on p. 7 shows this, and we were everywhere told that until a few years ago a man trespassing on the territory of others might have been shot without fear of this provoking reprisals.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The cave with which the seclusion of the rock-shelter is still maintained probably belongs to a different category of ideas, and is an example of the jealousy with which Vedda women are guarded.

At Sitala Wanniya we heard of the following method of settling disputes concerning boundaries, though Handuna my informant had never known of any example of a difficulty of this kind arising, and had only heard of the method of settling them from his father and father-in-law. When two Veddas, or groups of Veddas, are not satisfied as to the position of a boundary, the disputants each bring their "seinin" stones to the land over which the quarrel has arisen. Here the stones are placed in pots upon supports of the kind used in the Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaradewa (Plate XXXVI, figure 1). When this has been done the disputants invoke certain spiritual agencies, but who these are my informants could not tell me. As a result of this, a wild animal, usually an elephant, would come and destroy the pot set up by the party wrongfully claiming the tract of land.

Every Vedda has one or two dogs with which he does not readily part, though with characteristic generosity he is ever willing to give away pups to any of his friends or relatives. Vedda dogs are invariably well fed and well treated, and it was clear that the warmest feelings exist between a man and his dogs. As evidence of the importance of dogs in the community we may cite their use as wedding gifts and refer to the process of anointing them with a part of the offering dedicated to the yaku described in Chapter VI. Bailey's account of the relation of Vedda dogs to their masters brings out so much of this feeling that it is quoted here at length. "They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued....

"But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. 'What would you do,' I asked a Veddah once, 'if your bow were stolen?' 'No one could steal it,' he replied, 'the dog would not let him.' 'But if anyone killed your dog?' His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 435

"And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic[1]. He never attempted to deny what he had done. 'It is true,' he said at the coroner's inquest, 'I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted for my support'."[2] 231 674

The following is a list of the names of dogs and bitches obtained from the Henebedda Veddas: 552

Dogs. Kapura, Kadiya (*kadi*, black ant), Muranduwa (obstinate), Hudena (white), Pandina (spotty), Dimbula, Boriya, Tuniya, Tambula, Semba, Katakaluwa (black mouth), Bahira, Palana, Kambiliya, Komiya (a Sinhalese corruption of "come here," the name of a dog belonging to the Korale of Nilgala).

Bitches. Pandi (spotty), Katakalu (black mouth), Handani (white), Dasai (clever), Dimbile, Makadi (like iron), Bosari, Hudu Valli, Mukulu.

The following list represents the usual property of an elderly Vedda, that is, of one of the influential men of the group, and actually records the property of Poromala (Walaha) the "senior" of the Henebedda Veddas: one axe, bow and arrows, three pots, a deerskin, a "flint and steel" and supply of tinder, a gourd for carrying water, a betel pouch containing betel cutters and some form of vessel or small box, perhaps of metal (e.g. an old brass covered cartridge case), for holding lime. Most Veddas also possess a certain amount of cloth besides that actually in use on their person, and Handuna was no exception to this rule. 422

Kaira of Henebedda had only two pots, but otherwise the list of his property is identical with that already given. Handuna

[1] "The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance."

[2] Bailey, op. cit., pp. 186—187.

of Sinala Wanniya had three dogs, an axe, bow and arrow, one
433 pot, betel bag, betel cutters, "flint and steel" and gourd for carrying tinder.

434 It seemed that adult sons inherited most of their fathers' personal property, but certainly the sons-in-law had the right to receive something. We have no doubt that what actually occurs, or until recently occurred, is that the adult children and the sons-in-law talked over and decided who should have each article of property, the whole being fairly shared; or if the sons-in-law were well provided with goods the whole of the dead man's property might go to his sons; thus Poromala (Walaha) told us that when his father died, leaving an axe, a bow and arrows, a deerskin, "flint and steel" and a betel bag with accessories, he took the axe and bow and arrows, leaving the other articles to his brother Handuna. Poromala added that as elder brother the division of the property was his affair. When Poromala dies his property will be divided among his children, and it appeared that his eldest child, his daughter Tuti and her husband, would take the leading part in the distribution of his personal property. Handuna of Sinala Wanniya says that his property will be divided as follows; he has three dogs, each of his two sons and his *Aasna* will take one of these; his axe and bow and arrows will be divided between his sons; his son-in-law will take his strike-a-light and his wife his betel bag and its appurtenances and probably his pots. Handuna added that his landed property would naturally go to his sons, but pointed out that his *Aasna* had a right to demand any personal property he cared to have, though no *Aasna* would behave unfairly or badly to his father-in-law's sons.

At Godatalawa, where Handuna the "senior" of the group had no adult sons, it was said that his dog, axe and bow and arrows would be divided between his sons-in-law; his betel bag and his deerskin would go to his son, a boy of eight or ten, who would also take his rice mortar and divide his father's pots with his *Aasna*. From these examples, it will be clear that a man's personal property is fairly equally divided between his children, the daughters' shares being often nominally given to their husbands.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

In concluding these remarks on property we may refer to the list given by Rutimeyer (*Globus* 1903) of Vedda objects of personal property in the Basle Museum, these are: 422

(i) Bow and ordinary arrows with iron heads of different sizes.
(ii) Elephant arrows (i.e. ceremonial arrows or *asale*).
(iii) Simple sharpened wood arrows.
(iv) Boy's bow with wooden arrows, being an exact facsimile of the iron tipped arrows.
(v) Axes.
(vi) Digging sticks.
(vii) Drill for producing fire.
(viii) Apron made of the bast of *Antiaris toxicaria* (*riti* bark).
(ix) Tortoise shell from the Danigala used as a dish.
(x) Disc of wax from wild bees (trading asset).
(xi) Ball of bast cord for bow strings.
(xii) Fire lighting appliances with hollowed areca nut for keeping tinder.
(xiii) Earthenware pot hanging in a bast net.
(xiv) Pouch made of squirrel skin.
(xv) Kilt made of leaves.

To this Rutimeyer would add a *riti* bark bag, the message stick referred to in the anonymous report of 1820, printed by Le Mesurier[1], and clay figures and marbles mentioned by Stevens, in order to have "a rather complete inventory of all utensils of the 'Nature Veddas.'" This list, however, omits dried deer skins and the skin and wooden honey-collecting utensils described in Chapter XI. Further, no mention is made of beads, which are certainly much appreciated by even the wilder Veddas (cf. Chapter XI).

[1] "The Veddas of Ceylon," by C. J. R. Le Mesurier, *Journal Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, Vol. IX, 1886. The statement referred to will be found on p. 347 and runs as follows:—"They are totally unacquainted with letters, but the different tribes hold a rude correspondence with each other with small pieces of wood cut into different shapes. Fugitives used to be furnished with passports of this kind, when they removed from one tribe to another, and the treatment they received depended on the recommendation which the inlement conveyed." 202 211

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

202
177

With regard to the existence of message sticks mentioned in the last paragraph, very careful inquiries were made of Veddas, Sinhalese peasants and Sinhalese headmen, including Mr Bibile, Ratemahatmaya. There seemed no doubt that among the peasant Sinhalese messages were traditionally transmitted by the conveyance of certain objects. We are unable to say whether this system was ever well developed and applied to many of the emergencies of life, but it seemed to be the general impression among our informants that the practice was formerly more common than at present. We were able, however, to hear of two messages habitually sent in this way among the more backward jungle Sinhalese at the present day. The first of these was the transmission of a piece of creeper with one, two, or three knots tied in it. This was sent wrapped in a fragment of cloth and was a call to the recipient to come to the sender, the urgency of the latter's need being indicated by the number of knots. We consider the use of this message object thoroughly established as a Sinhalese custom, it was in use in the neighbourhood of Bibile until recently and is still used in remoter jungle districts.

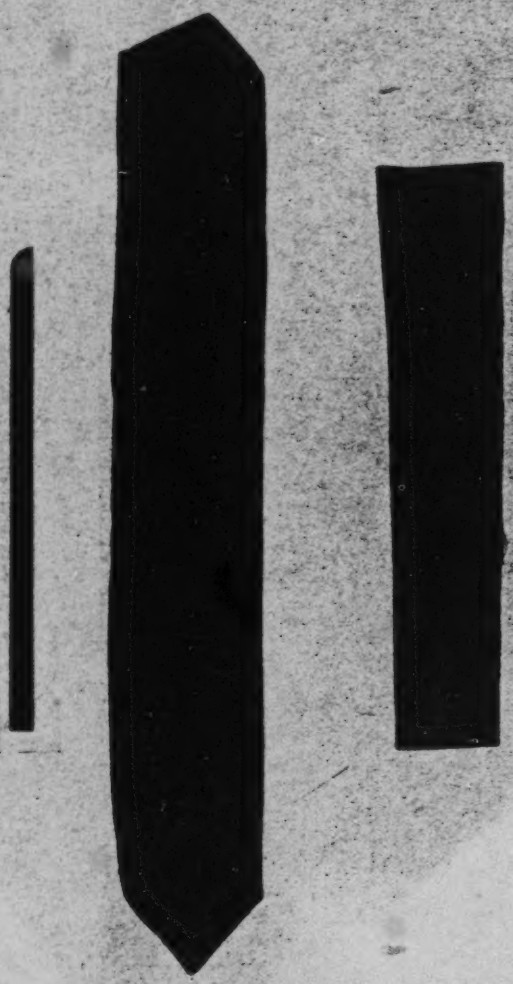
[92] A lock of hair usually cut from the head of the dead man and twisted round a small stick and wrapped in a leaf or fragment of cloth was sent as a sign that a death had occurred. Our impression is that at the present day this is essentially a Sinhalese custom, for the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde told us that among the jungle Sinhalese when a man died away from his home, his people might be informed of his death in this way. We could not hear of this custom among the least sophisticated of the Veddas we met, though it was said to exist at Henebedda, where however, if it really occurred, it may have been due to Sinhalese influence. With regard to its existence among the Veddas apart from Sinhalese influence, it seemed to us that the importance of a lock of hair as evidence of land transfer (described on p. 114) renders it unlikely that hair would be sent as evidence of death. The care that the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde took when bringing me his "seisin" to photograph, of which a lock of hair was an important part, was very noticeable[1].

[1] On the other hand the custom may have been derived from the Vedda practice,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

202

Plate XXIV



Messages scratched on a slip of bark and an ola leaf

[facing p. 120]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Turning now to the message sticks, certain conventional signs scratched on leaves or flat slips of wood were at times sent by Sinhalese chiefs to the Veddas as an intimation that they required them to bring venison and honey. These signs always took one form, representing a carrying stick (*pingo*), to each end of which a circular object representing a pot of honey was attached. By the side of the pot of honey there were generally drawn two short vertical lines, immediately beneath which were a number of rather longer horizontal lines. Each pair of horizontal lines represented a joint of venison and the vertical lines immediately above them the cord by which they would be suspended from the *pingo*. As far as we could determine no other form of written message ever passed between the Sinhalese and Veddas, but there is no doubt that although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas knew nothing of such messages the Danigala Veddas recognised their meaning and acted on them. Mr Bibile told us that on one occasion when he had sent this message scratched on an *ola* leaf to the headman of the Danigala Veddas he had received the honey and venison he had asked for in about a week. We were told that on receiving this message a Vedda might say

202
648

[539]

Dik, dik, cuwwā; kuc kuffā
Wafa kuru cuwwā; pani muffā[1]
Kofa kofa cuwwā; muc kuffā[2].

Long long (ones I) have sent; cut pingos
Round (ones I) have sent; honey pots
Short short (ones I) have sent; cut meat.

and represent this modified to suit the convenience of the peasant Sinhalese who, as already mentioned, have much Vedda blood in them.

[1] *Muffa* may be a verb, *muffiya* is a pot.

[2] *Kuffa* appears to be derived from v. *kuhanawā*, to chop or cut; compare colloquial *kuwwā*, "I have drank," from v. *kuwwā* and other instances. We are indebted to Mr Parker for these notes as well as for the transliteration and translation of the message.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION

764 When a man or woman dies from distress the body is left in the cave or rock-shelter in which death took place. The body is not washed, dressed or ornamented in any way but is generally allowed to lie in the natural supine position and is covered with leaves and branches.

This was formerly the universal custom and still persists among the less sophisticated Veddas, who sometimes in addition place a large stone upon the chest of the dead man. This old custom, for which no reason could be given, is still observed at Sitala Wanniya where the body is still covered with branches and left where death has occurred. As soon as these matters
768 are attended to, and it seemed that they are carried through as quickly as possible after death, the small community leaves the cave or place in which the death has occurred and avoids it for a long time. It was sometimes stated that its members would never return, but we know of at least two cases in which sons returned to the cave in which their fathers died after many years, and we have no doubt that this statement means no more than that no one approached the cave for a long time. It was always difficult to obtain even a crude estimate of the lapse of time between events, but there was some reason to believe that in one of the two instances the shelter in which death occurred was untenanted for about twelve years. In any event it is certain that Veddas did return to caves in which a death had occurred, and that if any bones were left, no difficulty was made about picking these up and casting them into the jungle[1].

[764] [1] This accords with the experience of the Des Sarasin who say:—"We never found the least difficulty when collecting skeletons of Veddas. They [the Veddas]

[p. 122]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It should be mentioned that no fire was lit near the corpse or water left by it when the living deserted the cave. Among the majority, including the two wildest groups of Veddas, there is no avoidance of any of the property of the dead man, and the contents of his betel bag would be eaten directly after his death, but among the members of another group of Veddas (Henebedda), who must be regarded as pure-blooded although their system of magic shows Sinhalese influence, the betel bag, unless it were a very good one, would be left with the corpse, and in any case its contents would not be eaten, but left near the dead man. The areca nut cutter and lime box, which during life were always carried in the bag, would not be left with the corpse, but before they were used by the living, measures were taken of which the avowed design was to render these objects harmless. Thus the old headman of the Henebedda Veddas exposed his father's lime box and areca cutters under a bush for a period which was certainly longer than ten but probably less than thirty days. It was necessary to do this, since if these objects had been used immediately, the individuals using them would probably have contracted the same illness as that from which the dead man suffered, and on further questioning the old man explained that the *yaka* producing the illness from which his father had died would for some time, and in some way which he could not define, remain connected with the chewing apparatus which the dead man had used constantly during his last illness.

At Bandaraduwa we were able to ascertain what was done after the death of a man named Tuta which had occurred in a neighbouring settlement two days before our arrival. The grave was dug by two of the man's brothers who carried the body to it; nothing was buried in the grave, not even the dead man's

were always ready to show us the place in which...they had buried. When we proceeded to dig up the skeleton they for the most part looked on with interest and without showing the least sign of excitement, and when it was necessary to pick all the small hand and foot bones out of the sandy soil they were perfectly ready to assist. We were always told willingly who was buried in a particular spot. The place of burial was always shown us by the relatives of the deceased...thus in Madugala near Omani a father showed us the grave of his daughter and in the Nilgala district a son led us to the grave of his father." *Op. cit.* p. 494.)

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

764 betel pouch, although he had lain with it supporting his head during his last illness which was by no means short, but on the contrary it was kept in the house and its contents were immediately used. No water was left on the grave nor was a fire lit, nor could we discover that the two men who carried the body to the grave washed or in any way purified themselves.

Among the village Veddas of Omuni who have much Sinhalese blood, though culturally they appear to owe more to the Tamils of the east coast than to the Sinhalese, it was stated that the betel pouch and its contents would be buried beneath the head of the dead man and a coconut shell of water placed by his side. These people, who settled some seventy years ago, as Tennant records[1], knew only of leaving the body in the cave as a custom practised long ago by their ancestors, and there is no doubt that the adults of the present generation have seen nothing except burial in graves probably conducted in much the same manner as that practised by the surrounding Sinhalese.

The Omuni Veddas mentioned two interesting points with regard to burial. It should not take place in the immediate neighbourhood of any of their scanty and primitive chena cultivations, and the grave should be at least as far from the village as it was possible to hear a "Hoo" cry.

An even more advanced stage of care for the dead has been described by the Sarasins in the case of a "Culture Vedda" whose grave they opened. Unfortunately it is not said in what part of the country this grave was situated, though from the description given it is clear that the burial was recent. "A small structure (*gwaut*) was built over one such grave upon which a coconut leaf was laid, and at each corner of the erection was tied the inflorescence of a coconut palm. At the head of the grave lay three open coconuts and a small heap of wood, at the foot an opened and an untouched coconut. Three cacti were planted on the grave, one at the head, one in the middle and one at the foot. The grave was three or four feet deep....The body which was that of a woman was wrapped in much cloth and had on it a necklace of glass beads...."

The authorities quoted further note that bows, arrows, axes,

[1] *Ceylon*, London 1859, Vol. II, pp. 446 and 447.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

764
769
775

betel bags and strike-a-lights may all be buried in the graves of male "Culture Veddas," and in one such grave they even found bullets[1].

When an attempt is made to discover the nature of the noxious influence felt in the place of death, the usual answer given is to the effect that "if we stayed where the death had occurred we should be pelted with stones." Further questions made it clear that in many instances there was no definite idea that some part of the dead man was the active agent in the stone-throwing; on the other hand some Veddas, and these as far as we could judge some of the least contaminated, definitely believed that it was the spirit or *yaku* of the dead man who would cause stones to rain on anybody staying near the corpse. And in this instance it was admittedly fear of the spirit of the dead individual that caused them to hurry from the site of death. Stone-throwing is the usual method by which the *yaku* show their displeasure, using *yaku* in the broadest sense, and by no means limiting this term to the spirits of the recent dead. It was clear that during certain disturbances described as "stone-throwing" no actual rocks or stones were moved or fell, and this was recognised by the Veddas who, however, continued to speak of the upheaval as "stone-throwing," which they ascribed to annoyance felt by the *yaku*. In one instance it was possible to say that the aggrieved *yaku* were not those of the recent dead. While camping within a couple of hundred yards of the Bendiyagalge caves in that part of the Uva jungle known as Henebedda we were startled between eleven and twelve one night by a deep groaning sound of considerable volume which was immediately followed by an outcry from the caves. Men shouted, women and children cried out, and every dog in the settlement howled its loudest. The noise which alarmed the cave occurred only once, and can hardly have lasted for more than ten seconds, but the chatter of people and the howling of dogs must have continued for about a quarter of an hour. We are entirely unable to state the cause of the noise, but suppose that it was due to one rock slipping upon another, or to the splitting of a mass of rock below the surface of the

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 494.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 ground, but no freshly exposed rock surfaces or any displace-
775 ment of the soil was to be seen next morning in the neighbour-
hood of the caves or the country immediately round them. The Veddas, however, had no doubt as to the cause of the noise and described it as "stone-throwing," stating that a number of *yaku* must have been annoyed with their proceedings on the previous day, when, after going through the *hirikavaku* ceremony over a fine buck which one of them had shot the night before, they were tempted to show us some part of the *kolamadutu* ceremony without providing the proper gifts for the *yaku* invoked on that occasion. They pointed out that it was the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had manifested their displeasure by stone-throwing, though they all admitted that no one had seen the stones thrown or could show the stones with which the alleged bombardment had been effected. This, combined with the fact that a minority of Veddas frankly admit that the cause of leaving the site where death has occurred is fear of the *yaku*, seems to point to the whole process of desertion being due to fear of the spirit of the deceased, which for a short but indefinite time seems to be thought of as existing near the body it has left, though it was never possible to discover that this was a clearly formulated belief.

The matter may indeed be said to have been put beyond doubt by a discovery made by Mr Parker. The words *mal pannaar* occur in a number of invocations to the Nae Yaku. We could obtain no translation for these words in the field, though it was said that they alluded to the dead man, but by comparing a number of invocations to the Nae Yaku Mr Parker ascertained that *mal* is used as the equivalent of both "flowers" and "Veddas," so that this expression, which is undoubtedly a term of address to the dead man's spirit, is to be translated "driver away of Veddas."

775 Although the fear of the dead (as expressed by leaving the site of death) occurs among all the wilder Veddas, we met with a few old men, notably Puremala (Walaha) of Henebedda, and Handuna of Godetalawa, who were by no means confident that all men on their death became *yaku*. Although they were sure that all important and influential men, as well as those who

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

during life had the power of calling and becoming possessed by the *yaku*, became *yaku* after death, they considered that it was by no means certain that any part of quite ordinary individuals survived death. At Godatalawa such doubts in the case of particular dead individuals might be settled by calling upon the deceased at a Nae Yaku ceremony when the following invocation was used: 775 775 769

Lord! New Driver away of Vaeddas, if it is true that there are miracles, killing one wild monitor lizard in the jungle while coming I must meet with a sambar deer. (Be pleased) to drink, Driver away of Vaeddas, this young coconut[1].

If much game was killed after this ceremony the deceased was considered to have become a *yaku* ready and willing to help his friends and relatives.

To ascertain the actual condition of the spirits of the departed for the first few days after death is a matter of some difficulty, for although certain communities have perfectly definite views on this point, others have not; hence it will be convenient to leave this matter for the present and to return to it when the attitude of the Veddas towards their dead has been further defined. 775

As each Vedda community consists of a small number of families who, since cousin marriage prevails, are usually related both by blood and marriage, the *yaku* of the recent dead, called collectively Nae Yaku, are supposed to stand towards the surviving members of the group in the light of friends and relatives, who if well treated will continue to show lovingkindness to their survivors, and only if neglected will show disgust and anger by withdrawing their assistance, or becoming even actively hostile. Hence it is generally considered necessary to present an offering to the newly dead within a week or two of their decease; but this is not invariably the case, for a few Veddas said that they would not hold a Nae Yaku ceremony until they specially required the help of the *yaku* or until misfortune threatened or had overtaken them. 775 769

Among most Veddas the offering must consist of cooked rice and coconut milk, the food that every Vedda esteems above all

[1] The transliteration of this invocation will be found in Chapter X, p. 277.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

other, but betel leaves and areca nut are often added and the oldest survivor of a small group of comparatively unsophisticated Veddas seen at Godatalawa stated that in the old days this offering would have consisted of yams and water, if, as was often the case, coconuts and rice—which were only to be secured with difficulty and by barter—could not be obtained.] In each community there is one man called *hapurale* or *dugganeme*, who has the power and knowledge requisite to call the *yaku*, and in the ceremony of presenting the offering called *Nae Yaku Nametane* (literally the dancing of the *Nae Yaku*), this man calls upon the *yaku* of the recently dead man to come and take the offering. It was stated that *dugganeme* was an older word than *hapurale* and was in fact a Vedda word, though it was soon obvious that only a minority of Veddas knew it. The *dugganeme*[1] who throughout this book will be spoken of as the shaman, becomes possessed by the *yaku* of the dead man who speaks through the mouth of the shaman in hoarse guttural accents, declaring that he approves the offering, that he will assist his kinsfolk in hunting, and often stating the direction in which the next hunting party should go.

Each shaman trains his successor, usually taking as his pupil his own son or his sister's son (i.e. his actual or potential son-in-law). Hasduna of Sitala Wanniya learnt from his father. At Henebedda we were told that a special hut was built in which the shaman and his pupil slept, and from which women were excluded. It seems probable that this is only done among Veddas who have come under Sinhalese influence, as among them, but not among the wilder Veddas, women are considered unclean, and there was no isolation of the shaman and his pupil at Sitala Wanniya.

Sella Wanniya of Unuwatura Bubula was instructed by his father, and during his apprenticeship he resided with him in a hut into which his mother was not allowed to come.

The pupil learns to repeat the invocations used at the various ceremonies, but no food is offered to the *yaku*. At Sitala Wanniya we were told that the shaman recited the following formula, explaining to the *yaku* that he is teaching his pupil:

(1 See footnote, p. 16.)

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

79
[539]

(Ayu bowa. Mama ada sita man golayek hadanawd
Eyin kisi waradak ganda epa.
Mage golayata man kiya denawa me puda topata denda

"May (your) life be long! From to-day I am rearing a scholar of the mind. Do not take any offense at it. I am explaining to my pupil how to give this offering to you."

The yaku understand that although the formulae invoking them are recited they are not really being called, and so the pupil does not become possessed while learning, nor do the yaku hurt him. The pupil avoids eating or touching pig or eating fowl in the same way, as the shaman, and Sell of Unuwatura Bubula stated that while learning he avoided rice, coconuts and kurakan, eating especially the flesh of the sambar and monitor lizard.

The shaman exercises complete control over his pupil and, we believe does not usually train more than one disciple. We heard of one instance in which a shaman, considering his pupil unfit, advised him to give up all idea of becoming a shaman. This happened among the Mudigala Veddas, apparently between 20 or 30 years ago. No man, however highly trained, is accounted the official shaman of a community during his teacher's life, although with his teacher's permission he will, when he is proficient, perform ceremonies and become possessed by the yaku.

79
826

At Sitala Wanniya we discovered that a shaman must not cut his hair unless he takes special precautions. One of us was collecting specimens of hair, and on asking Handuna for a lock, was answered affirmatively but told that as he (Handuna) was a shaman a cloth must be held over his head "because of the yaku." As we had used a great deal of cloth, we asked if a piece of newspaper would do; Handuna replied that it would be as good, but he must keep it always to cover his head when he danced. We explained that the paper would probably rot; the said he, "I shall die." He said he did not know why, but he believed this, as his father had told him that even should his son want a lock of his hair (hair is given as "seisin") he must cover his head with a cloth when it was cut, and ever afterwards must cover it when dancing, or else the yaku would kill him. Yet such was his politeness that rather than refuse our request

1rSeligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

791 he was ready to suffer this inconvenience. Of course under
826 these conditions we did not take a lock of his hair.

His son-in-law Kaira, although he assisted Handuma in dancing, offered no objection to our collecting a sample of his hair, nor did any of the other members of the community.

769 Besides the shaman one or more of the near relatives of the
791 dead man may become possessed, but this though common is not invariable. The yaka leaves the shaman soon after he has promised his favour and success in hunting, the shaman often collapsing as the spirit departs and in any case appearing in an exceedingly exhausted state for a few minutes. However, he soon comes round when he and all present, constituting the men, women and children of the group, eat the offering, usually on the spot on which the invocation took place, though this is not absolutely necessary, for on one occasion at Sitala Wanniya when a rain squall threatened, the food was quickly carried to the cave a few hundred yards distant from the dancing ground.

769 It was clear that this eating of the food which had been offered to the yaku was an act of communion, and an essential part of the ceremony which was thought to bring health and good fortune, for some communities even anointed the heads of their dogs with the milk of the offering, explaining that this was done because of their value. This was the case at Henebedda, while the patriarch of the Godatalawa Veddas explained that some of the offering was always given to their dogs to eat, for the reason that they depended upon them in hunting. In one Nae Yaku ceremony (Bandaraduwa) the shaman fed the nearest relatives of the dead man immediately after the yaku left him, holding the bowl containing the offering to their mouths, while among the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, not only did the shaman, while still possessed, feed the children of the group from the bowl and smear its contents over their faces, but a number of members of the group, including the grandchildren of the dead man whose yaka possessed the shaman at the time, place a small portion of the offering in the shaman's mouth. The strength of the desire for the companionship and communion with the spirits of the kindly dead was very strong, and it was generally felt that shamans, and those frequently possessed by

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the *yaku*, might expect to have especially good luck on account of their close association with the spirits. Many instances occurred which showed how strong was the feeling of good fellowship which the living had for the spirits of their dead. Thus at Sitala Wanniya, on the occasion of the performance of a *Nae Yaku* ceremony got up at our request, Handuna, the shaman and leading man in the small community, volunteered the statement that he and his people were delighted to hold the ceremony, since it was seldom that they were able to offer their *yaku* such food as that provided by us. After his own father had been invoked and had expressed his unqualified pleasure at the good things provided for him, there was some discussion as to further dancing, because the dancer really felt exhausted, but all urged the continuation of the ceremony, since there were other *yaku* who might well be invoked on an occasion when an unusually plenteous supply of food was provided for them. Again, in the ceremony which insured the safe taking of rock honey, it was explained that every male member of the little community must perform the dance, since only thus could they certainly expect to share in the benefits to be reaped from the goodwill of the *yaku*. But perhaps the best example of the feeling of affectionate regard and of kindly good-fellowship existing between the living and the dead is afforded by the end of the invocation on the occasion of the *Nae Yaku* ceremony at Sitala Wanniya, for surely there could be no closer communion between the quick and the dead than that implied in the invocation, which is fully carried into effect by every member of the community sharing in the food that has been offered to the *yaku*.

"Salutation! Salutation! Part [of our] relatives having called [you] in time (i.e. at the right time) [we] give you white rice. [You] eat [and] drink. Do not think any wrong (i.e. do not form an unfavourable opinion of us). We also eat and drink [the same food]."

The above account is an outline of the simplest form of death ceremony such as was described to us at Godatalawa, but usually the matter is complicated by the invocation of certain *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*. Many generations ago there lived a Vedda called Kande Wanniya, a mighty hunter, who at his death became Kande Yaka, and under this name is constantly

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Veddas AX5

769 invoked to give success in hunting. With Kande Yaka is also associated the *yaka* of his younger brother Bilindi, who is commonly believed to have been killed by Kande Wanniya in a fit of temper and who according to another version is not the brother but the brother-in-law of Kande Yaka. It is usual to invoke Kande Yaka and also Bilindi Yaka at the beginning of a *Nae Yaku* ceremony, and it was pointed out at different times by a number of our informants that the *Nae Yaku* could not come to the offerings unless accompanied by Kande Yaka, who was even spoken of as bringing the *Nae Yaku* with him. In fact, many Veddas stated that the *Nae Yaku* go to Kande Yaka and become his attendants; this point of view was illustrated by the fact that in two death dances seen (one held for a man who had died seven days previously, the other a rehearsal performed for our benefit), Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked, and possessed the shaman and gave signs of their favour to the group of Veddas present, before the shaman became possessed by the *Nae Yaku*. Further, many of our informants, especially the less sophisticated, pointed out that soon after death the spirit of the deceased resorted to Kande Yaka in order to obtain his permission to accept offerings from their living relatives, and to obtain power from him to assist them in return for their offerings, or to injure them in the event of their bad behaviour. Thus Kande Yaka, who is of especial assistance in hunting, becomes Lord of the Dead. We have, however, little doubt that to the majority of Veddas Kande Yaka is especially the *yaka* who gives success in hunting, and that his relation to the dead does not leap to their minds on the mention of his name as does the idea of his helpfulness in hunting, for Kande Yaka was essentially a friendly and helpful *yaka*, who, unlike many other *yaku* usually beneficent, never sent sickness; in fact, Kande Yaka the spirit scarcely differs as patron of hunters from Kande Wanniya the mighty hunter, still living and showing kindness and helpfulness towards the people among whom he dwelt.

775 It is now possible to consider the condition of the spirit of the deceased for a few days after death, according to those Veddas who state that a definite period elapses before the spirit

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

becomes a *yaka*, for it appears that properly speaking the word *yaka* should not be applied to the spirit of the dead for the first few days after it has left the body. During this short period the word *prana karaya* (living one) should be used for the spirit of the deceased, for it has not yet attained the condition implied by the term *yaka*. Among the Henebedda Veddas it was thought that the *prana karaya* resorted to Kande Yaka a few days, perhaps three or five, after death, and then obtained permission from him to accept offerings from the living, and thus become numbered among his attendants, the *Nae Yaku*; but beyond a vague idea that the spirit might perhaps exist for a short time at the site where death had occurred, these folk had no knowledge of its state before it reached Kande Yaka. The Bandaraduwa Veddas, who had come more under Sinhalese and Tamil influence, asserted that the spirit of the deceased spent some days in the neighbourhood of the death scene, which it only left to seek the Kataragam God and obtain his permission to become a *yaka* and pass into the train of attendants on Kande Yaka, and so become a *Nae Yaku* capable of accepting offerings from the living and in return helping or injuring them.

The method of invocation of the *yaku* is essentially the same in all Vedda ceremonies; an invocation is sung by the shaman and often by the onlookers, while the shaman slowly dances, usually round the offering that has been prepared for the *yaku*. Sometimes the invocations are quite appropriate and either consist of straightforward appeals to the *yaka* invoked for help, or recite the deeds and prowess of the *yaka* when he too was a man, as when Kande Yaka is addressed as "continuing to go from hill to hill [who] follows up the traces from footprint to footprint of excellent sambar deer." But at other times the charms seem singularly inappropriate; probably in many of these instances they are the remains of old Sinhalese charms that have not only been displaced from their proper position and function, but have been mangled in the process, and have in the course of time become incomprehensible. As the charm is recited over and over again the shaman dances more and more quickly, his voice becomes hoarse and he soon becomes possessed by the *yaka*, and, although he does not lose consciousness and can coordinate

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 his movements, he nevertheless does not retain any clear recol-
787 lection of what he says, and only a general idea of the movements
791 he has performed. Although there is doubtless a certain element of humbug about some of the performances, we believe that this is only intentional among the tamer Veddas accustomed to show off before visitors, and that among the less sophisticated Veddas the singing and movements of the dance soon produce a more or less automatic condition, in which the mind of the shaman, being dominated by his belief in the reality of the *yaka*, and of his coming possession, really acts without being in a condition of complete volitional consciousness. Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that although they never entirely lost consciousness, they nearly did so at times, and that they never fully appreciated what they said when possessed, while at both the beginning and end of possession they experienced a sensation of nausea and vertigo and the ground seemed to rock and sway beneath their feet.

Some men, including Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, whom
787 we consider one of the most trustworthy of our informants, said
791 that they were aware that they shivered and trembled when they
[115] became possessed, and Handuna heard booming noises in his ears as the spirit left him and full consciousness returned. He said this usually happened after he had ceased to dance. We could not hear of any shaman who saw visions while possessed or experienced any olfactory or visual hallucinations before, during, or after possession. The Veddas recognise that women may become possessed, but we only saw one instance of (alleged) possession in a woman, which occurred at a rehearsal of a dance got up for our benefit on our first visit to Bendiyagalge, during which we are confident that none of the dancers were really possessed. Although we did not see the beginning of this woman's seizure we have little doubt that there was a large element of conscious deception in her actions, for when we became aware of her she was sitting bolt upright with her eyes shut and the lids quivering, apparently from the muscular effort of keeping them tightly closed, while opposite her was Tissahami the Vedda Arachi muttering spells over a coconut shell half full of water with which he dabbed her eyes and face.

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

It is not suggested that the conscious element is entirely absent from the Vedda possession dances, it is impossible to believe that such a sudden collapse as that occurring in the Henebedda *kirikeraka* ceremony (p. 223) (when Kande Yaka in the person of the shaman shoots the sambar deer), followed by an almost instantaneous recovery, is entirely non-volitional, and the same holds good for the pig-spearing in the Bambura Yaka ceremony (p. 243) at Sitala Wanniya. We believe that these facts can be fully accounted for by a partial abolition of the will, that is to say, by a dulling of volition far short of complete unconsciousness. The shaman in fact surrenders himself to the dance in the fullest sense, and it is this, combined with a high degree of sub-conscious expectancy, which leads him to enact almost automatically and certainly without careful forethought the traditional parts of the dance in their conventionally correct order. Further, the assistant, who follows every movement of the dancer, prepared to catch him when he falls, may also greatly assist by conscious or unconscious suggestion in the correct performance of these complicated possession dances. Again, we do not think there can be any doubt as to the non-volitional nature of the possession, by the *yaka*, of the bystanders, near relatives of the dead man, which may take place during the *Nat Yaka* ceremony[1].

One remarkable fact may be chronicled here, viz. that we have never met a Vedda who had seen the spirit of a dead man, that is to say, no Vedda ever saw a ghost, at least in his waking hours. We have never been able to obtain any corroborative evidence for Bailey's assertion that "the spirits [of the dead] appear to them in dreams and tell them [the Veddas] where to hunt." Veddas certainly dream, but Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira, two most trustworthy informants, said that they did

[1] There was nothing about the general behaviour of any of the Veddas with whom we came in contact that suggested a specially neurotic or hysterical tendency. The graver stigmata of hysteria such as would warrant a diagnosis of functional disease were always absent and the Veddas, even when ill, were in no sense fuss makers or inclined to magnify their ailments in the way so many Melanesians do. We are indebted to Dr C. S. Myers for the suggestion that possession by the *yaka* can best be explained as an affection (dissociation) of altered personality. If this be so the condition is comparable to a number of well-known cases in the sphere of mental pathology.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

987 not often have dreams. Dreams are considered uncanny, and
828 Handuna said that, although a shaman, he himself feared them. He told us that a man would usually remain quietly in the rock-shelter for a whole day after a dream, and would not leave it to get food, even if staying in the cave meant going hungry. Handuna once dreamt that he had shot a monkey and brought it back to the cave, so he did not go out hunting the next day but stayed in the cave. He said that he had never had dreams that were of themselves of a terrifying nature, such as being attacked by bears or falling over a precipice. He dreamt of his father a few days after his death, but seldom or never since then. In his dream his dead father invited him to come hunting with him, and together they went into the jungle and found some yams and cooked and ate them. Handuna said that he was not afraid "because he was my father; what was there to be afraid of? Nevertheless I stayed in the cave, for I was sorry that day." Handuna told us that children—even small children that cannot talk—may wake up shrieking, but he has never heard of people talking in their sleep.

987 With regard to the causation of dreams there was a real but
775 ill-defined belief connecting the dream-forms of dead relatives with the spirits (*yaku*) of the dead. Discussing this matter in connection with his dream of his dead father, Handuna said, "We think it is through love they come," but he showed that he realised that living people who were not near relatives might be seen in dreams, by volunteering the statement that at our departure he might dream of one of us (C. G. S.) to whom he was speaking.

Although the dream-forms of dead persons were vaguely associated with their *yaku*, it was generally denied that the dead seen in dreams told the living where to hunt, and it must be remembered that the general opinion was that no living person had ever seen a *yaku*, and it was only when specially discussing dreams that it was said that *yaku* were seen in dreams. Nor did the *Nae Yaku* regularly make their presence known in any other way than by possession, though some Veddas translated the minor noises of the jungle into signs of the presence of the *yaku*. These facts also seem to militate against the idea that any

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

considerable part of Vedda possession is a fraud, deliberately conceived and perpetrated, for knowing, as many Veddas do, of the frequency with which the Sinhalese see "devils" and "spirits" of all sorts, nothing would appear easier, if fraud were intended, than for a shaman to assert that he could see the spirits which every Vedda believes are constantly around him.

Arrows play a considerable part in the Vedda religion, two forms of arrow being used. The first is the ordinary arrow used for shooting game, the second a ceremonial arrow called *aude* with a blade 8 to 18 inches long, which is usually but not always hafted into a handle often considerably shorter than the blade[1]. Both forms of arrows are used in the possession dances described in Chapter IX, but in addition to this the shooting arrow is used as a protection to infants, being commonly thrust in the ground by the side of a sleeping child when its mother is forced to leave it. We heard of this custom in several communities, and at Sitala Wanniya, where arrows were scarce, were shown a wooden bladed arrow which was said to be used in this way (figure 7 (*a*)); *aude* might also be made of wood when an iron blade was not available, and figure 7 (*b*) shows a wooden *aude* made for us at Henebedda. These facts are important as showing that the power of the arrow lies in itself and not in its iron blade.

The protective power of the arrow was noted by Nevill, who stated that the Nilgala Veddas "regard the symbol of an arrow, placed by their babe, as efficient protection for it. They leave tiny babes upon the sand for hours together, with no other guard than an arrow stuck in the ground by their side. Their belief in the efficacy of this has received no shock. They never knew such a child to be attacked by wild beasts, pigs, leopards, jackals, etc. or harmed[2]."

With regard to the long-bladed and short-handled ceremonial arrows, the handles of these are sometimes covered with incisions so roughly executed that they do not form a pattern and can hardly be decorative even in intention, so that probably they only serve the useful purpose of preventing the hand from

[1] These ceremonial arrows are doubtless identical with the large blades described by various authors as formerly used in shooting elephants.

[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 184.

411
778

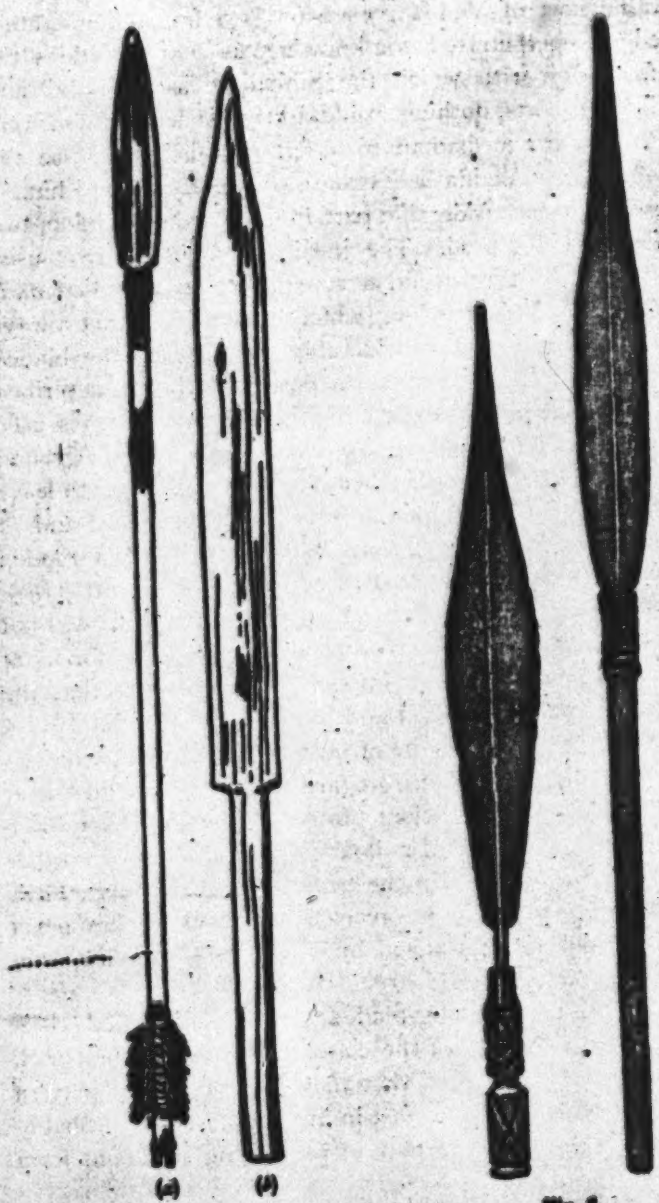


Fig. 7.
Arrow with wooden blade and wooden shaft.

Fig. 8.
Arrow. [illegible]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

slipping. Such ceremonial arrows are generally heirlooms, not necessarily passing from father to son but rather being handed down in apostolic succession from shaman to shaman, and among the village Veddas of Bintenne I have handled one such blade with a history running back for five generations.

Figure 8 shows two ceremonial arrows which we were able to collect. Besides these we saw similar *aude* at Omuni and were told at Sitala Wanniya that Handuna had formerly possessed one. Rutimeyer has figured one of these ceremonial arrows about 14 inches long, obtained from Kaira the "senior" of the Danigala Veddas. These arrows are carefully preserved by the shaman, and just as he himself observes certain dietetic rules, avoiding eating pig and fowl which are supposed to be particularly repulsive to the *yaku*, so among those more sophisticated communities who believe in the periodical uncleanliness of women, special precautions are taken to avoid the possible contamination of the *aude*[1]. This is generally done by keeping them in some comparatively remote spot such as a cave or in the roof thatch. It is necessary that the shaman should hold one of these arrows in his hand when invoking Kande Yaka; he should also have one for Bilindi Yaka, though as a matter of practice Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were often invoked using the same *aude*, another *aude* being reserved for invoking the *Nae Yaku*. Both arrows were, however, commonly held in the hands during the whole of the *Nae Yaku* ceremony, but in spite of this no confusion seemed to arise nor had the onlookers the least difficulty in saying which *aude* belonged to Kande Yaka whenever they were asked.

The offering of rice in the pot would be stirred with the *aude*, and betel leaves might be ceremonially transfixed with it. Among the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula the testing of the quality of the food provided for the *yaku* was performed with the help of the *aude*, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka using the *aude* to remove from the pot a few grains of rice which the *yaku* in the person of the shaman several times examined before expressing his approval of the offering provided.

[1] The belief in the periodical uncleanliness of women has been borrowed from the Sinhalese. It did not exist in the "wildest" group we met with, on the other hand we found it among all the more sophisticated Veddas, attaining a maximum where these had come under foreign influence.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Besides the important part in the Vedda cult of the dead played by the propitiation of the *Nat Yaku*, and of the *yaku* of certain other Veddas such as Kande Wanniya who as *yaku* have attained to special importance (approaching that of culture heroes in other forms of belief), there is a certain feeling of reverence for a host of unnamed *yaku*. Little attention is paid to these but, since it is stated that they too were once men, the suggestion may be hazarded that they represent the *yaku* of the forgotten dead. These *yaku*, although all around in the jungle, are in some instances thought of as vaguely attached to special localities, especially to glades in the forest, unusually large trees, and above all large rocks and rocky hilltops. The *yaku* of rocks and hilltops, indeed, tend to become named, taking the name of the hill they inhabit; even among the less civilised Veddas they are sometimes identified with the *yaku* of Vedda headmen who have lived on or near the hills. On the other hand among the more sophisticated Veddas these *yaku* tend to become less and less the spirits of dead Veddas, and finally, under Tamil influence, are thought of as dangerous spirits, immigrants from beyond the Ocean, each of whom with a female of his own species haunts the hilltops and sends disease. Somewhat akin to these *yaku* in their less dangerous forms are the *kiriamma* (literally milk mothers, i.e. grandmothers), the *yaku* of Vedda women, generally the wives of Vedda headmen or chiefs, many of whom are thought of as haunting the sides and tops of hills where there are rocks and springs. They are sometimes jealous of people gathering honey—indeed there is a tendency to avoid rocky mountain tops on their account—but may be placated by a charm, though occasionally a little honey is left for them with a muttered *kapau kiriammala*—Eat O Kiriamma. Although they retain the fondness for children which they felt in their lifetime they not infrequently send sickness, at least among the more sophisticated Veddas.

A few *kiriamma* have become rather important *yaku*, notably an old woman of the Unapane clan now known as Unapane Kiriamma, but such *kiriamma* do not appear to be especially associated with rocky or hilly sites.

We are now in a position to discuss the possible evolution of

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
782

such specially important *yaku* as Kande Yaka and Bambura Yaka who may without exaggeration be said to have attained the position of heroes. It has been stated on p. 126 that according to certain Veddas not all the dead become *yaku* but only the spirits of specially important men or those who during life have the power of summoning the *yaku* to them. Further, the general impression we gathered was that the stronger the personality of the dead man, the more powerful and important was his *yaka*, and it may well be that the *yaka* of a particularly strong or skilled individual may be remembered by name and continue to receive offerings, even after the death of those near relatives to whom the spirit is one of the most important of the Nae Yaku on account of the blood bond between them. This appears to have happened in the case of Panikkia Yaka invoked at the present day by the Henebedda Veddas, and we shall now attempt to trace the history of this spirit.

It was stated in the first chapter that a number of the Veddas were politically organised in the 16th century and that one of the most important of their chiefs, described in a contemporary manuscript as Panikki the Vedda, was appointed to the high office of Bandara Mudiyanse. Further, it is recorded that Panikki the Vedda caught elephants and took them to the king. Now at Henebedda at the present day Panikki Yaka is invoked in the Kolomaduwa ceremony to avert sickness alike from man and cattle, and to confer prosperity on villages and cattle-folds. Those Veddas, a minority, who know anything of this *yaka*, state that he is the spirit of a long dead Vedda who was especially skilled in capturing buffalo, and who on account of his great knowledge of jungle craft is still able to confer safety and jungle favour on those invoking him.

In Chapter I we have mentioned that the Vedda cult of the dead has infiltrated the beliefs of the Sinhalese, and we will now give some details of the Bandar cult to which we there alluded. Concerning this Mr Parker writes: "It is a common practice of the Kandian Sinhalese of that part of the country to make offerings to the spirits of the deceased chiefs and important ancestors.....

"They are all classed as Yakas by the Sinhalese and are

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775
769

generally hurtful; but some have certain protective functions, and protect cattle and coconut trees and crops.

"The offerings are kept up everywhere in that part of the island to the present day at the Dewalas, and elsewhere. Luckily, it is a branch of their religion to which I devoted special attention...and although my lists are doubtless incomplete I have the names of considerably more than 100 of them.

"Some were included in the lists as important ancestors; others, the majority, because of their power, others because of their cruelty, or their sudden violent death.

"Panikki Vaedda occurs among them, and there are a few other names which may be those of Vaeddas,—such as Yapa, Hiti, Hapu etc....

"I have been informed that every one for whom a *dana* or funeral feast is not offered (at which the spirit is supposed to be present) remains in the form of a homeless spirit (*preta*) or *yaka*. These commonly disappear in time and are forgotten. Some of them remain about their old abodes, and uncanny noises heard during the night in the houses are caused by these ghosts, as in Europe....

"The Sinhalese demonology is very intricate, and it is extremely difficult to understand. There are many classes of *yaku*; but I believe that this Bandar worship is the only indigenous portion of it. I have traced practically all the other demons to Southern India, although the *kapurala* claim that a few others, in addition to the Bandaras, are of local origin. They themselves admit that all the rest were imported from India.

"The twelve Vaedi Yaku are, I believe, an entirely different set of evil spirits....

"The Vaeddas told me that they are extremely malignant. Besides these, they said that the whole forest is full of local nameless Yaku, who make strange noises in the night and frighten people in various ways. This also is a firmly rooted Sinhalese belief; their estimate of the number is two millions."

The resemblance between this *Bandara* cult and the Vedda worship of the Nae Yaku is obvious and is still further shown by

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775
769

the canonization as a Bandar of one Godegedara, an influential Ratemahatmaya, first of Wellasse and then of Badulla who died in 1872 and whose spirit now prevents disease among cattle, increases their milk, protects man and animals from beasts of prey, helps hunters and prevents their meeting wild beasts suddenly in the jungle and in fact gives success in all things[1]. About three months after his death certain unusual happenings suggested that one of the dead was trying to attract the attention of the living. An elephant appeared at Damenegama in Uva and in the neighbourhood, and although repeatedly shot at continued to come to the villages and tear the roofs off the houses, but did no other damage. This unusual behaviour led to the suspicion that one of the dead had sent the elephant, and accordingly the turning stone (*paena balanawa*) was consulted as to whether one of the old or recent dead was responsible. When it was ascertained that it was the latter, a ceremony *kamba kanuwa natanawa* was undertaken to discover whose was the spirit. The *kapurale* became possessed, when the spirit within him announced that he, Godegedara, had sent the elephant and that he desired to be honoured and invoked to help men. It was explained that the spirits of the dead always approach the living for the first time through animals, or signify their desire for offerings by making a man sick. The rank of the deceased is roughly estimated by the animal sent, in which, however, the spirit of the deceased is not immanent. The lion is said to be highest, then comes the elephant; the leopard indicates the spirit of a rather less exalted person.

It appears that the dead have no power to interfere in human affairs and take offerings until permission has been obtained from one or more high gods, of whom the chief is the Kataragam God. How the spirit obtains this permission was not clear, but the early signs of the power of the deceased were always in some way connected with the Kataragam God. Thus Godegedera caused the elephant of the Kataragam God to go mad at the *perahera* ceremony, and when Kosgama became a Bandar a leopard sent by him rode round the Kataragam temple on the

[1] A translation of the invocation used when calling upon Godegedera is given in the addendum to this chapter.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

764
775

back of one of the God's bulls, i.e., one of the *tevalam* bulls, bringing provisions and salt to the temple.

Kosgama Bandar is associated with Kosgama, where he lived in the 18th century or earlier. He refused to pay tribute to the king and from his invocation given elsewhere[1] it may be gathered that he rebelled and was betrayed by an adherent whom he trusted. He was captured, tied to a tree and shot to death with arrows. Kosgama Bandar was said to be especially helpful in litigation and in recovering lost cattle, but in fact he is of assistance in all ways.

We may now return to Panikki Yaka, who Mr Parker agrees with us may safely be identified as the spirit of the 16th century "Vedda" chief, Panikki the Vedda. In the same manner as this *yaka* has been remembered and has developed the characters of a Vedda hero, so we believe Kande Yaka and other hero Yaku of the wilder Veddas have arisen, for it is as a mighty Vedda of the old days that the Veddas revere Kande Yaka.

We need only assume that such heroes were unusually successful hunters, stronger personalities than their neighbours, so that their names were held in honour among a people more numerous than their immediate family circle, to see clearly how after their death their names would be continued in memory and their spirits be invoked by those who had admired and feared them, and by their children and children's children. It is entirely in harmony with this view that Kande Yaka should have become the Lord of the Dead, to whom the lesser spirits resort to obtain permission to accept offerings and to aid their still living relatives and former companions.

821

No reverence is paid to the heavenly bodies, and our old Kandyan informant knew nothing of any worship of the sun or moon. He nevertheless agreed that in his youth as at the present day the Veddas would call the moon Hande Deyo or Sande Deyo and the sun Ira Deyo respectively[2].

1 "Note on the Bandar Cult of the Kandyan Sinhalese," *Man*, 1909, p. 77.

2 We found Deyo to be commonly used for "god," the proper word for which is *deviyā*, pl. *deviyō*; but as explained to us by Mr Parker these words are often altered to *deyiya* and *deyiyo* and the Sinhalese "always say 'Kataragama Deyiya' or 'Deyiyo.' The plural forms are used honorifically with a singular meaning."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ADDENDUM.

The following translation of the invocation of Godegedara Bandara has been prepared by Mr Parker from a manuscript given me in Ceylon by the Arachi of Potuliyadde.

782
539

The Song of the God Godegedara.

1. He is a god of a distant country in the Uva region,
   Having come to this side in the Wellassa region,
   Having raised my joined hands to my head I worship (him) that there may be good luck.
   He is coming, I shall say, the God of (this) region.

2. Is not every one staying in (some) place?
   Having died in its heart what pulse will ripen?
   The God sleeps in the upper heavens.
   The God Godegedara is coming.

3. For an endless time being on the watch we utter songs to the God.
   Should there be mistakes (in them) in the name of charity (or merit) pardon the mistakes.
   Endlessly songs are sung accompanied by beating of the five (kinds of) tom-toms.
   The God Godegedara is powerful (enough) even to give a tusk elephant.

4. When it rises the dusk of the moon lights up the round universe and Dambadiva (India).
   The God Godegedara appears like an inextinguishable lamp (lit. a lamp with its fire enduring by (divine) orders for many years).
   The hair of his head sports in the midst of his back like the play of golden rays acting as his retinue.
   Should King Godegedara come to the seat I shall now receive the betel altar (i.e. the offering will be made, and the officiator will then get the betel which has been offered).

"In the last line there is some doubt about the title of Godegedara; either the expression *deva(na) devi* means king, that is literally 'god of the earth,' or *dera* has been written by mistake."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION (CONTINUED)

114
991

WE have now described the fundamental ideas of the Vedda cult of the dead, but superposed upon these there are two other strata of belief both of which have influenced the religion of certain groups of Veddas to a greater or less extent. Before discussing these we may briefly indicate the views of the more thorough of previous investigators. In this as in other matters Knox was better informed than many of his successors when he said of the Veddas, "The *tamer* do build Temples, the wild only bring their sacrifice under Trees, and while it is offering dance round it, both men and women[1]." Tennant's account adds little to this; Bailey's account, undoubtedly the most complete and trustworthy that has been given to date, is not quoted here because it will be found almost in full on pp. 160 and 161 where the religious beliefs of the Nilgala Veddas are discussed. Tennant writes, "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state...in short, no instinct of worship, except...when sick, they send for devil dancers to drive away the evil spirit, who is believed to inflict the disease. The dance is executed in front of an offering of something eatable, placed on a tripod of sticks, the dancer having his head and girdle decorated with green leaves. At first he shuffles with his feet to a plaintive air, and by degrees he works himself into a state of great excitement and action, accompanied by moans and screams, and during this paroxysm, he professes to be inspired with instruction for the cure of the patient[2]."

114
991
965

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 63.
[2] Tennant, *op. cit.* pp. 441 and 442.

[p. 146]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Even Nevill missed the essentials of the Vedda cult of the dead, though he shows that he knew something of what actually occurred. "The Vaedda religion seems to have been such that the spirit alone was recognised as human, and the flesh, when the spirit has left it, receives neither veneration nor superstitious reverence. Where the life left the body, there the body was left....Two or five days after the death, however, the relations were invited to the scene of funeral and a feast was held...to satisfy relations there had been no foul play....

114 775 764

"The Vaeddas of Bintenne, however, having assembled relations and neighbours, procure rice, or other grain, and decorate the pot in which it is cooked with sprays of the liniya tree[1], a shrub with leaves like our hazel, but with bright scarlet flowers. If no flowers can be got, bits of red cotton or other cloth should be used. The celebrant then dances round the pot of food, with an arrow in his hand, singing any chant he knows, and making obeisance to the food by a wave of the arrow. The food is then distributed....

114 764

"It is evident this custom cannot apply to those who formerly did not eat grain. These, however, were few. Roasted game would probably with such take the place of grain, and the latter seems only used as the best and most unusual food procurable, much as our poor try to provide cake, and not bread and cheese, etc. at weddings....

"Bodies were never buried until the English Government endeavoured to enforce burial. The Vaeddas have not the least objection to the corpse being buried, but object greatly to being forced to dig the grave...[2]."

[177]

Although the Sarasins underestimated the importance of the Vedda cult of the dead, and failed to discover that even "Nature" Veddas make offerings to the spirits of their departed, their opinions and conclusions are necessarily given at some length on account of the undoubted importance of their work. "The Veddas of Dewilane told us that after death they became spirits or yakas, but as to whether these persisted (*lebten*) or not they never thought; they did not pray to them nor honour them. The 'Nature' Veddas from Danigala...told us in 1885

114 769 775

[1] *Holigerna isora*, L. [2] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 179.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

114
769
775

that they worshipped neither their ancestors, nor a devil nor a god. Five years later the Veddas settled at Henebedda in the Nilgala district told us that they believed that the dead became spirits or yakas; but they did not make offerings to them. At Wewatte they likewise believe that the dead become yakas and there they invoke them in cases of sickness...gods they have none. A Vedda from the neighbourhood of Kalodai (Pallegama district) named Manikrala informed us that they worshipped children, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother—in short their dead relatives. In remembrance of the death of such relatives they gave a present to the first Buddhist priest whom they met. We therefore asked this 'Culture' Vedda whether his relatives continued to live as spirits after death, but he replied that he did not know; the present of rice was simply in remembrance of the deceased man. In answer to the further question whether they had a definite religion or worshipped a god, he replied that he had never thought about it, and he gave us the impression that this question and the idea it suggested were new to him.

"We found the idea of the existence of the departed as spirits further developed in an old 'Culture' Vedda of Mudagala near Mahaoya, named Sella. He said they had no gods besides their departed. Every year at the full moon they consumed yams and other food at the burying place. On this occasion they hold a dance in honour of the departed, invoke the dead by name and pray them to help them. At Omuni the corpses were buried in Sinhalese fashion and provided with burial presents; but two Veddas when we questioned them about their religion could tell us nothing on this point, and said that the departed were not honoured as gods[1]."

From these data the Sarasins conclude that "genuine 'Nature' Veddas either lack, or at the most have a quite uncertain idea of the persistence of the souls of the dead at the site of death, and that they make no offerings to their manes[2]." Further, they state "that among 'Culture' Veddas this idea has developed but little, for they either answered that they did not know whether they persisted as souls after death, or that they

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 497 and 498. [2] *Loc. cit.*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had never thought the matter over. Nevertheless they honour the names which like the Sinhalese they call Yakas with food, dances or offerings. Any monotheistic idea of God is absent both in 'Nature' and in 'Culture' Veddas[1]."

The three strata of belief to which we referred at the beginning of this chapter and which exist among the Veddas of the present day, have not fused so thoroughly that there is any great difficulty in isolating them. We believe they may be tabulated as follows:

I. The Cult of the dead, including the cult of the spirits of recent ancestors, i.e. of the Nae Yaka and the *yaku* of certain Veddas who have been long dead and may well be regarded as heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka.

II. The Cult of foreign spirits, who have become naturalised and have taken the friendly protective nature of the Vedda *yaku*.

III. The Cult of foreign spirits who, though not often regarded as such, have retained their foreign nature and are in the main terrible or even hostile.

Another feature of the last stratum of thought is the endowment of true Vedda *yaku* with foreign attributes[2]. When the history of the island is considered, it is not surprising that the first condition, which may be considered the primitive religion of the Veddas, should nowhere be found standing alone at the present day. It is impossible to say how much the Indian invaders influenced the aboriginal inhabitants of Lanka (Ceylon) when they took possession of the island under Vijeyo about 500 B.C., for the few references made to Veddas in the ancient chronicles of the country throw no light on this subject.

Knox mentions that Veddas paid a tribute of game and honey to the Sinhalese, and in his day there were "wild and tame" Veddas, and it is certain that from the middle ages onwards there was a considerable amount of intercourse between at least the tamer Veddas and the Sinhalese. Therefore it is natural that foreign beliefs should have gradually infiltrated the native Vedda cult.

[1] Ibid.

[2] The invocation (No. 121) to Ambalangoti Kirimuna given on p. 316 is an excellent example of this. Bilindi Yaka is here treated as if he were a Sinhalese or Tamil deity.

To illustrate and prove these propositions we must examine in detail the beliefs of some of the communities in which each stage is respectively dominant. The Veddas met at Godatalawa and Sitala Wanniya form the best example of the first stage of belief. In comparing their beliefs it must, however, be remembered that the Godatalawa family have drifted away from their hunting grounds and are in dire want, and that their oldest man and leader (now quite infirm though still mentally vigorous) was never a shaman and consequently could give only the lay opinion of his group on religious matters. It must then not be assumed that no spirits beyond the *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Bilindi Yaka were known to the shaman of the Galmeda community, although the fact that the laymen only knew of these spirits shows how vastly more important they were than any other.

The Sitala Wanniya people, on the other hand, were living in a condition which must have been general from ancient times up to about 70 years ago. Four of the five families had never made even rough chena or built bark houses, but lived on game, honey and yams and wandered about from rock-shelter to rock-shelter within their territory.

At Godatalawa Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were both known though they were not recognised as brothers, and Kande Yaka was said to be greater than all other *yaku*. They are the two principal *yaku* invoked in order to obtain game, but with them there are invoked three other *yaku*, who, it was stated, are not the spirits of the dead but have existed as *yaku* from the beginning. These were, however, of little importance, and our informant, an old man the senior of the group but not a shaman, did not remember their names. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka would be invoked in order to obtain game at the *Hiriwaka* ceremony, or simply when dancing round an arrow struck in the ground. These dances were not in gratitude for game already killed, but when the hunting had been successful, pieces of flesh from the neck and chest of the kill were cooked on the ashes and Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked to come to this offering which a few minutes later would be consumed by the Veddas. If part of the meat were not thus

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776
782

presented to Kande Yaka the hunters would expect bad luck in future, and might even be bitten by snakes or attacked by bears.

775
782
769

The *Nae Yaku* are the spirits of the dead, they must report themselves to Kande Yaka as the chief of all the *yaku* and from him obtain permission to help the living and accept their offerings. Kande Yaka comes to the *Nae Yaku* ceremonies since the spirits of the dead could not be present without him. It was definitely stated that the spirits of the dead did not become *yaku* until the fifth day after death, but my informant knew nothing of the state of the spirits during this period though it was surmised that at least part of the time would be passed in seeking Kande Yaka or in his company, though there was no idea as to where Kande Yaka had his being. It was however stated, that the spirits of the dead were in hills, caves and rocks. The *Nae Yaku* including the spirit of the dead man are invoked on the fifth day after death. An offering is made of coconut milk and rice, if these are obtainable, but if not one consisting of yams and water is substituted. The shaman dances, holding in his hand a big ceremonial arrow for which no special name could be elicited, while the remainder of the community gather round. The shaman invokes the *Nae Yaku* and also Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka. The shaman becomes possessed and is supported lest he fall while the spirit of the deceased promises that yams, honey, and game shall be plentiful. He then sprinkles coconut milk or water from the offering on the relatives of the deceased as a sign of the spirit's favour. One or more of the relatives of the dead man may also become possessed. The shaman gives the relatives water and yams, putting their food into their mouths himself while he is possessed, and it appeared that this might cause the relatives to become possessed. At the end of the ceremony he asks the *Nae Yaku* to depart to where they came from and the spirits leave the offering.

796
796

Nothing was known concerning the Kataragam God or the *kolamadua* ceremony, though our informants said that they had heard of other Veddas performing this ceremony. Gale Yaka was not known, nor yet Wanagata Yaka.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 At Sitala Wanniya the principal *yaku* are Kande Yaka,
773 Bilindi Yaka, Bambura Yaka and the *Nae Yaku*. According to these people Kande Wanniya killed his younger brother Bilindi when the latter was only an infant. The story is that their parents were out hunting when Bilindi, feeling hungry, began to cry and would not desist in spite of the endearments lavished upon him by Kande. At last Kande threw the child on the ground in despair and so killed him.

776 It appeared that as a hunting hero Bambura Yaka is on the whole as important as Kande Yaka, though he is certainly not looked upon as so benevolent nor so loved as the latter, who helps men to kill deer and never sends sickness. Bambura Yaka is a somewhat grim spirit who although he gives yams and helps men to kill pig, also sends sickness and must be invoked to remove it, and he is also invoked when dogs are lost or taken by leopards. Because of his giving yams he is sometimes known as Ale (yam) Yaka, and yams are offered to him together with other vegetable food when this can be obtained.

224 The *kirikoraha* ceremony is performed to obtain game, in
776 gratitude for which the head and a portion of the flesh from
782 the breast of every deer killed is cooked as an offering to Kande Yaka and is afterwards eaten by the community. If this were not done Kande Yaka would be angry and little game would be killed.

The *kirikoraha* seen at Sitala Wanniya is described on pp. 223 to 226, and the ceremony at which Bambura Yaka is invoked on pp. 237 to 245.

775 The spirits of the dead become the *Nae Yaku* and with
782 Kande Yaka are invoked for success in hunting; a description
769 of this ceremony will be found on pp. 230 to 233. A few days after a death the dead man is invoked for assistance in hunting, being addressed as *mal paenae wanna*, and when the relatives or the group leave the cave to look for game they repeat the invocation as they move along. After this, if they are successful, they know that the spirit of the dead man has become powerful as a *Nae Yaku* and invoke him at the *kirikoraha* among the *Nae Yaku* called upon. The *Nae Yaku* must obtain permission

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nat Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas.

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaku* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death.

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*kadunu*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness.

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 156), had been naturalised and were said to represent snake.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The dwellings of certain spirits residing on various hills and rocks were known; they were said not to be worshipped, although they were looked upon with awe and respect as they were believed to cause sickness.

These spirits are the Maha Yakini who are especially associated with the hills Nuwaragala, Walimbagala and a rock called Kalumal Ela. The chief of the Maha Yakini is the Maha Kiriamma, and the other Maha Yakini are her attendants. Although associated with rocks and hill-tops they are not invoked before taking honey in these places. It was stated that the Maha Yakini were formerly living people—old women—and that they were especially fond of children and might even steal them. It is for this reason that infants are protected by an arrow struck in the ground, and it is clear that something of their character as old Vedda women still survives in spite of their generally more or less unfriendly attributes.

Concerning the Maha Kiriamma nothing definite could be learnt: our informant had heard it said that she had been invoked in the old days, but knew nothing of this himself. Handuna said that what little knowledge they had of the Maha Kiriamma had travelled to them from the Bintenne Veddas near Horaborawewa[1].

In the Sitala Wanniya community, therefore, the second stratum is well developed and the third is indicated. The second and third strata, though probably not recently introduced, are, however, entirely subsidiary to the primitive cult of the friendly dead.

The Bandaraduwa community is one in which the second stratum is so highly developed that at first sight it appears dominant, for after a death offerings are made to the Buddhist priest, but this is only done as an additional means of propitiation of the *Nae Yaku* who are still considered of the first importance, to whom an offering is made on the seventh day after death. Further, Kande Yaka is still closely associated with the *Nae Yaku* and is invoked with them, but he is no longer formally regarded as the Lord of the Dead, that function has been usurped by Kanda Swami or Skanda known to these Veddas as "the Kataragam

[1] An invocation to the Maha Kiriamma (No. XXXIII), a fragment of a much longer formula (No. XXXIX), unknown to our informants, is given in Chapter X.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God." He is one of the four gods who protect Ceylon, said to have come from India, and is worshipped chiefly by Tamils, who coming from the north-east frequently pass through the territory of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas on their pilgrimage to the temple of their God in the south of the island.

The following information concerning Kataragam is taken from Mr Herbert White's *Manual of Uva*.

Although the present temple is of brick and of no architectural pretensions it is the lineal descendant of the temple endowed some 2000 years ago by Dutugamunu, King of Mogana, as a thank-offering for assistance in overcoming the Tamil King Elala[1]. But Kataragam was a holy place before this, for the Mahavansa describes how the princes of Kataragam assisted at the planting of the shoots of the sacred Bo tree and how one of the miraculously produced offshoots was planted at Kataragam itself[2].

"The aspect and natural features of the country surrounding the temple of Kataragama are not calculated to make a favourable impression upon the eye when they first meet it. There is nothing in them to attract and invite it. Everything, with the exception of the temple and the river on which it stands, at the village of Kataragama and its vicinity looks wild, dreary and monotonous....

"The population of the village may be estimated at forty, including women and children; but it is liable to fluctuation at different periods of the year, from the influx and efflux of the pilgrims who resort to the temple. And I need scarcely add that the village, its adjacent hills, and the surrounding country, are all temple lands, and their occupants are attached to the temple service as its tenants[3]."

The guardian of the temple and its lands, the latter including a domain of some 60,000 acres, is a Buddhist headman resident at Badulla, and although there are now no Veddas near Kataragam, tradition states that there were formerly many Veddas in

[1] Kataragam is situated at the south-east of the island, on the left bank of the Manik-ganga, at a distance of more than forty miles north-east of Hambantota and about sixty miles south-east of Badulla.

[2] Mahavansa, Chapter XIX.

[3] *Manual of Uva*, p. 47.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the temple forests who in some sense served the temple and were known to the Sinhalese as the Kovil Vanamai Veddas. Concerning these Nevill says: "This name means Vaeddas of the Temple wilds, and they were from time immemorial guards of the Katthiragam temple. Their district was from Kumbukan Ara to the Temple precincts, and north as far as the settled villages of Butala and Maha Vaedda Rata....They are said traditionally to descend from the Vaeddas who found the noble babe Valliamma left in the forest, and reared her as their child[1]." Writing in 1886 Nevill points out that he had himself met the last remnants of these people most of whom were, however, "too reduced by want and disease to retain any memory for old customs."

At the present day the sanctity of Kataragam is reputed to be due to the tradition that the god halted on the highest of its seven hills on his return homeward from the conquest of the Asuras. "The particular spot...where Kataragama first met Valliammal in the guise of a hungry and thirsty *pandaram*, or mendicant, and begged of her to appease his hunger and quench his thirst, when she was watching her *chena* cultivation as the adopted daughter of a Vedda chief, and preparing cakes from a composition of honey and *sami* or milled flour, is pointed out at a distance of more than four miles from the temple. The precise spot again, with footmarks of an elephant on a rock, where she had suddenly encountered the ponderous brute and entreated the *pandaram* to protect her from its attacks, is also shown to the enthusiastic pilgrim[2]."

Now Valliamma was the daughter, or the adopted daughter, of a Vedda, and to this day such Veddas as those of Bandaraduwa who have come under the influence of Hinduism, although acknowledging that the Kataragam God, whom they do not call by any other name, is greater than the *Nae Yaku*, nevertheless hold him in less awe and treat him with less formality than do the Tamils and Sinhalese.

These Veddas know nothing of the other three great gods who protect Ceylon, and they regard Valliamma as a Vedda and speak of her as their elder sister (*akka*), while the Kataragam

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 180.

[2] *Manual of Uva*, p. 50.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God is almost, if not quite, thought of as their brother-in-law. In fact the divinity of the God and of his consort has not among the Veddas reached the proportions it has among the Sinhalese and Tamils. It has already been stated that among the Sinhalese the spirits of the dead who desire to become *Bandāra* present themselves to the Kataragam God, and from him obtain permission to receive offerings of cooked food (*ambukku*) in return for benefits to be conferred, or to smite men with sickness and other disasters, and we were told that the Kataragam God would not refuse any spirit who approached him with this request[1].

Further, these Veddas hold that the man may become possessed by the Kataragam God in the same way as by the *Nae Yaku*, and the god is worshipped at certain shrines in the Kovil Vanamai district which are traditionally associated with Veddas and are said to be of Vedda origin. One of these at a place called Kokkadichchola is said to have arisen as follows.

A Vedda and his wife were cutting the trunk of a tree for honey when the tree began to bleed and they found in it not a bee's nest but an infant. The Vedda became possessed and while this condition lasted the God within him announced that he was the Kataragam God and that a temple must be built to him there. When the Vedda returned to his senses the child could not be found, but in its place was an image of the God.

Returning to the beliefs held by the Bandaraduwa people concerning the *Nae Yaku*, these can be best illustrated and explained by considering the events following the death of a Kovil Vanamai man called Tuta.

The day after our arrival at Bandaraduwa a Vedda called Kaira came to our camp sobbing and shaking and protesting that he could not stay long with us as his brother was dead. He seemed deeply affected, though another brother, Kaurale, who was with him appeared quite calm, which led us to suspect that his uncontrollable agitation was due to something more than mere affection for the dead man, and we soon discovered

[1] This belief in spirits of the dead obtaining license from the Kataragam God is also held by some rural Sinhalese.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 that this brother had lived with him and died in his hut, and
769 that it was his duty to make an offering to the nearest Buddhist priest and to provide the necessities for a dance to the *Nae Yaku*, and that he had not the wherewithal to do these things. If these duties were neglected the spirit of the dead man would be angry, and after seven days when the spirit had become a *yaka* would cause misfortune and sickness and perhaps kill him. His manifest relief when we offered him the money needed to purchase the offerings showed that his sorrow for the loss of his brother was the least of his troubles, and he was quite gay when he started on his twenty mile walk to the nearest boutique with Rs. 3·50 in his betel pouch, and readily assented to our condition that he must return with his purchases so that the *Nae Yaku* ceremony might be performed near our camp. The local shaman, who was Vidane of the Vedda settlement, was perfectly ready to agree to this, indeed it suited him well, for it saved him the trouble of walking some eight miles to the scene of the death, and as he pointed out, the *Nae Yaku* could be invoked as well in one place as in another. It was important that the *Nae Yaku* dance should be held on the seventh day after death, since it was thought that the spirit of the dead man, which became a *yaka* on the third day after death, resorted to the Kataragam God and on the seventh day obtained authority from him to accept offerings and to help or molest the living according to the way in which he was treated by them. We were assured that whatever the intentions of the relations might be with regard to the spirit of the dead man, no danger was to be apprehended until the seventh day when the *Nae Yaku* ceremony should be performed, though this could not be done unless alms had previously been given to a Buddhist priest. The offerings which must be given to the priest are worth nearly three rupees and consist of the following foods and other objects. The numbers in parentheses after each object show the price in cents at the nearest boutique, some fifteen or twenty miles from Bandaraduwa. Rice 3 measures (60), 2 coconuts (20), 50 balls of jaggery sugar (15), 25 areca nuts (6), 5 tobacco leaves (12), 100 betel leaves (18), 1 plate (30), 1 cup (25), 1 mat (25), 1 handkerchief (36), half a bottle of coconut oil (50), the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

total amounting to 2 Rs. 97 cents. The offering made to the *Nae Yaku* cost only 40 cents and consisted of a coconut, 50 betel leaves and a measure of rice. 775 769

The actual ceremony at which the spirit of the dead man was invoked and offerings made to it is described in Chapter IX, pp. 233 to 237.

Certain of the invocations used by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas, for instance, in invocation (No. XXXIV) to Indigollae Kiriamma for success in hunting and the invocations sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony, especially that to Unapane Kiriamma (No. XXXVIII), show how greatly foreign influence has altered the character of spiritual beings who existed in the original Vedda religion.

The Veddas of Uniche form a community in much the same stage of belief as the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. A few days after death the spirit of the deceased obtains permission from a "chief" to accept offerings and assist or harm the living. Our informants could not tell us who this chief was, but appeared to think that he had lived in comparatively recent times, and were confident that he was not Kande or Bilindi Yaka. 771 775

The *Nae Yaku*, including the spirit of the dead man, are invoked a few, perhaps five, days after a death has taken place. A pot of coconut milk with betel leaves in it is placed upon a rice pounder, and the shaman, holding a ceremonial arrow in each hand, dances round this, invoking the spirits, including that of the dead man. When possessed, the shaman sprinkles some of the coconut milk on the relatives and places betel leaves on their chests; the shaman also feeds the relatives from the bowl of coconut milk. The object of this dance is said to be to enable the *prana karaya* to become a *Nae Yaku*. It is clear that this is simply a condensed account of the ceremony we witnessed at Bandaraduwa, described on pp. 233 to 237. 775 769

The conditions prevailing at Henebedda, which at first were most puzzling, were found to be largely due to the influence of Tissahami "the Vedda Arachi," whose strong personality has been already referred to on p. 41. This man had taught the present Henebedda shaman much of his lore, and the latter 776 775

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

TK
775

was but too anxious to assimilate and practise all that the Arachi would teach him. The knowledge he thus acquired spread to the younger members of the tribe, such as Sita Wanniya, who obviously took more interest in the ceremonial observances of his religion than any other of the younger men we met, and it was said that he would probably be the next shaman. The older men, on the other hand, appeared to know little of the developments introduced by the Arachi. To them Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nas Yaku* were not only the most important spiritual powers, but appeared to be the only ones who were at all well known; the simplicity of the eschatological beliefs of these older men has already been referred to on p. 186 and agrees wonderfully well with those described by Bailey in 1863. "The result of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than evil. ...They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread....But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their 'nehya yakoon,' kindred spirits. They describe them as 'ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting.' In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, 'bilindoo yakkoon,' or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke....

775
769
539

"The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following: an arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm:

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

מקר
768
[539]

'Mâ miya, mâ miya, mâ deyâ,
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâh!'

'My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?'

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon; without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions, when the intervention of the guardian spirit is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.

"Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

"Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. 'Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come! wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!' and they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.

"They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. 'Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!' was the only reply I received to repeated questions. They have no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings[1]."

מקר

Although in essentials this account is accurate, certain corrections and suggestions must be made. The "bilindoo yakkoon" are not "infant spirits" but obviously represent Bilindi Yaka who became a *yaka* while still a child. The arrow dance is clearly described and agrees with the dance we saw and photographed near Bendiyagalge, figures of which are given in Plate XXVI.

מקר
114

With regard to the spirits of the dead appearing in dreams and stating where game will be found, this, which is quite contradictory to our experience, has already been referred to on

114

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* pp. 166–169.

1. Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 p. 135, but it may be noted that Bailey clearly did not know of the existence of shamanistic ceremonies and we have little doubt that the information given him, which he took to refer to dreams, in fact described the experiences of possession. The "few sticks...with a branch thrown over them" are clearly remains of the *mases* upon which the offerings are placed.

775 The *Maha Yakino* are the spirits of old Vedda women, the 753 chief of whom is the Maha Kiriamma, who, as Bailey pointed out in 1869, is more feared than loved, and in many cases is supposed to send sickness. It was said that her name was Anami and that she lived at Okegala near Alutnuwara, dying of old age; but in spite of these circumstantial details, which are perhaps due to the teachings of Tissahami, neither the name nor the memory of her husband has survived.

775 Unapane Kiriamma is another important *Maha Yakini* who lived near Unapane[1].

Unapane Kiriamma also gives luck in honey getting, and it is thought that she in some way causes bees to build good combs, in fact, all the *Maha Yakino* are associated with rock honey from the belief that they especially affect the rocky crests of hills[2].

Although the *Maha Yakino* are looked upon as the spirits of old Vedda women and are reputed to show their fondness for children by kidnapping them, they are regarded with considerable awe, for they are considered to send disease, and it is necessary to make an offering to them in order that this may be removed. This is generally done at the *bolamadurua* ceremony described on p. 268. With the exception of the

[1] She is known to the jungle Sinhalese of the Vedirata, who state that with her husband Unapane Kaira Wanniya she made the Unapane paddy fields. She is [842a] particularly invoked by barren women, and those who have brought forth still-born children, for increase of cattle and milk, to prevent cattle being taken by leopards or damaging the crops and to give good harvests.

[2] Offerings of honey made to the *Maha Yakino* are described elsewhere. The belief that the *Maha Yakino* are especially associated with hills is also found among the Sinhalese of the Vedda country, who especially associate these spirits with hills [823] on which springs are found or on which streams arise. One such hill near Nilgala, which at the end of the rains has many small streams running down its face, is known as Yakini Ela and is especially associated by the neighbouring Sinhalese with the *Maha Yakino*, who they say can be heard moving about the crest at night.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

invocation of the *Maha Yakino* at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony the beliefs of the Henebedda people, old and young, as far as we have described them, belong to the true Vedda stratum, but we must now record a number of *yaku* including Panikkia Yaka, who are equally believed in by the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedda country and who, like Panikkia Yaka, are probably all *yaku* of important Veddas who were village Veddas or lived in more or less organized contact with the Sinhalese. These *yaku* are:

Mawaragala Panikkia, invoked to give good fortune and avert sickness from man and beast.

Rerangala Yaka who lived in the Uva Bintenne and was particularly expert at noosing elephants, though it is not known whether he first practised this art. He died of old age, and is invoked to prevent sickness, particularly epidemic diseases, and to give prosperity in all things.

Lepat Yaka lived at Lepatgala in the Bintenne and was called Lepatgala Wanniya; nothing is known of his life or death. This *yaka* is invoked during epidemics and before hunting to prevent danger from wild animals.

Hantane Mahavedi Unehe who lived on Mawaragala, and of whose life and death nothing is known, is invoked to cure sickness and to give good fortune in hunting.

Walimbagala Yaka, whom the Veddas of Uva call Walimbagala Panikkia, formerly lived on Walimbagala between Bandaraduwa and Madana in the Eastern Province. He was a great and important chief and his spirit is invoked to cure sickness, to send game and to safeguard men taking honey.

Galaridi Bandar lived on Veragodagala near Nilgala. He was an expert at capturing elephants, which he used to present to the Kandyan kings. Galaridi Bandar is reputed to have constructed dagobas and to have brought a range of paddy fields under cultivation.

Kadaelle Nalla Panikkia was so good a huntsman that he could run down deer. It is not known where he lived, he is invoked at the *kolamaduwa* only.

Rangrual Bandar is invoked to prevent men falling when collecting honey, and also at the *kolamaduwa*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796

Irugal Bandar is invoked to prevent epidemics and at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony[1].

Sandugal Bandar is invoked before hunting and safeguards men from the attacks of wild animals and snake-bite.

Ranhoti Bandar, a Vedda chief who lived at Hamanawa in Nilgala Chorale. His spirit is a very important *yaka* and not to be invoked carelessly along with others at the *kolamaduwa*, but when properly approached will help his suppliants in many ways.

Gange Bandar was in charge of rivers and also of insect pests. It is said that he belonged to the Morane *warige*, though his place is not known. He is invoked at the *kolamaduwa*, and when there is not enough rain or too much.

With these *yaku*, all of whom were said to be the spirits of dead Veddas, there were invoked two spirits of whom it was definitely said that they were not Veddas. The first of these was Peradeneya Bandar who lived at Peradeneya near Kandy, where he was *dissava*. He prevents harm from wild beasts, and his protection is invoked during storms and at the *kolamaduwa*. Clearly this *yaka* is the spirit of a man of great local influence, probably comparable to that exerted by Godegedara whose canonisation is recorded on p. 143. The other *yaka* Kalu Bandar is more important and is widely feared throughout the Vedda-Sinhalese zone from Alutnuwara to the Eastern Province. According to the Vedda Arachi he was a native of Mallawa in India[2]. King Vijaya was frightened by a leopard and this man cured him of the sickness produced by fear; he is invoked to procure game and at the *kolamaduwa*.

We must point out that although we give these *yaku* as if a belief in them constituted an organic part of the Henebedda creed, and although the *kolamaduwa* ceremony is certainly performed by the Henebedda community, we consider that the belief in many of them is purely formal; we are convinced that a number of these *yaku* are never called upon or even considered except when invoked as part of the routine of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony. Further, we think it probable that a

[1] Mr Parker informs us that "Irugal Baṇḍāra was a Sinhalese chief who is said to have lived at Baṇḍāra Koswatta (where Knox dwelt) in the reign of King Wijaja Bahu."

[2] Mr Parker suggests that this may be Malwa in the Central Provinces of India or more probably Malawara, Malayalam.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

number of these *yaku*, especially Irugal Bandar and the other Bandar, may have been introduced since Bailey's time. It is even possible that Tissahami may be responsible in part. 775

The reference to King Vijaya shows that Kalu Bandar has nothing to do with the primitive beliefs of the Veddas, for no Vedda knew anything of Vijaya or Kuweni.

Before describing the beliefs of the village Veddas, among whom the third stratum of thought is dominant, the condition of the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula (who have moved there from Mudugala) must be considered and compared with those of both the wilder and the village Veddas. Many of the *yaku* of the less sophisticated communities were known to them, and some invoked by the village Veddas were also called upon at Unuwatura Bubula. Although Kande Yaka was known and considered powerful to send game and cure sickness, apparently he was no longer Lord of the Dead, as he was not invoked at the *alutyakagama* (see p. 260) to which the *Nae Yaku* were called. A structure called a *bulatyahana* was built for him and a Hindu trident as well as an *aude* was held when he was invoked. Bilindi Yaka was known, but we have no note as to whether he was considered the brother of Kande Yaka or no. Bambura Yaka and his attendants known to the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya and Uniche were unknown here. Pata Yaka (Sitala Wanniya) had been heard of but had never been invoked. The Wanegatha Yaku were of considerable importance here, they were said to be the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had perished in their rock-shelter owing to a fall of rock. Indigollae Yaka (the attendant of Kande Yaka at Sitala Wanniya) was known here and considered extremely powerful; when really short of food, offerings are made to him and his wife Indigollae Yakini, and the shaman thrusts an *aude* into the roof of his hut and hangs on it a string of beads which are kept specially for this purpose, and then Indigollae Yaka sends game. We were told that no charm or invocation accompanied this action. 775 776 [346]

We did not realise at the time of our visit that Indigollae Yaka might be another name for Gale Yaka, but this appears not unlikely in view of information furnished by Mr Parker, and the fact that Gale Yaka was here invoked with the *Nae*

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yaku, while at nearly all the village Vedda communities Indigollae Yaka was said to bring the *Nae Yaku*. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all: perhaps Gale Yaka had become Lord of the Dead as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony; Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate ceremony. No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both to bring evil upon man and to help them to get game was, however, volunteered and, as already mentioned, some old, specially valuable beads were kept to be offered to him.

Gale Yaka was also invoked to give success when gathering honey; he appeared to be associated with a certain rock near Mahaella, and we were told that beads were worn during the ceremony.

The Maha Kiriamma was said to be one of the most powerful of the *Maha Yakino*, a class of female spirits who were said to send sickness[1]. Unapane Yakini (Unapane Kiriamma) was another *yakini* of the same class who was thought to live at Omunigala. Here as among many other groups of Veddas the *Maha Yakino* were associated with hill tops, and it was the custom for people collecting the honey of the rock bee to leave a piece of the comb *in situ*, saying, "Eat, O Kiriamma[2]."

When the *Maha Yakino* are invoked to cure sickness a basket is used in which are put a bead necklace and bangles and the leaves of a *na* tree. The shaman becomes possessed and raises the basket above the patient's head and prophesies recovery. The leaves are subsequently thrown away, but the beads and bangles are preserved for the *Yakino*. Presumably this is the origin of the similar or identical use of these objects in the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which, however, appears to be of Sinhalese origin.

[1] Nothing was ever said to cause us to suspect that she was connected with Gale Yaka or Indigollae Yaka.

[2] Kiriamma is in the plural in the Sinhalese, showing that all the *Maha Yakino* in the neighbourhood were invoked to partake.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Gange Bandar, unknown among the wilder Veddas but worshipped by all village Veddas, was known at Unuwatura Bubula. 784 [184]

OMUNI.

The history of this settlement dating back to the first half of the last century has been given on pp. 45 and 46. The Omuni folk believe there are spirits (*yaku*) everywhere in the jungle, but none have seen them; further, there are many *yaku* of each kind or species such as the Indigollae Yaku, the Dadayan Yaku and many others including the Gale Yaku called the Jungle Yaku, who do not, however, frequent the jungle around Omuni. It was said that Ganga Bandar Deyo who lives in rocks in the river is greater than any of these. Omuni was one of the first Vedda settlements we visited, and as the importance of Sinhalese and Tamil gods and demons was not then appreciated no questions concerning these were asked. It is, however, reasonable to suppose that the Kataragam God and other mighty *devijo* are worshipped. The spirits of the dead (*Nae Yaku*) are believed to be associated with rocks; on the whole they are kindly spirits, but it is necessary to invoke and propitiate them. [775]

A *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some little time after a death has taken place, at which the shaman dances with an *aude* before a *maesa* on which is placed an offering of cooked yams and other food, and the *maesa* is decorated with special clothes kept for that purpose. The *aude* is held in the smoke arising from gum-resin thrown on glowing charcoal, and then pressed on the head of all the male members of the community. If this were not done little game would be killed. 769 782

We have an account of another ceremony performed to cure sickness and when the chena had been reaped, but it is not clear what spirits were invoked at this; presumably the most important of these were certain of the *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*, though the *Nae Yaku* may have played a subordinate part. A shed or very rough house is built and hung with special clothes reserved for this purpose, those shown to us being rather old and worn pieces of linen woven at Batticaloa. A roughly made shelf forming a sort of altar is built in the shed on which 755

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the offering is placed. The dance is held at night and continues until morning when the whole community eat the offering, though only the men dance. We were shown a pot in a small cave near the settlement which was said to be kept there purposely, and which it was stated was used for boiling rice for the ceremony.

We may now consider the religious beliefs of certain communities in which the third stratum of belief already alluded to is dominant. Such communities are the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne and those of the Eastern Province and Tamankaduwa, among all of whom the *Nae Yaku* were known and reverenced, but the great Vedda heroes have all disappeared, their place having been taken by numerous Sinhalese gods and demons. Some of the village Veddas even build temples, rough bark or mud huts like their own habitations in which the various symbols of the *deviyo* and *yaku* are kept and in which the shamas dances.

Such a temple was seen at Yakure dedicated to Gange Bandar Deyo, here also were two rough stones leaning against a tree on the *bund* of Yakurewaewa which were held sacred to Gane Deyo (Ganesa).

At a place called Nadena, where there were said to be Veddas until a few years ago, on the road running inland from Patrippu in the Eastern Province, there is a temple containing an image of Ganesa and this is looked upon as a Vedda shrine. Other temples or shrines in the Eastern Province are traditionally associated with Veddas though none survive at the present day, except, we believe, at Portiv near Patrippu and at Mandur.

Village Veddas of the Bintenne.

At Dambani and the neighbouring settlements of Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the *Nae Yaku* are held to be of great importance. Reference has already been made on p. 50 to the difficulty of working with these village Veddas, and our information concerning the religious beliefs of the Dambani folk was obtained from the Arachi of Belligala; with regard to Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the little information we possess was obtained at first hand and carefully checked, and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

though incomplete we have no doubt of its substantial accuracy as far as it goes. We had considerable doubts as to the reliability of our Dambani information, but these have been removed lately as far as they affect Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* owing to the kindness of Mr Hartshorne who allowed us to look through a number of notes collected among these people thirty years ago. And since the information obtained from the Arachi of Belligala was correct on these points, there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the rest of his information.

According to the Arachi, who, it must be remembered, as stated on p. 49, knows the Dambani folk well, there are three important classes of *yaku*.

The first of these are the *Nae Yaku* who do not go to Kande Yaka but to Indigollae Yaka, who lives on a hill (*kande*) called Indigollae Kande which never has been seen. Indigollae Yaka is first invoked at the *Nae Yaku* ceremony and with him come the *Nae Yaku*. An *aude* is used in calling upon Indigollae Yaka in this ceremony, while the *Nae Yaku* are invoked by means of a cloth and beads; as among other Veddas an offering of food is made.

We could not discover with certainty at Dambani what was the relative importance of the *Nae Yaku* and the two other classes of *yaka*, but at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle our informants made it quite clear that the *yaku* of recent ancestors were the most important. Thus Kuma stated that he considered his father's *yaka* to be the most important of all and that this spirit was invoked alike to send game and in thanks for game killed.

Bandia of Wellampelle said the most important *yaka* he knew was Punchi Badena, his father's father; his mother is dead but her *yaka* is not so important[1]. Punchi Badena is invoked to get game and honey or when people are sick. At all three villages a structure, which from the description given to us resembles an *alutyakagama*, is built for the invocation of the *Nae Yaku*, to whom the customary offerings are made before

[1] We have no note that the father of Kuma was dead; although we do not remember definitely inquiring about this our impression is that both parents had been dead for some time.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann•E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

being eaten by the community. A man becomes a *yaka* directly he is dead, nothing is buried with him and the contents of his betel pouch are used in the ordinary way. The *Nat Yaku* ceremony is held some days after death, one, or according to another informant two, *aude* being used.

At Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle neither Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka was known, and these two *yaku* were also unknown at Dambani where, however, the Belligala Arachi said that Kande Yaka gives luck in hunting. This has been confirmed by Mr Hartshorne's notes, so that although our informants at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle stated that they did not know this *yaka*, too much stress must not be laid upon this.

The other two classes of *yaku* invoked at Dambani are tree and rock *yaku*. Both send sickness and are invoked with dancing and offerings to remove it, the stone magic described on p. 143 being used to determine which *yaka* is responsible for the disease. The most important rock *yaku* are Mawaragala Yaka, Rerangala Yaka, Barutugala Yaka, and Mehaluku Yakini. The latter is associated with a rock Batugala near Alutnuwara, the others with the peaks whose names they bear.

Two tree *yaku* were mentioned, each having a number of attendants. These tree *yaku* are named Na Gaha Yaka (Na tree Yaka) and Bo Gaha Yaka (Bo tree Yaka), that is to say they are called after the trees with which they are associated, and the Arachi pointed out that tree *yaku* habitually lived in trees of the species after which they are named. We could not discover any facts suggesting that these tree *yaku* were considered to represent the life of the tree.

HORABORAWEWA.

The surroundings and physical characters of the Veddas of Horaborawewa have been described on p. 53. The shaman is the local Sinhalese headman, who stated that the same *yaku* are invoked by Veddas and Sinhalese alike. Seren (Riri) Yaka is the most important *yaka*, Wiloya Yaka and Kalu Yaka are also known, and it was stated that the latter spirit was also called Wangata Yaka. Our informant had not heard of Kande Yaka or Bilindi Yaka, and it was certain that the worshipped *yaku*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

were generally associated with rocks and were not the spirits of the dead. There is however an exception, namely, Dehigole Yaka, whose history is as follows. A man from Dehigole, a Vedda, went to Kandy to see the king, probably Sri Vikram Rajah Sinha, the last of the Sinhalese kings, who was dethroned early in the last century. On his way back he was killed by an elephant, and now his spirit looks after the chena and prevents elephants breaking into and destroying the crops. A leafy branch is tied to a pole or dead tree in the chena, and Dehigole Yaka and other spirits are invoked, an offering of sweetmeats, jaggery, coconuts and rice cooked in coconut milk being made and subsequently eaten by the owners of the chena. There was said to be no invocation of the *yaku* of the recent dead, nor before taking honey which is obtained from trees.

LINDEGALA.

The "Veddas" described on p. 76 from Lindegala in the neighbourhood of Kallodi worship a large number of male and female spirits including the Bo Gaha Yaka and the Na Gaha Yaka[1].

As already indicated the people of Lindegala are Veddas in scarcely more than name. The most important of them, an old man with his son and son-in-law, visited us at Kallodi. The old man who is tall and presented typical Sinhalese features is a renowned *vederale* (medicine-man) and is employed by the Sinhalese for miles round. He brought with him to show us two ceremonial arrows with which he invoked the spirits. One of these arrows is of the shape of a Hindu trident, the other is of the usual Vedda shape and is notable on account of the silver *ke* leaf with which the blade is inlaid. This *ande* is shown in Plate XXV. Both of these had been presented by the Sinhalese king to one of his ancestors, apparently about 100 years ago.

[1] Although these *yaku* were spoken of in the singular there were many individuals of each species. Some of the other more important *yaku* which were worshipped were named, Watagala Wanniya, Gala Dogala Wanniya, Gurugala Wanniya, Maldumpahe Yaka, Lepat Yaka, Eheregala Yaka, Meheregal Yaka, Kumal Yaka, Walmat Yaka, Hittangala Yaka, Mikmal Naida Yaka, Kehelpotagala Yaka, Mawaragala Yaka, Herang Yaka, Inthangala Wanniya, Maindangala Wanniya, Gara Rajah Wanniya. There were only an insignificant fraction of the total number of *yaku* known to our oldest informant.

411 The story told us was that when this ancestor, who was a Vedda
978 headman and a shaman of great fame, gave up his jungle life
113 and began to cultivate, the Sinhalese king sent him the two *aude* as tokens that he granted the land on which he settled to him and his descendants for ever. It seems that previously to this they had led a more or less unsettled life, or had perhaps been dispossessed of their own territory during the troubles of the period. The arrows were in fact "seisin" and were considered the equivalent of a *sannasa*, the inscribed metal plate or rock face on which grants of land were formerly recorded. Inquiry showed that it was by no means uncommon for a man to be given a ceremonial example of an implement of his trade or profession as a *sannasa*. Thus, in the Kandy Museum there is a beautifully worked Bull's bell (*gonmiligediya*) given as *sannasa* to Rantun Mudianse of Walala head of the Pattiya or Nilamakkara people by King Narendara Singhe of Kundasale who reigned 1706—1739. We may also refer to a ceremonial weaver's shuttle in the Colombo Museum and to the lacquered arrows described in Chapter XI.

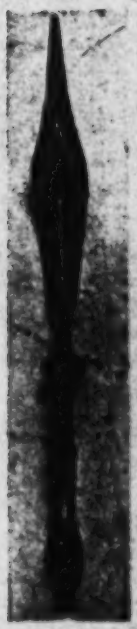
976 The *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Wanegata Yaka are con-
975 sidered less important than the tree *yaku* and the host of *yaku* alluded to above. Indigollae Yaka and Rahu Yaka are recognised but not considered very powerful, though it was said that all these were formerly invoked to give success in hunting. The *kolamadwa* ceremony is known, very many spirits being invoked including Unapane Kiriamma. The *Nae Yaku* become attendants on some of the *yaku* mentioned in the above list and these are invoked first and bring the *Nae Yaku* with them, but it appeared that it was no longer the custom to hold a *Nae Yaku* ceremony within a few days of a death. Among the *Nae Yaku* mentioned was the spirit of the man on whom one of the last Sinhalese kings had bestowed the land of which the inlaid *aude* shown in Plate XXV is the *sannasa*. Another *yaku* greatly venerated is that of Kimbul Otbe, an important individual living a few generations ago concerning whom Nevill has written at some length[1].

[1] Nevill, who says that he could find no clue to his identity, still regarded Kimbul Otbe as "a great historical personage," for "The Sinhalese of the Eastern Province

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411
778

Plate XXV



Aude with inlaid silver Be leaf

[facing p.172]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

KALUKALASSA.

The most important spiritual agencies are the following:— Gange Bandar Deyo, Kataragam Deyo, Indigollae Yaka, Rerang Yaka, Riri Yaka (Sinhalese), Marulu Yaka, Rahu Yaka, and Eile Yakini. 776

In spite of the fact that the people of Kalukalasha keep cattle and are predominantly agriculturalists Gange Bandar Deyo, who lives on the hill Yangala beyond Hemberewa and gives luck in hunting and honey gathering, was said to be especially important. He is invoked when game is scarce, but it is the Kataragam God who gives increase of yams and vegetable food. They do not dance to him but make offerings of cooked brinjal and pumpkins, which are left for half-a-day on a rude altar and then eaten. Chena are also under the protection of the Kataragam God to whom offerings are made after the produce has been reaped, some of every kind of fruit being cooked and exposed in the chena for some hours before it is eaten by the people. 776 782

At Kalukalasha Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Bambura Yaka were unknown. The spirits of the dead are recognised as the *Nae Yaku*, but they are certainly thought of as far less important than a number of other spiritual beings to be immediately considered. They are however invoked, but it seemed that this was not done habitually immediately after a death, but at quite uncertain intervals to remove sickness. The father of 775 755

and Bintenne, and Hilgala, alike agree that he was a great and powerful prince. They speak of him often, and call him Barangala Kimbul-Hemat mudiyanse Rajapat Wannimaedu. From the name Hemat it is manifest he headed some great political movement.... Raja-pat probably means king-maker, and the whole title may be translated as 'His Excellency the General Kimbul-Otbe of Barangala, the king-maker Lord-of-the-Marches,' or else the 'King-made Lord-of-the-Marches,' wanni, literally a forest or waste, being used exactly as we use the term 'marches,' of Wales or Scotland. The support of the Sinhalese, and this elaborate title of highest honour, show that this great Veddda Chieftain headed an army that replaced one of the Sinhalese kings upon the throne of his ancestors. I think it is more probable he figured in a comparatively modern war than in a very ancient one....It is perfectly likely that Kimbul-Otbe was a prince of the Sinhala royal family, who married a Veddda....

"The supposition that Kimbul-Otbe was a Sinhala, and that he married either a Bandara or an Unapana lady, would thus account for the otherwise unexplained fact that the Sinhalese say some of their oldest and best families also descended from Kimbul-Otbe, though they did not know whether he was really a Veddda or was claimed by the Vedddas in mistake, having been their prince." *Op. cit.* Vol. 1, p. 176.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[742] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

770 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka is known. The *Nae Yaku* are of the company of Indigollae Yaka, and with the latter are invoked after a death, but the *Nae Yaku* are not asked for good luck in hunting. The *Nae Yaku* are invoked after every death; coconut, jaggery (palm sugar), and rice are placed on a *maesa*, offered to the *yaku* and afterwards eaten by the shaman and other members of the community. While invoking the spirits the shaman holds a cloth in his hands but no *aude*.

ULPOTA.

The Kataragam God, Gane Deyo and Vihara Deyo, are worshipped, as probably are many others. These spirits are all considered more important than the *Nae Yaku*, and it is to their aid that success in hunting and in honey getting is largely attributed, nevertheless it was clear that the *Nae Yaku* were thought of as helpful in these activities. Our informant stated that they had never heard of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka, nor had they heard of the gods of the coast Veddas Kapalpe or Kadupe.

The spirits of the dead become *Nae Yaku*, and it is customary for a ceremony to be held eight days after a death, at which the spirits of all the recent dead are invoked. It was said that these spirits of the deceased joined the other *Nae Yaku* without asking permission from any other spiritual being and that the *Nae Yaku* came when they were invoked unaccompanied by any other spirit. The shaman does not hold an *aude* in his hand when invoking the *Nae Yaku*, but some rice and cooked pumpkin are put upon a *maesa* before which he dances. At the side of this is a pot of rice covered with a cloth supported on a rice pounder. The shaman faces the east whilst dancing, and appeals to all remembered *Nae Yaku* by name. It was said to be rare for any but the shaman to become possessed.

The *Nae Yaku* give honey and luck in hunting, and it is in order to obtain their favour that they are invoked, for if they were not they would give bad luck. When collecting tree honey the name of a dead man is called and he is requested to accept a little honey which is left at the foot of the tree for a short time, after which it is eaten by the honey gatherers. After killing game

L-Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

a piece of flesh is offered to the *Nae Yaku* who are called by name, and then the Veddas eat it themselves.

Vihara Deyo is considered to send sickness, and he is invoked to make men whole again. Rice is cooked with milk usually obtained from the Tamil village of Horawila, and this with betel and areca nut is put upon a *maesa*. Only the shaman dances, and after the ceremony the offering is eaten by the whole community, including the sick man. Our informant did not know how the *yaku* or *deyo* causing the sickness was discovered, that being left to the shaman.

YAKURE.

The important spiritual agencies are:—Gange Bandara Deyo, Genikandia Deyo, Palugamman Deyo, Vihara Deyo, Mangara Deyo. Our informants knew of Indigollae Yaka but did not know if he ever was a man or had always been a spirit. Nothing was known of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka. Dead shamans are thought to become *yaku* and it is the spirits of these people who are the *Nae Yaku*: the fate of the spirits of ordinary folk is uncertain, but they do not become *Nae Yaku*. The *Nae Yaku* are danced to and invoked with the other *yaku* in order to cure sickness, but apparently they are not considered particularly important. A *maesa* is made and a cloth put over it, and on it are laid flowers of many kinds, betel leaves and areca nuts. Incense is burned before these offerings, in front of which the shaman dances facing the east. In some instances the *maesa* is built inside the temple, the shaman holds a cloth in his hand and a pot of rice cooked in milk is placed by the *maesa* on a rice pounder[1]. This is not tasted during the dance, but is eaten afterwards by the shaman and the sick man and other individuals of the community[2].

Kataragam Deyo is invoked especially to protect the chena and at harvest an offering is made which is afterwards eaten at Elakotaliya.

[1] It must be remembered that Yakure is a great cattle breeding centre.

[2] This is an interesting contrast to the practice which Mr Parker informs us prevails in the south of the island, where food given to spirits is not eaten at all but is expended in the jungle or some deserted place. The fact that at Yakure food offered to spirits, many of whom are of Sinhalese or Tamil origin, is eaten, is clearly a remnant of the Vedda belief that the spirits invoked are in the main beneficent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered.

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding.

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *aude* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo.

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

T6
T15
187

when he takes the shape of a well made young man dressed in white and with a white stick in his hand. Vedi Yaka also appears only in dreams, as a black man in a cloth with nothing else particular about him[1]."

The Avoidance of Certain Foods.

260

It must be assumed that the following prohibitions are of a religious or of a magico-religious nature, and for this reason they are included in the present chapter. They do not appear to be connected with totemism, yet we do not feel confident that they are derived from Hinduism, as is suggested by the Sarasins[2]. In this doubt we have the support of Mr Parker who writes: "This prohibition appears to have no connection with Hinduism, or the common Brown Monkey, *Rilawā* (*Macacus pileatus*), would be included, and also the Rat, as the vāhana of Ganēsa, and the Turtle as representative of Vishnu; or some of these[3]."

Bailey writes, "The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk, deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pengolin—all flesh indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.

"They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of these beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained, is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh[4]."

We are able to confirm Bailey's statement as far as it concerns the flesh of mammals, with the reservation that most Veddas do not eat porcupine. With regard to birds, the Veddas of Henebedda said they would not eat fowls or eagles. The majority of Veddas, including even the degenerate Veddas of the coast, avoid eating fowl, though many of the settled village Veddas keep them for sale or for the sake of their eggs, and in

[1] Both the passages quoted are from a report by Mr Hornburgh to the Colonial Secretary.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 415.

[3] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

[4] *Op. cit.* pp. 287 and 288.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

many places the flesh of the jungle cock is avoided as well as that of the domesticated bird. Many Veddas when questioned about fowl said, that though they did not eat it themselves other Veddas would, and some alleged that the reason for their abstinence was that fowls eat dirt. The lay members of the Sitala Wanniya community had no objection to eating fowl, though Handuna avoided it because he was a shaman. 262

Further, those Veddas who eat fowl, avoid eating it when about to take part in a dance. When discussing this matter at Sitala Wanniya, Vela, who was not a shaman, was about to take part in the Dola Yaka ceremony described in Chapter IX, and it was then explained that this day he must avoid fowl, though at other times it would not matter if he were to eat it or not. The reason was not clear, while one man said that it was because the *yaku* did not like fowl, and so would not readily enter him after he had eaten it, another said that should a man become possessed after eating fowl it might be difficult to regain consciousness. It is equally necessary for shamans to avoid eating pig, though the reason for this was more definitely stated, namely, that the *yaku* disliked this animal. 262 787

Although shamans will not eat pig, they have no scruples with regard to killing it, but they must not touch it or cut it up. If they were to neglect this observance they would be ill and shiver for four or five days afterwards, even when seated comfortably in the cave. The arrow with which a pig had been killed must be cleaned by a man who is not a shaman, and may then be used again by the shaman. The shaman of the sophisticated Veddas said that he would eat only rice, coconut milk, salt, bananas and cow's milk for some days before invoking the *yaku*, and this man insisted on having a daily ration of rice for several days before the *Nae Yaku* ceremony held after the death of Tuta. But as all these foods are foreign to the wilder Veddas and must be obtained by trade, these abstinences have assuredly been introduced, and certainly no custom of this sort is observed at Sitala Wanniya or even at Henebedda. 262 791

The suggestion that these prohibitions have been taken over from Hinduism will not explain the equally strong objection to 262

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 fowls of the majority of Veddas, or the abstinence from the flesh of fowls of the shaman in communities, the lay members of which eat fowl except before dancing. Nor does it explain the similar abstinence from pig which Mr Parker suggests may be due to the unclean nature of its food, for it is "an eater of dead bodies which might be those of human beings[1]." Further, the abstinence from the flesh of elephants, leopards and bears is hardly to be explained as due to foreign influence; we believe that these animals are not eaten because they are, and always have been, difficult to hunt by a people as poorly armed as the Veddas, who were not driven to attempt to kill them on account of the scarcity of game. There was in fact no necessity to attempt to kill them, for deer were easier to hunt and more pleasant to eat; so the Veddas gave them a wide berth and their flesh was not regarded as food, and if come by accidentally, as when a dead elephant was found in the jungle, its flesh was not eaten because it was new and strange[2].

In the same way the flesh of buffalo was not eaten, for buffalo are perhaps the most dangerous of all Indian animals to hunt, and as for the flesh of the domestic cattle, it is obvious that no Veddas except those who kept cattle or were village Veddas could have had the chance of eating this meat. Once this stage of sophistication had been reached, abstinence from the flesh of cattle might easily be dictated by contact with Hinduism, but hardly before. It is of course questionable how far the avoidance of strange food because it is strange and has not been eaten before in the community is a matter of religion, but we have thought it best to discuss the matter in this place because of the view which connects these observances with Hinduism.

ADDENDUM.

[27] Since our return to England we have received from Mr Parker important information concerning the popular beliefs of the Kandyan Sinhalese of the North Western Province. This information bears in a most interesting manner upon the beliefs

[1] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

[2] At Baddaraduwa we were told that once, two or three generations ago, a dead elephant was found in the jungle but its flesh was not eaten.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

which we have classified as belonging to the second and third strata of the Vedda religion. We therefore propose to give a short account of these Sinhalese beliefs, but before doing this we may indicate that in our opinion the Kandyan Sinhalese must not be considered the pure or nearly pure descendants of invaders from the Ganges. On the contrary, we believe with Mr Parker that everywhere throughout the old Vedirata and in the hills west of the Mahaweliganga the present day Sinhalese possess a varying and sometimes large amount of Vedda blood. It is therefore only natural that the beliefs of these peasants should present a mixture of the beliefs of the aborigines and of the races which came later into the island. The actual working beliefs of the Sinhalese are exceedingly complicated; there is first the belief in a number of High Gods of whom Skanda—the Kataragam God—appeared to us to be the most important[1]. Then comes the ever-present fear of a countless number of demons who are responsible for misfortune and disaster, who must be constantly propitiated. The worship of these has given rise to a prodigiously elaborate system of demonology complicated by endless local variations and beliefs, intermixed with which there exists the Bandar cult of the Dead already referred to in Chapter VI. A reverence for Buddha which, as far as we could judge, is stronger in the large towns than in the jungle villages loosely holds together this mass of beliefs which the people call Buddhism[2]. It seems obvious that the Bandar cult represents the remains of the primitive Cult of the Dead which appears to have been the religion of the early non-Aryan inhabitants of the whole of Southern India.

This view has the support of Mr Parker, who writes, "The

[1] Mr Parker writes, "The most important of the Hindu Gods in the opinion of the Kandian Sinhalese is Vishnu, termed by them Mā Vis Unnānsé. I rather think that Ganesa, termed Gana Deviyō, should be placed next, the statues of these two, only being found in the wihārés.

"The name of Skanda, Kataragama Deviyō, is perhaps oftenest on their lips; but on the whole he does not appear to hold quite as important a position with the villagers as Ayiyanār, the son of Mōhini. Both are powerful Forest Gods."

[2] The orthodox Sinhalese Buddhists separate their belief in the Indian Gods and in demons from Buddhism. Mr Parker points out that "even the erection of the shrines of Vishnu and Ganesa in the wihārés is of comparatively recent date, and is not altogether approved of by the monks."

1.Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 Sinhalese demonology is very interesting.... There are many classes of Yaku; but I believe that this Bandara worship is the only indigenous portion of it. I have traced practically all the other demons to Southern India, although the Kapuralas claim that a few others, in addition to the Bandaras, are of local origin. They themselves admit that all the rest are imported from India."

177 Among these immigrant spiritual beings is one, the Gale Deviyo, who appears to be originally identical with the Gale Yaka of the village Veddas and the Indigollae Yaka of other groups. Mr Parker states that the Gale Deviyo is popularly supposed to have come from India with his Prime Minister Kurumbuda; he is worshipped in Uva, the North Central and North Western Provinces. "He is a beneficent God, who gives food and rain and guards the crops and prevents or checks epidemics." Two miles from the temple at Nirammulla are two caves, and in one of these Kurumbuda killed sixty priests who were there assembled, in order to take possession of the cave himself. Gale Deviyo is danced to annually in July or August on the summit of crags. The dancer, called *anumaetirala* (i.e. one subject to command) represents the god; in the temple he assumes a three-tiered hat and holds a golden katty (*ran kaetta*), and the spirit of the god enters him without any of the usual phenomena of possession. The man who made the katty (or one of his descendants) and the dhobie who washed his clothes accompany the dancer to the foot of the crag which he ascends alone. The hat, katty, and flounces which the dancer wears are kept in the temple.

"In the North Central Province the chief temple of the God is at Indigollaewa, on the southern side of Kalawaewa. The 'dancing rock' (*natana gala*) near it is called Andiyagala. In the North Western Province his chief temple is at Nirammulla, 15 miles N.E. of Kurunegala; and its two 'dancing rocks' are on Devagiriya 'the Hill of the God,' where his original temple was established in a cave which he took by force from the monks killed by Kurumbuda."

Mr Parker points out that it is quite certain that the Gale Deviyo is identical with the Gale Yaka of some at least of the village Veddas, for "there is the same service to him everywhere,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and the same tradition of his coming from Malawara-desa, our Maleiyalam, accompanied by his minister Kurumbuda, called a Yaka, but also by the Kandians a Devata or Godling.

"I got the same account of him from the Tamil-speaking Vaeddas, the Vaeddas of Maha Oya district, the forests south of it, Maduru Oya district, and the extreme south of the Batticaloa district, and the Sinhalese of Uva, North Central Province and North Western Province. He is worshipped in all these three Sinhalese districts. There can be no doubt as to his being a God of the Village Vaeddas.... All in these districts appeal to him in cases of epidemics.... The Tamil-speaking Veddas told me that although called *yaka* he is really their God of all, who taught them everything they know and the names of things and animals, and instructed them regarding their dances.

"The Tamil-speaking Vaeddas address him as 'Lord God,' 'Lord of the Country,' 'Hill Lord' (Maleiya Swami).

"The Tamil-speaking Vaeddas give me the very same account of the arrival of the Gale Yaka and the Gale Deviyo as those of Bintenne and the Sinhalese of the North Western Province. They all agree that he came from Malawara-desa—the Malayalam country—with one minister, and the only point where they do not agree is as to the place where he landed. Some say Kokkagala, others Valeichena on the coast, and the Sinhalese say he came to some hills in their part."

Mr Parker states that the Sinhalese all call Gale Deviyo the god of the Veddas, and the village Veddas told him that a ceremony similar to that described in the North Central Province is performed on Omungala and Kokkagala in the Bintenne. There are temples to him throughout all the village Vedda districts "just like their own huts that might be passed without notice unless specially informed what they are." Where there is no rocky crag on which to dance, the ceremony is performed beneath a tree, and this occurs among the coast Veddas. Mr Parker points out that Gale Deviyo must not be confused with Gale Bandar who came with four or five followers in a stone boat from India and landed near Galle.

To sum up, Mr Parker's observations show that the Gale Deviyo of the Sinhalese of the North Central Province is regarded

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

as an immigrant God from beyond the ocean. Mr Parker states that he is also the most important God of the coast Veddas, and this is supported by our observation that the coast Veddas call their most important God Kappalpei, "Ship Spirit" (Mr Parker suggests "ship demon"), and say that he came from over seas. It is therefore clear that among Sinhalese and coast Veddas a foreign spiritual agency is considered the most important of the Gods and temples are raised to him. This God is danced to on certain crags by the Sinhalese, and similar rites occur among some of the sophisticated Veddas of the Bintenne who also say that the spiritual agency Gale Yaka whom they invoke in this ceremony is a foreigner.

In many communities of Veddas, far less sophisticated than the village Veddas, we were told about spirits who inhabited rock-masses or hills such as Walimbagala, but these did not at all correspond to the Gale Deviyo of Mr Parker. It was perfectly clear that to the majority of Veddas they really were simply local unnamed *yaka*, who were spoken of by the name of the peak or rock supposed to be their favourite haunt, and in only one advanced community were these spirits bearing hill names considered to be immigrants from India[1]. We therefore consider that the Gale Yaka of the village Veddas has been adopted from the Sinhalese by the more advanced communities of Veddas where alone he is known, and that although the foreign rite of dancing to him on crags is still retained, he has to some extent taken on Vedda characters as witnessed by his invocation at the *alutyahagama* ceremony described in Chapter IX.

The temple of the Gale Deviyo at Indigollaewa in the North Central Province has already been mentioned. His wife the Kiriamma is worshipped here with him, and God and Goddess are sometimes spoken of as Indigollaewa Devia and Indigollaewa Kiriamma. Concerning him Mr Parker writes, "I collected accounts of him in all parts, and about Indigollaewa in the North Central Province where his temple is, and they all agree that he is the Gale Yaka, while the Sinhalese of Indigollaewa know him

[1] Cf. Chapter IX, in which is described the *rasnais* ceremony by which these spirits are propitiated.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

only as the Gale Deviyo." "The Sinhalese of Indigollaewa and some of the settled Vaeddas near Maha Oya make offerings to the Gale Yaka and the Kiriamma, as his wife, together; no offerings, however, are made to her on the hill tops, which are reserved for the Gale Yaka.... She is a great food provider for the Vaeddas. Some call her Indigollae Kiriamma; others Kukulapola Kiriamma; but both names referred to the same person, they said."

At Unuwatura Bubula, where there is a small settlement of Veddas, we saw Gale Yaka invoked (see *alutyakagama*) in a dance in which the *Nae Yaku* and Rahu Yaku were also invoked. At the same dance a female spirit came, about whom there was some confusion, she may have been one of the *Nae Yakini*, or she may have been the Kiriamma who was certainly known. Unfortunately the Kapurale who performed this dance became ill after it and so was unable to discuss the matter with us. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all, perhaps Gale Yaka had become lord of the dead and so usurped the place of Kande Yaka, as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate dance (see p. 229, *bulatyakana*). No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka might be names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both for good and evil and for successful hunting, was volunteered, and some especially valuable beads were kept to offer him.

At Sitala Wanniya we heard of Indigollae Yaka. The invocation given in Chapter X (No. XXIII) clearly shows that he is of foreign origin, and we were told that Riri Yaka was another name for the same spirit. Now Riri Yaka is the Sinhalese and Tamil blood-devil, a demon with particularly well marked characteristics and considered extremely dangerous. There is thus no doubt that at Indigollaewa the "God of Indigollaewa" is the Gale Deviyo, and he retains this character among the village Veddas, but among the wilder Veddas he acquires Vedda characteristics, becomes an attendant on Kande Yaka, and as a foreigner may

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

be confused with other adopted and therefore little known *yaku*.

The position of the Indigollaewa Kiriamma and her relation to the Kiriamma of the Veddas is comparatively simple. Among the wilder Veddas there are certain female spirits, the *yaku* of old women called *kiriamma* (lit. grandmothers) who were especially fond of children, and would occasionally steal them. They sometimes caused sickness. Most of these live on rocks, and at Sitala Wanniya we were told that the Maha Kiriamma was the chief of these and the *Maha Yakini* were her attendants. All these *yakino* were said to be the wives of Veddas who lived long ago and in no case was the Kiriamma ever mentioned as the wife of the Gale Yaka or of Indigollae Yaka. At Unuwatura Bubula a Gale Yakini was mentioned, and this may have been the female spirit who was invoked after Gale Yaka, and in that case it seems reasonable to suppose that she was the original Maha Kiriamma or Maha Yakini of the Veddas, who has become confused with the foreign Kiriamma (identified by Mr Parker with Mohini in Ceylon), the wife of the foreign Gale Deviyo, who probably was introduced through the Sinhalese to the village Veddas at a very early date[1].

Although she does not appear to have passed from the village Veddas to the wilder Veddas, her consort has been carried on as Indigollae Yaka. Further, although when investigating the beliefs of the less sophisticated Veddas we knew nothing of the foreign Gale Yaka and the Indigollae Kiriamma, we feel confident, from much information volunteered to us, that Indigollae Yaka was an attendant spirit, and there was no connection in the minds of the Veddas between him and their own *kiriamma* who were the wives of long dead Veddas.

Even among the Sinhalese the relationship between the Gale Deviyo and the Maha Kiriamma varies in a manner that suggests that the connection between the two is late. Mr Parker writes, "The Kandians of the North West Province know of no wife of the God of the Rock, and I believe that they alone have preserved the correct tradition in this respect... for it is everywhere

[1] Reference is made on p. 188 to Mr Parker's view that Gale Deviyo is the original supreme god of the Veddas.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

agreed that when the Gale Yaka came to Ceylon he was accompanied only by Kurumbuda. No doubt she had been taken over from the Tamils, through the Sinhalese of the North Central Province, to provide a suitable wife for the Gale Yaka. Probably she is the one called the Alut Devi, the New Goddess."

There is another matter to which we may refer, namely, a suggested relationship of Kande Yaka to Kanda Swami the Kataragam God. This is a matter to which we paid much attention in the field. The circumstances which at first suggest the identity appear to be the similarity in name, and the fact that "Kandaswami's brother... an important deity in the Hindu temples is commonly called Pillaiar or 'the child.'" Further, it has been suggested that because "Kandaswami's favourite weapon is the *vel* or lance," therefore it is "most probably the original of the" ceremonial arrow "which plays so large a part in Vedda ceremonies." The passages between quotation marks are by Mr P. Arunachalam and are quoted because he has put the case for the identity of Kande Yaka and the Kataragam God more strongly than anyone else[1].

Remembering that the Veddas are bowmen and that until a few generations ago all genuine Veddas were dependent for their livelihood on the bow, the last argument seems to us of little force.

We have already (in Chapter VII) made mention of the celebrated temple at Kataragam and of the extent of its influence among the Veddas[2]. At Bandaraduwa and other places where the temple at Kataragam is known by repute, and at Henebedda in the Nilgala district, the god is called the "Kataragam God" and not Kanda Swami (*swami* "lord"). At these places Kande

[1] We quote from the report in the *Ceylon Observer* (May 26th, 1908) of Mr Arunachalam's remarks in a discussion on a paper read by one of us before the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

[2] Cf. Bailey (*op. cit.* pp. 304—305). "The far-famed Hindu Temple of Kataragam which attracts thousands of pilgrims annually from India and is regarded with awe by the Sinhalese is dedicated to Skanda...of the existence of Skanda or of Kataragam the Veddas are profoundly ignorant.". Bailey spoke of the Nilgala Veddas who at the time he wrote must have been in much the same condition as the Sitala Wanniya community is to-day.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yaka is also known, he is always looked upon as a Vedda hero famous for his prowess in killing samber, he is regarded as a powerful but benevolent spirit who never causes sickness, and who, when invoked and given certain offerings of food, grants luck in hunting. The Kataragam God on the other hand is everywhere held in awe, and acknowledged to be the most fearful of all gods.

Although we do not consider Kande Yaka and Skanda identical we are inclined to agree with Mr Parker that "the two may have been confounded by the Gangetic settlers, Skanda being also known as Kanda Kumara, and being a Hill-god." Any such confusion would be bound to react on the beliefs of the village Veddas or of those communities which later gave rise to the village Veddas. Mr Parker continues, "In *Ancient Ceylon* I have pointed out that Kataragama was an important station in the third century B.C., and suggested that the first settlers who landed near Kirinde... may have concluded from the similarity of names that he and Skanda were the same deity."

Since the above was written Mr Parker has been so good as to send us for perusal a part of the proof sheets of his work *Ancient Ceylon*. We may perhaps be allowed to comment on his main thesis that the Gale Yaka or Gale Deviyo is the god of the earliest inhabitants of Ceylon, and therefore of the Veddas.

In the first place Mr Parker's information concerning the Gale Deviyo was obtained from village Veddas, and the Tamil-speaking Veddas whom we call coast Veddas. He also states that the cult of this God is widely spread among Sinhalese villagers of the North Central and North Western Provinces.

We have noted that we found no trace of the Gale Yaka among the wilder Veddas, although allowed to participate in their ceremonies. However, we heard of Indigollae Yaka as an attendant on Kande Yaka, and although it may be that among the peasant Sinhalese and village Veddas these names are synonymous, this is certainly not the case among the less sophisticated Veddas. Again, Mr Parker states that the emblem of the God is the *Ran-haetta* the "Golden Bill-hook" (*Ancient Ceylon*, p. 189). This cannot be regarded as a Vedda emblem, for the bill-hook is unknown to the Veddas, who are essentially

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

bowmen, and among whom the arrow in its ordinary or ceremonial form is associated with the invocation of their dead and the other *yaku* whom they worship.

It therefore seems reasonable to suppose that the Gale Yaka is an immigrant god introduced by the Sinhalese to the village Veddas. The fact that politically organized Vèddas are mentioned in the Mahavansa as possessing a temple dedicated to the Vyādha Dēva[1]—the Vedda God—in the great city of Anuradhapura in the fourth century B.C. does not seem to us to bear upon the condition of the wilder Veddas, nor do we follow Mr Parker's identification of this God with the Gale Yaka. All the facts adduced by Mr Parker seem to us to be most readily explained by the interaction of Sinhalese and village Veddas as indicated in Chapter I.

[1] Mahavansa, Chapter X, p. 43 (Tournour's translation).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VIII

MAGIC

789 In the chapters upon religion we have described those ceremonies and observances of the Veddas which depend for their efficacy upon the successful appeal to some extra-human personal influence. In this section we shall discuss a number of actions which we consider magical, that is, actions which are expected to produce the required result automatically by virtue of their own intrinsic qualities.

One of the first things we noted during our stay in the Vedda country was the very slight part which magic played in the life of the Veddas. The more we saw of the people the more convinced we became of this. It seems to us that among the uncontaminated Veddas of two or three generations ago magical practices were almost entirely absent, and even at the present day the few remaining Veddas who have not been much exposed to foreign influence have scarcely any customs that are truly magical.

789 We include in this chapter the custom which formerly existed of eating a small piece of human liver in times of great stress, for even if this custom be not considered magical in the strict sense, it is clearly based on principles which lie at the root of many magical beliefs.

789 Since it is important to make thoroughly clear the absence of many forms of magic, we shall consider the condition of the different communities with regard to some of the most commonly occurring forms.

MAGIC DIRECTED AGAINST THE INDIVIDUAL.

754 This is completely absent except among the village Veddas, which is all the more surprising in view of the extraordinary

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

prevalence among the Sinhalese of magic having for its object the production of disease and death. Even the Henebedda Veddas, who have accepted a number of Sinhalese charms against animals, do not believe in this form of magic. The presence of a woman with wasting of both legs and contracture, the result of a long-standing ulcerative process of obscure origin which developed spontaneously, enabled this to be tested.

Although we discussed this woman's condition with a number of Veddas it was only once suggested, and then very doubtfully, that it might have been due to Sinhalese *kuniyam* magic[1], and it was clear that to the community generally this woman's disease was simply an accident, the origin of which they did not understand and did not trouble about.

Though Veddas, and especially Vedda women, are extremely shy there is no belief in the evil eye, or in the danger of being "overlooked."

Charms protective against Animals.

The bear is the only animal that the Veddas really fear, and there is no doubt that a number of Veddas and jungle-dwelling Sinhalese are mauled each year, indeed, at least one man in each community that we visited bore the marks of the bear's paws. Bear's flesh is not eaten and we doubt if Veddas ever voluntarily attack a bear, though there is no doubt that they sometimes kill one that has attacked them. Hence, the bear is called the "enemy" and his name is seldom mentioned nor is he represented among the rock paintings at Pihilegodagalge although the leopard, who steals the Vedda dogs and is hated in consequence, is represented. When questioned on the subject our male informants said nothing, but a number of women looked surprised and one said quite decidedly that no one would paint a bear. The words used in speaking of the bear are of

[1] That the *kuniyam* idea was foreign to the one Vedda who suggested it, was proved by the results of further questioning, when our informant gave an outline of one of the commonest Sinhalese beliefs as to the method of preparation and action of *kuniyam* charms. The reference to *kuniyam* in one of the "Vedda charms" published by Mr De Zoysa (*Journal Ceylon Branch R. A. S.*, Vol. VII, 1881, p. 103), cannot be taken to invalidate our conclusions, for many of these charms show unmixed Sinhalese influence.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The words used in speaking of the bear are of

825
789

interest from this standpoint. We believe that in most Vedda communities *walahe* the ordinary word for bear is seldom or never used[1], certainly this was the case at Sitala Wanniya where the word ordinarily used for bear was *hetta*. This word was not considered a dangerous word to use when all bears were at a distance, but when there was any possibility of coming in contact with a bear the animal was spoken of as *hatara*, the meaning of this word being "enemy" or "adversary." On one occasion when with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya we came to a hill covered with irregularly weathered rocks and known to be the haunt of bears, Handuna shouted *hatara yanda* ("enemy begone") before taking an abrupt turn in the track which here skirted a mass of rock. He repeated this sentence two or three times in a loud voice and assured us that we could now proceed without running the least risk of meeting a bear, and he himself led us round the rock with every appearance of careless ease, explaining that even if bears were about they would have heard what he had said and would have moved away. Two of the Henebedda Veddas exhibited the same appearance of carelessness when guiding us to a rock-shelter which though sometimes used by Veddas had not been tenanted for some time and bore obvious signs of being the lair of a bear. Sita Wanniya, our guide, explained his attitude by his belief in the power of the charms with which he was confident he could put any bear to flight.

These charms were recited in a loud voice, in fact the last words were almost shrieked and would doubtless have turned any bear, for it is a well known fact that the Sinhalese bear fears man and only attacks when surprised or cornered. This is shown by the circumstances in which the majority of accidents with bears occur. A man coming silently along a narrow jungle track suddenly meets a bear, or disturbs one grubbing behind a white ant heap. It is then that the bear, as much frightened as the man, charges inflicting severe though seldom fatal injuries.

[194]

[1] We met with one obvious exception to this rule, the Henebedda youths Sita Wanniya and Poromala used the word *walahe* quite freely even in the jungle, and old Poromala, half of whose face was torn away by a bear some years ago, has been nicknamed Walahe, the Bear. This name was, however, given him by the Sinhalese.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bailey's remarks on these charms, which unfortunately he does not quote, are extremely pertinent. "I shall never forget the first time one of these Vedda charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation.... I was chatting to an intelligent Vedda at my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms....I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant 'behegang! wirooowee! wirooowah!' which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success[1]."

A youth, Kaira of Bingoda, wore a number of bone beads on his waist string. He refused to sell these or exchange them for other beads or cloth, and though obviously not desirous of discussing them, stated that he had made them by grinding down the bones of a bear which he had found in the jungle. Although the remains of animals are not commonly found we did ourselves find the remains of one bear which we identified with certainty by the skull which was tolerably well preserved. The wearing of these beads as a matter of personal feeling by a single Vedda, if not exactly an example of magic, seems to us to be an example of the mode of thought from which magical practices spring and perhaps an example of an early experiment in magic, which under favourable circumstances might give rise to an amulet of bear's bone.

The Veddas of Sitala Wanniya have no charms against bears or other animals and the only charms directed towards this end that we could discover were a number obviously of Sinhalese origin which we collected at Henebedda. Probably these are not of very recent introduction, for we obtained some of them from old Poromala, nicknamed Walaha. Poromala is one of the oldest men of the community and is its leader as

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 189.

Seligmann & Seligmann 2-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AAS Vedda AAS

787
197

far as a leader can be said to exist, and he told us that he had learnt these invocations as a boy.

787
539

We regret that the names of our informants were not noted in every case in the following charms, but we give them where possible. The transliterations and translations of these charms as well as the comments on them are by Mr Parker who points out that the word *Ōn* occurring in a number of them is the Indian *Ōm*[1].

The first two charms are directed against bears.

Arini kurini, nāgu pata gē ja kurē, pak.

Venerable one of noble family (?). O Lord, born in a house in a rock-hole. Be off!

Mr Parker writes, "I do not know the meaning of the first two words of the spell, *arini kurini*. Probably *arini* is derived from *ārya* and the honorific ending *ni*, meaning 'the venerable one.' In that case the second word may be *kulīna*, 'of noble family,' and the whole translation would be as given. *Patā* for *pataka*, a hole, hollow or pool."

This charm was given us by Poromala of Bingoda who said he had known it a long time. Its meaning could not be ascertained in the field. The next charm was obtained from Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, who said it had been used in his youth by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas.

Ōn Dahasak Budunni kuru gaden upan Nila Kandigē kaḷi upan Nilada Nilida, nil, pā ādā, nil, pe ādī, pak.

Ōn! Born in the womb of Nila (the blue-black) Kandi, born from the heap of filth of a thousand Buddhas (or sages), whether (you are) Nilā or Nili (the blue-black one, m. or f.). Stop! Go thou (m.)! Stop! Go thou (f.). Be off!

The first part is ordinary Sinhalese; the orders to go are in Tamil.

1 "This word begins nearly all invocations, and it is stated in the *Vishnu Purāna* (Wilson, p. 273) that 'The syllable *Ōm* is defined to be the eternal monosyllable Brahma.' On p. 274 Wilson adds (f. n.) 'The daily prayers of the Brahmans commence with the formula *Ōm bhūr, bhuvah, svar*; *Ōm*, earth, sky, heaven.'

"In the *Sacred Laws of the Āryas* (Bühler), i. 4, 6 (Aphorisms of Āpastamba) it is said 'The syllable "*Ōm*" is the door of heaven.' At i. 4, 8 also 'And in common life, at the occasion of ceremonies performed for the sake of welfare, the sentences shall be headed by this word, as, for instance, "(*Ōm*) an auspicious day!" "(*Ōm*) welfare."'

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Veddā AX5

Mr Parker writes, "This looks like a very modern spell. The speaker treats the bear contemptuously; but I cannot explain the reference to the sages. He wishes the bear to understand the very inferior position he occupies, in his opinion." 789 539

The next charm applies to the elephant.

Ōn! Aeri singa wayirā naeri singā swadgayā, namā. Sk.

Ōn! Excited (or strong) elephant, angry one, stout elephant. Salutation! homage! Be off!

We could obtain no satisfactory translation of this charm. Mr Parker writes, "The difficult words in this spell are *aeri* and *naeri*. Such spells as these almost always commence by applying honourable epithets to the animals, and therefore a probable derivation of the former word is from *airya* (Skt root *ir*), with the meaning 'excited,' 'aroused,' or from *iraya* 'strong.'

"*Naeri* is perhaps derived from *nerijanawā*, to grow stout or obese, although the change from *e* to *ae* is unusual. The translation would then be as above.

"*Singa*, for *śṛiṅga*, a horn; compare *śṛiṅgin*, an elephant, derived from the same word.

"*Wayirawā*. This was translated in Ceylon as Bhairava, but the Sinhalese form for this deity is Bahirawā, and I prefer the meaning given above, from the Tamil *vayiram*, angry, and *avan*, he.

"*Swadgayā* appears literally to mean 'may you go to heaven,' *swargu*; but compare *swāgata* 'salutation' from *swa* and *agata*."

Mr De Zoysa gives the following charm as a protection against elephants but he does not give its origin.

Ichchata vallay
Puchchata vallay
Dela dewallay
Situ ayya situ.

A hanging member in front (trunk)
A hanging member behind (tail)
On two sides two hanging members (the two ears)
Stay, beast, stay!

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
537

The next two charms were given by Tissahami the Vedda Arachi as protections against the leopard and the buffalo respectively. They were said to be in use at Bandaraduwa but owing to an oversight this statement was not verified.

Ōn! Sinhan Sivatthe vedippulayā nam ata hata āru. Sī.

Ōn! O Lion, for the sake of Siva, if you are one who has escaped from shooting, may (your) foot and mouth be appeased. Be off!

The words of this charm are chiefly Tamil.

Sivatthe from *Śiva* and *atthaṇ*, on account of.

Vedippulayā for *Vedippiḷiyār* (honorific) from *Veḍi* "a shot," and *piḷi* to escape from a danger.

Āru, v. *āṟu*, "to cool," "be appeased," "repose."

Sī for *isi*, an expression used in driving away cats.

Mr Parker points out that "remembrance of the danger from which he himself escaped is expected to cause the leopard to sympathise with and to spare the man."

Ōn. Nā Wasrallīgē puta Rana Dēvatāwē Andungyā parawanā wanā indagena Kalugal rusiyāfayi tā anni maṇa no wagi. Hēwa ādā hewa.

Ōn. Rana Devata, son of Nāga-Wasrallī (*f.*), thou shalt strike the Kalugal (Black-rock) Ascetic who sits on the Andun-giri (Black-hill) mountain; not me. Be off, be off!

Mr Parker does not know anything about the Rana Devata (Godling of Fighting) or his mother, or the Ascetic, but the charm suggests to him that the Devata is believed to inspire the buffalo to attack men.

Bailey gives the following charm against an animal called *okma* which he says is the wild boar, though Mr Parker considers that the *okma* is the buffalo and this view is also taken by Mr De Zoysa. We are inclined to agree with them and therefore quote this charm here.

Iri deyyanni ākma
Sanda deyyanni ākma
Pasi Budunni ākma
Situ ākma situ

Okma of the Sun-god!
Okma of the Moon-god!
Okma of the Pase Budu!
Stay, *Okma*, stay!

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The great interest of this spell is that Bailey obtained it from the Nilgala Veddas over fifty years ago, and that he was able to trace the Sinhalese charm against toothache—from which it was derived.

781
539

Iru deyend ayā!
Sanda deyend ayā!
Passi Budund ayā!
Dati nositoo dat ayā!
Worm of the sun-god!
Worm of the moon-god!
Worm of the Passe Buddha!
Stay not in the tooth, thou tooth-worm.

Bailey recognised the importance of this discovery, for he wrote, "These are identical; yet the Veddahs and the Sinhalese certainly do not associate so closely as to borrow one another's charms....The term okma I can get no satisfactory explanation of. It is not Sinhalese, certainly I assume it means 'wild boar,' and this is the charm to arrest a boar in the path; but it is not the term used by the Veddahs for a boar in ordinary conversation. The allusion to the Pase, or Pache Buddha, is curious as occurring in both....The other Veddah charms are, I believe, quite unlike those of the Sinhalese, but on that point I am still making enquiries...[1]."

The next two charms are against snakes and were obtained from Poromala (Walaha) of Henebedda and Poromala of Bingoda.

It is necessary for the efficacy of the first of these charms that a string of human hair be bound round the limb above the bite. The hand of the operator is then carried down the limb repeatedly as he mutters the charm, the thumb nail being flicked against the ground each time the hand has passed down the leg[2]. This is to drive the poison into the ground. The string of hair is not the purposeful beginning of rational treatment; we believe that it was not considered necessary to tie the hair

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 304.
There can be little doubt that this and similar charms crept into the beliefs of the wilder Veddas at the same time and in the same way as the *yaku* of village Veddas, e.g. Unapane Kirianama, became known to the wilder Veddas.
[2] Snake bites in the jungle are invariably on the leg.

787
539

string at all tightly and our informants were perfectly certain that the benefit derived from this treatment (which Peremuna around us he had soon succeed more than once) was due to the virtue of the hair of the head which might equally well be that of the snake's victim, or of any one else.

Mantra. Nayin giri kihiri, polangus dewun kihiri, hewanda mila kihiri, panipuli sapiyin in ow gani, is gani, dala gani, mise hari mata polangin dimmiti.

Translation: I set fire to cobras, I coil up (or split up) polangus (*Dabia russelli*), I make carry of hawanilas (*Bungarus sp.*). From five hundred snakes the eyes are knocked out, the hands are beaten, the teeth are knocked out, and the poison is sent down to the earth. Hamba!

"*Nawa* is a Pali expression, borrowed from Buddhist works etc. in which it takes the place occupied by *ow* in India. It is derived from the Skt. root *nam*, to bend, bow etc.

"*Mata* is the colloquial word for carry; also for meat, but the latter word is not suitable here. The Sinhalese never say 'I made meat of' anything.

"*Dewunda* from *da*, the conjunction 'and' in combination with *hewanda*. The last two words of the charm should be *polangindu hewanda*."

Ahanta guru hewanda guru? Aha(ra) ta guru iru sanda da guru.

Polanta guru hewanda guru? Polanta guru Mihiri dewun.

Nayinta guru hewanda guru? Nayida guru Nāga guru.
Vittta guru hewa(da) guru? Vittta guru mamayi guru.
Vit hain tib guru mitti. Me dat gurug ewa yayi dit.
Pidag vit diru vit. Tō nalana ti dangin hit ewa.
Mata dewa vira hewanna, vit nati hahu Gangāpurāja yāwa.
Ōn wanā.

The preceptor of the sky, who is the preceptor?

The preceptor of the sky, the Sun and the Moon are the two preceptors.

The preceptor of the earth, who is the preceptor?

The preceptor of the earth, the great Goddess Mahāmantrawa is the preceptor.

And the preceptor of the cobras, who is the preceptor?

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

The preceptor of the cobras, the Naga is the preceptor.
The preceptor of poison, who is the preceptor?
The preceptor to poison, I am the preceptor.

For casting down poison (there is) the mother of the teacher of the three worlds (Buddha).

The preceptor of this country will go to another country (after death).

The poison of Polangas is the limit of poison. If thou, not knowing (me), shouldst make (it) for (thy) two eyes, I will bind (on thee) the poisons which I know, going (afterwards, out of thy reach) to the excellent king of many *garuda*, who have no poison. *Ōn!* salutation!

"A *guru* is a teacher or preceptor, one who has complete knowledge of the subject. A student's teacher is his *guru*. The word is also especially used to indicate a Brahman who is thoroughly acquainted with the Vedas and the forms of religious ceremonies, and who acts as a king's chaplain. Brihaspati, the deity of the planet Jupiter, was the *guru* of the Gods[1].

"Mahikantawa is the Earth Goddess, or personification of the earth.

"*Nāga* are supernatural beings who take either a human form or that of cobras, at will. I think the reference to Mayā, the mother of Buddha, means that by bringing into the world such a son she has reduced the poison of evil deeds and thoughts, which are compared to those of the poisonous snakes. The poison of the polanga (*Daboia russelli*) is said to be the most powerful of all snake poisons. It is stated that persons sometimes die within five minutes after being bitten by this snake, and usually within half an hour. There is an idea that some snakes have the power of projecting poison from their eyes.

"The *garuda* is a fabulous bird which feeds on poisonous snakes, especially cobras."

We failed to obtain any coherent account of the meaning of

[1] In the *Ordinances of Manu* (Burnell's translation) ii, 1 and 2, it is stated "That Brahman is called Guru who performs according to rule the rites on conception and the like, and feeds (the child) with rice (for the first time)." At ii, 149 it is said, "He who confers the benefit of the Veda on anyone, be it little or be it much, he should know him to be here his Guru, by reason of that benefit through the Veda."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

this charm in the field and are indebted to Mr Parker for the following explanation. "I think I understand the meaning of this invocation quite clearly. The reciter says 'As the Sun and Moon are the preceptors, or the beings or deities who have a complete knowledge of the sky; as Mahikantawa has complete knowledge of the earth; as Nagas have complete knowledge of cobras, so I have complete knowledge of all poisons.' He first wishes to impress the snake with a belief in his powers, and then he threatens it."

The next charm given by Poromala of Bingoda cures the bite of the centipede, but neither Poromala nor Tissahami the Vedda Arachi could tell us the meaning of the spell.

Nāngara guru, nāngara guru, nāngara potakun aeragena visahuṇ.

Man atu bindagena, rattaeyā pāgāgena, aeli moḍarā piṭa siṭagena, api guruṇ sikikaragena, mama yanne visa bāgena, tō nedana tō daesta kali nam maṇ daena visa baemnaṇ, eyin tachas(?) visē naeta baku Guruppurāja yanam. Ōn namō!

Vile preceptors, vile preceptors, poisonous ones taking (with you) vile young ones!

I, breaking branches, trampling on the Centipede, sitting on the back of the White Peacock, reflecting on our preceptors, I will go (only after) casting out the poisons. If thou, not knowing (me), shouldst make (poison) for (thy) two eyes[1], I will bind (on thee) the poisons which I know, after (?) that going to the excellent king of many *garudas*, who have no poison. *Ōn*, Salutation!

"The centipede is here treated with much less respect than the vertebrates, and the last two words must be said ironically. The breaking of branches refers to the custom of making offerings of leafy twigs when asking for the protection of the forest Deities. I do not know the white peacock, *aeli monarā*. (The bird is sometimes colloquially called *moṇḍarā*.) It may be the peacock that is the riding animal or *vahana* of the God Skanda, which is carved at the Tanjore temple with a snake hanging from its bill. Peacocks kill centipedes as well as snakes.

"The preceptors on whom the exorcist reflects will be those mentioned in the spell for cobras—that is Buddha, the Sun and Moon, Mahikantawa, and the Nagas who are guardian deities. Possibly also Skanda and Ayiyanar, the Guardian Forest Deities

[1] Another reading is, If thou (even) unwittingly, hast made (poison) for (thy) two eyes.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the Sinhalese. I do not understand *taekae*, there may have been some mistake in writing down the charm." 789 539

Charms to Obtain Food.

Neither amulets nor verbal formulae are used to insure straight shooting or the killing of deer or sambar, the two animals providing the greater part of the flesh consumed by the Veddas; nor are there amulets or charms to obtain success in pig hunting. Doubtless this is because the *yaku* when properly invoked give success in these matters. There are, however, no *yaku* whose special business it is to give success in the monkey drives which are, or were until recently, practised, and we found that certain formulae were sung by the members of the driving party, and in some case muttered by the men who waited in ambush for the monkeys to be driven to them. And we were told that the singing or reciting of these formulae was necessary to the success of the drive. 789 224

Mr Parker uses the diminutive "doggie" in the translations of the two following charms collected at Bandaraduwa in order to retain the sense of the originals, which clearly indicates that the reciter is speaking coaxingly to the monkeys. The words of the charm are literally "dog" and "bitch," the use of which in the translation would give a wrong impression. In one charm the hunters call the monkeys to them assuring them that they are quite safe, for certainly they cannot shoot them. 789 224 539

Charm sung while driving Wandura monkeys (Bandaraduwa).

Ammā maya nā kolandāni
Kolandan handā ṭiṭa yanni
Ekī kiyalā innā kāṭā,
Ēkit awalā yanḍama yanni.
"Taek, taek," kiyalā wāren hallā.
"Kik, kik," kiyalā wāren hallā.
Nāwini nāgan handā ṭiṭā,
Ēkiṭa dunnak widala hādoyi
Ēkī yanḍama yanḍama yanni.
Keliyen keliyaṭa wāren hallā,
Keli madalāgena dhunagena wāre.
Mother mine, the leaf-clad chief,
Pops behind a leafy trunk;

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
224
534

Tells another who is there;
She, excited, runs away.
"Tack, tack," crying, doggie come;
"Kik, kik," crying, doggie come.
In the Na-tree forest hid,
Safe behind a banyan trunk,
With a bow she can't be shot,
Setting off to go, to go.
Playing, playing, doggie come.
Stop your games and running come.

Charm sung while driving Rilawa monkeys (Bandaraduwa).

Ammā māyē mā rālāni
Rāsan handā pīṭa yanni
"Rā, Rā" kiyala wāren hallā.
Burutak handī pīṭa yannā.
Keliyen keliyaṭa duwagana wāru,
Keli maḍalāgena duwagena wāru.

Mother mine, the lovely chief,
Pops behind a cotton trunk,
"Ro, Ro" crying, doggie come.
Behind a satin stem she goes.
Playing, playing, running come;
Stop your games and running come.

The Sinhalese heading of this charm, collected at Henebedda (where it was dictated by Poromala of Bingoda) runs *Wanduruṇ nawa tanaka wiya*, the translation of which is "said at a place where *wanduru* stay."

Ātu surā damanni
Ō man handīṭa pāninni.
"Ah, Oh," kiyā wārē nam
Kola surā damanni,
Mē man handī naṭanni.
Bala ziṭā aeyi dennā?

The branches they scratch off and throw down,
They spring on to that trunk (?).
Come, indeed, saying "Ah, Oh."
They scratch off and throw down the leaves.
They dance on this trunk (?).
Why did they stop and look, both of them?

789

We could find no trace of any ceremony having for its object the control of the supply of game and honey or the increase of the number of yams and edible berries. It is assumed that

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

these are beyond human control, though the *yaku*, who in an indefinite way are considered to be concerned with them, give success in hunting, yam digging and honey gathering. 789

Nor could we discover any trace of weather magic in spite of the preference for rain indicated in a number of the invocations given in Chapter X, as well as by the remark on this subject made by Handuna, quoted upon page 84.

We could not discover among the wilder Veddas any magic connected with the bow and arrow, and certainly these were never personified or named. We, however, obtained the following "song" from the village Veddas of Bintenne. It was taken down just as we were breaking camp and so no special attention was paid to it, as we were assured that it was of the same nature as other songs we had collected. Mr Parker, who has provided the following transliteration and translation, points out that, in his opinion, this "song" must be regarded as a charm said over an arrow in order to kill monitor lizards. To our suggestion that this song might be sung mockingly to a particularly bad shot, urging him to try again and see if he could not hit the lizard in some part of its body, Mr Parker replied that this did not seem probable to him. "If this were addressed to a person who was a bad shot I hardly think expressions would be used such as *i maela* which would then require to be translated 'younger brother of arrows.'" We accordingly treat this formula as a charm and include it in the present chapter. 789 539

Mundi Kanda pita wattirt gê,
Ehata widapa hiri hurê.
Ettama arapa i maela,
Pitata accen palāga.
Etanama arapa i maela,
Tommata lastten (palāga).
Ettama arapa i mela,
Tommata accen palāga.
Etanama arapa i maela,
Bellata lastten palāga.
Etanama arapa i maela,
Badata lastten palāga.
Etanama arapa i maela,
Kihila maddan laruiga.

789
539

Go and drop behind the body of the monitor lizard ! ?
Pierce it, dear cousin.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle (or edge) of the back.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle of the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the neck.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the stomach.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and fix (yourself) in the middle of the armpit.

"In order to rhyme all the lines ought to end in a long a.

"*Ettamá* is an evident mistake for *etanama*.

"*Tommá* is for *tunsba*, a Vaedi word for tail, the Sinhalese is *tubu*.

"*Accen* and *aeccen* are for *assen*, abl. of *assa*, angle or corner.

"*Laetten* is a word I have not previously met with. The only probable derivation with which I am acquainted is the Tamil *iratta*, Sin. *retta*, double, two-fold.

"*Maelá* means younger brother.

"*Kiri hurá*, lit. milk cousin, simply means dear cousin."

Love Charms.

832 Love magic or charms to compel love do not seem to exist among the wilder Veddas, though in the Bintenne we were told that women may charm the waist strings they give to their husbands, in order to ensure their fidelity.

Amulets.

301 Before discussing the existence of these it is necessary to determine to what extent the Veddas now wear, or formerly wore, ornaments.

Disregarding the stories current among the Sinhalese that the Veddas formerly had valuable jewellery and pots of pure gold—legends of which the Veddas themselves are quite

[errata — see p. xx. — Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ignorant—the evidence for the use of jewellery or personal ornaments worn for their own sake is limited to the former wearing of ear ornaments by the Vedda women. Bailey states that the women "have their ears pierced and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory[1]," and this was confirmed by our old Sinhalese informant, whose evidence as to the former condition of the Veddas has been given in Chapter II. It seems that men did not wear ear ornaments, although we met some village Veddas (Dambani) who wore earrings, and a few men in other communities were seen with pierced ears. This point of view is confirmed by Nevill who wrote, "Men occasionally wore a few large beads on their waist string, if they could afford it, but no other jewels," and he describes the women's ear ornaments as "ear-jewels, the size of a man's thumb made of ivory, white horn, or bone, and carved or etched...worn through the lobe of the ear[2]."

At the present time among the wilder Veddas neither men nor women wear beads or ornaments of any kind, though the women are pleased to accept beads as presents.

It is otherwise among the more sophisticated Veddas of the Bintenne. At Omuni all the women and girls wore beads, and though they could not account for their origin, we were able to ascertain that they had been in their possession at least five generations. They descended usually from grandmother to granddaughter, some strings being given to each girl-child at birth, the rest being usually given when the girl married, or on the death of the grandmother. These beads are of glass, mostly red though some are green and a few white. They have been identified by Mr C. H. Read as 17th century Venetian beads, and were doubtless a present from some notable who required assistance from the Veddas as he passed through their country.

This summarises all we have been able to learn concerning the use of personal ornaments among the Veddas, and though Nevill states, presumably of the Veddas of the Bintenne, that they "delight to deck their hair with bright or fragrant flowers," we were unable to find any trace of this practice occurring

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 284. [2] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

301 among the wilder Veddas at the present day. It therefore appears that although beads are worn as ornaments by the members of certain communities in the Bintenne there is no [184] evidence for their use as such among the Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road.

301 751 We may next consider certain facts which seem to indicate that beads may be sometimes treated as amulets, or at least as having magical power. At Bandaraduwa where there has been a great deal of Sinhalese influence, one woman wore a piece of knotted string round her throat which had been charmed and put on by a Sinhalese to cure her of some ailment. When we gave her a string of beads she was very pleased and immediately broke the old charmed string and put the beads round her neck in place of it.

At Bendiyagalge all the women were particularly anxious for us to give beads to their children and immediately put these round their necks, but those given to themselves were not usually put on in our presence. In both these cases there is only the suggestion that beads were regarded as anything more than ornaments, and this also holds good as regards the beads of bear's bone worn by Kaira of Bingoda already recorded, but in the following cases the relation of beads to the *yaku* is perfectly clear. The women of Unuwatura Bubula, though they possessed beads of the same kind as those worn by the 301 women of Omuni, were afraid to wear them, and gave them 791 to the shaman to keep and use in *yaku* ceremonies. In this village we found that women would not accept red beads as presents because "they were afraid," though they readily took the white beads offered them, and the shaman when dancing to the Alut Yakini wore cross shoulder straps of old beads, and similar beads were kept for Indigollae Yaka.

There is equally strong evidence of the definite association 301 of beads with the *yaku* in other communities, though the reason 782 for this association could not be determined. At Sitala Wanniya a band of bast was placed upon the offering to the Rahu Yaku, and our informants said that they would have used beads instead of the bast had they possessed them. At the same place when preparing for the dance to Dola Yaka, who gives

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

success in honey gathering, the shaman asked us for two strings of beads. These beads he placed over betel leaves upon two arrows thrust in the centre of the dancing ground which were surrounded by betel leaves offered to the *yaka*. These beads were said to represent the rough rope of creeper with which the green twigs forming the smoker were secured and the rope by which the smoker was lowered to the comb. 301 782

When it is remembered that Veddas do not tattoo or paint themselves, and have never been seen wearing any kind of seeds as ornaments, it seems reasonable to assume that where beads are sought after by the Veddas they are valued for their supposed magical properties. 304 302 301

In conclusion we may give the only perfectly clear instance of a Vedda wearing an amulet with which we are acquainted. The shaman of Bandaraduwa wore on his wrist a small silver cylinder such as is commonly used to contain a written charm. The cylinder was empty and had never contained a charm, but the shaman told us that he wore it in order to be cured of an illness from which he had suffered formerly, and that presently he would give the cylinder to some pilgrim proceeding to Kataragam in order that he might deposit it in the temple there. 751

The Eating of Human Liver.

Every group of Veddas except the most sophisticated village Veddas believe that it was formerly the custom for a man to carry in his betel pouch a small piece of dry human liver. But the majority of our informants were not clear as to the exact reason for doing this, though they were all agreed that it had something to do with raising a man's valour and making him strong to bear trouble. It was essential that the liver should be taken from a man killed by the individual who proposed to carry a portion of the dried liver in his pouch. When a man had been killed the slayer would open his belly and take out a small portion of his liver which he would dry in the sun in a secret place. This custom appears to have ceased about three generations ago, but the following instance, said to have occurred about fifty years ago, was given us at Bandaraduwa. 789 266

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
266

The headman of a small group of Kovil Vanamai Veddas killed a Sinhalese simply because he required a piece of human liver to keep in his betel pouch. In spite of this example the Bandaraduwa people could not tell us exactly how it was used, and it was only at Sitala Wanniya that it was ascertained that the purpose of the dried liver was to make men strong and confident to avenge insults. A man would bite off a piece of the dried liver and chew it, saying to himself: "I have killed this man; why should I not be strong and confident and kill this other one who has insulted me?" As far as we could understand a Vedda might thus work himself up into a condition of berseker fury, but this was only done after very serious insult, as when a man's wife had been carried off or been unfaithful, or when his bow and arrows had been stolen or an attempt made to take his land or caves[1].

[1] It was doubtless an exaggerated account of this practice that led Gillings to accuse the Veddas of cannibalism (*Journ. Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, 1853).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER IX

CEREMONIAL DANCES

535
786

WITH a single possible exception the dances of the Veddas are ceremonial and are performed with the object of becoming possessed by a *yaka* in the manner that has already been stated in Chapter VI where the subjective phenomena of possession are discussed. The majority of the ceremonial dances described in this chapter are pantomimic, and so well illustrate the objective manifestations of the condition of possession that little need be said on this subject, though it may be well to repeat our conviction that there is no considerable element of pretence in the performance of the shaman. The sudden collapse which accompanies the performance of some given act of the pantomime, usually an important event towards which the action has been leading up, is the feature that is most difficult to explain. According to the Veddas themselves it occurs when a *yaka* suddenly leaves the individual possessed, but it does not invariably accompany the cessation of possession, and it may equally occur when the individual becomes possessed, as at the Bandaraduwa *Nae Yaku* ceremony described on pages 233 to 237, where the first sign of possession shown by the brothers of the dead man was their collapse into the arms of their supporters. This can be explained as the result of expectancy, they expected to be overcome by the spirit of the deceased, and in fact this happened. In this connection we may refer to a Sinhalese "devil ceremony" which we witnessed in the remote jungle village of Gonagolla in the Eastern Province. One of us has described this ceremony elsewhere[1], but we would here

[1] Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journal Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXVIII, 1908.

[p.209]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
786

specially refer to the condition of the *katandirale* or "devil dancer" when dealing with the dangerous demon Riri Yaka. Although he took special precautions to prevent the demon entering him, that is to say to avoid possession by the demon, he almost collapsed, requiring to be supported in the arms of an assistant as under the assaults of the *yaka* he tottered with drawn features and half open quivering lips and almost closed eyes. Yet avowedly he was not possessed by the demon, but on the contrary was successful in warding off possession. His whole appearance was that of a person suffering from some amount of shock and in a condition of partial collapse, while the rapidity with which he passed into deep sleep immediately Riri Yaka, and his almost equally dreaded consort Riri Yakini, had left him, also favour the genuine character of his sufferings, concerning which he said that although he had never completely lost consciousness he had been near doing so and had felt giddy and nauseated[1]. Here we have a condition only a degree short of possession, occurring in an individual who not only hoped and expected to avoid being possessed by the spirit whom he invoked to come to the offering, but took elaborate precautions to prevent it. Had he become possessed it would have been a disaster which would have led to his illness and perhaps death, and would certainly have frustrated the object of the ceremony. Here there can have been no desire to lose consciousness, yet as the result of anticipation of the attack of the *yaka* the *katandirale* came near collapse.

This in our opinion throws a flood of light on Vedda possession and the collapse which may take place at its beginning, but it does not directly explain the collapse often experienced when a *yaka* leaves a person. But here we may seek assistance in the idea of analogy; when a spirit leaves the body, collapse and unconsciousness, permanent (death) or temporary (swoon, fainting fits or sleep), ensue. When the *yaka* leaves the body which for the time it has entirely

[1] During the condition of partial collapse the dancer's face was covered with sweat and so felt clammy, but this may only have been the result of his previous exertions; his pulse was small and rapid and was certainly over 120 though the conditions prevented it being accurately counted.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

dominated, what more natural than that collapse should occur or be feigned by the less honest or susceptible practitioners? There is no doubt that the Vedda ceremonies make considerable demand on the bodily powers of the dancers, but this is not so great as in the case of the Sinhalese devil ceremony of Gonagolla, since the Vedda ceremonies are of shorter duration—none we saw lasted over two hours and the majority certainly did not take so long. In spite of this we noted, after more than one ceremony, that the shaman was genuinely tired, and this was the case at Sitala Wanniya, where Kaira appeared actually exhausted at the end of the Pata Yaka ceremony. 535 786

We may now refer to the steps of the Vedda dance. The Drs Sarasin have described the steps of the arrow dance of the Henebedda Veddas in an elaborate and rather formal manner. We shall shortly quote their description of this dance and meanwhile content ourselves with summarising the movements of the Vedda dances. Essentially, these appear to consist of steps taken alternately with each foot, each step being followed by a couple of pats on the ground delivered with the ball of the foot that is in advance, and after each such movement with right or left foot a half turn is made. The rhythm of the dance is kept by swaying the body gently from the waist, the hands (when not beating the body or holding an object) being allowed to swing freely; with each half turn forward the body is inclined forward and the head bent so that the hair falls over the face, and with each half turn backwards the head is thrown backwards. The dance always begins slowly and gently, the back foot still touching the ground while that foot with which the step has been made performs the double pat, so that just at first it is little more than a shuffle, soon, however, the feet are raised more and more and longer paces are taken, the back foot no longer remains on the ground while the double pat is made and the swaying and bending of the body is greatly increased. 535

When the *yaka* enters the person of a shaman it is customary for him to inspect the offerings, and if he is pleased—which is almost invariably the case—he will show his pleasure. This is usually done by bending the head low over the offering, then 535 787

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 787 springing away and shouting "Ah! Ah!" while taking short deep breaths. The natural outcome of the *yaku's* gratitude is a promise of favours to the community. When prophesying good luck, the shaman places one or both hands on the participant's shoulders, or if he carries an *aude* or other sacred object, the shaman holds this against the latter's chest or, more rarely, presses it on the top of his head. His whole manner is agitated and he usually shuffles his feet, speaks in a hoarse somewhat guttural voice taking short deep breaths, and punctuates his remarks with a deep "Ah! Ah!"

787 778 535 With regard to the arrows and other special objects which are used when invoking the *yaku*, in which class we include such bower-like structures as the *alutyakaguma*, the *runwala* and the *kolomaduwa*, all described in this Chapter, we must point out that these simply act as conductors and resting places for the *yaku*. It was stated that Kande Yaka could not and would not come when invoked, unless his arrow were held, and the same idea accounts for the arrow dance, performed round an arrow struck in the ground in order to obtain game. Again the leaves in the bower-like structures with the aid of which the *yaku* were invoked were considered the resting place of the *yaku* which they left in order to enter the shaman. The number of *yaku* who came to the bower was not thought to be limited to those who possessed the shaman, on the contrary, important *yaku* were thought to bring their attendants (*piriwari*), who remained among the leaves which their lord left to possess the shaman, and it was to drive away the *yaku* who might unduly prolong their stay in the bower prepared for them, that the leaves were beaten and more or less stripped from the bowers at the end of the ceremony.

778 Before leaving the subject we would point out that though *yaku* might be spoken of as arrow-yaka (Itale Yaka), bow-yaka (Dunne Yakini) and so forth, such names do not imply that the *yaka* in question is immanent in the object or is believed to stand in specially close relationship to all objects of that class. In the case of Itale Yaka the idea was "the *yaka* who is invoked by means of an arrow"; in the case of Dunne Yakini the name simply refers to the skill of the nameless heroine who killed the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

boar wounded by the companions of Bandura, as is related in the Bambura Yaka dance.

The Henebedda Veddas washed before performing or assisting at the *hiriharaha* seen by us, and every Vedda who invoked the *yaku*, either let down his hair before beginning to dance or while dancing, in the latter instance presumably as he felt "possession" coming upon him. Many Veddas put on the *hangala* before dancing, this being a length of white cloth worn round the waist as is shown in many of the photographs reproduced in this chapter. Presumably this was not worn for the arrow dance, which is especially performed by unsuccessful hunters without any special preparation. We do not think that a leaf girdle was ever worn as a ceremonial garment when dancing. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya said that at some time, which he put more than three generations ago, there were Veddas, whom he called *Attukola Vedda*, who lived so remote from the Sinhalese that they had no cloth and so always wore leaf girdles, but he was quite confident that no Veddas who had cloth ever wore such girdles especially to invoke the *yaku*. This agrees with Nevill's conclusions[1] and does not conflict with the experience of the Sarasins.[2]

The Roman numbers in parentheses after references to invocations in the accounts of the ceremonies described in this chapter refer to the invocations given in Chapter X.

The Arrow Dance.

This, the simplest of the Vedda dances, has been described at length by the Drs Sarasin who saw it danced by "Veddas of the Nilgala district[3]." We have already quoted Bailey's account of the arrow dance as he found it danced by the ancestors of these Veddas two generations ago, and Monsieur Emile

[1] "I have especially questioned the best informed Vaeddas whether leaves were worn, either at ceremonies or otherwise. They all say yes, they were worn once, when cotton cloth was hard and dear to get, by those who lived where there were no Rui trees. They were only worn by the poorest, and from necessity, not choice. The leaves chosen were those of shrubs, the branches of which ended in rather pendulous sprays of foliage, and these were tucked under the waist string as a sort of apron." (*Op. cit.* p. 188.)

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 387—389.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 312—314.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 Deschamps has given an account of the same dance as it occurs among the village Veddas of Bintenne, while it has also been mentioned by other authors including Davy and Tennant.

Figures 1 and 2 of Plate XXVI show this dance as we saw it performed at Henebedda. An arrow was thrust into the ground and round this the Veddas circled, singing an invocation and keeping time by slapping their flanks with their open hands. The Drs Sarasin have carefully analysed the movements performed in this dance, and the following account is taken from their work.

"Only men dance. They form a circle round an arrow thrust into the ground; they do not touch one another and move slowly round the arrow....Each dancer turns once towards the left, in doing which he keeps the right leg motionless and steps convulsively forwards on the ground with the left, keeping time and giving the body a slight jerk backwards; then when he has executed a half turn he remains standing on the left leg and makes spasmodic trembling movements with the right as he pushes off from the ground. Thus continually executing half turns, and after completing one half turn using that leg which has just been moved as a support, the dancer slowly proceeds backwards in a circle round the arrow. Each dancer pays no regard to his neighbour while executing his circling movements, his sole object being to get round the arrow in the manner described; so that all the dancers are not making precisely the same movement at one time. For example, if one dancer turns on his left leg and his neighbour on his right leg at the same time then it happens that the two sometimes have their faces and sometimes their backs towards each other....Although the legs, as described, come comparatively little and at all events not extensively into play, there being no jumping or hopping...the arms are moved the more vigorously. As the body swings round they are extended and flung about and at the conclusion of the turn they are violently flung away from the body; after the performance of every half turn the dancers beat hard on their bellies, which take the place of musical instruments of which they have none....The head which

535

Fig. 1. Arrow dance (Henebédda)

Fig. 2. Arrow dance (Henebédda)

[facing p. 214]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

is thrown back at the completion of every turn is flung forward and downward in the direction of the movement while this is taking place. In doing this the mane-like bush of hair is tossed forwards like a horse's tail over the face; subsequently on the completion of every half turn it is tossed back again as the head is flung back, so that the hair is constantly being swung through the air from the right back to the left front and vice versa; this happens independently of the direction of movement round the arrow....As the dancers at the same time gasp out loudly a monotonous song with which their movements keep time—they work themselves up into a state of extreme nervous excitement and the sweat pours down them; the beating on the stomach becomes louder and louder...then after a time one after another falls full length on the ground exhausted, and remains on his back for a time still uttering howls between his gasps and trembling convulsively at the same time in all his limbs. Then suddenly all rise at once and the dance is at an end[1]."

535

Although this account shows that the dance performed for the Sarasins was rather more vigorously enacted than the one danced for our benefit, it recalls in violence of gesture the figures of a dance which we saw at Wellampelle among the village Veddas. One of these men evidently knew what was expected of him by strangers, for almost directly he saw us he began to dance and soon lay quivering on the ground. Obviously such exhibitions as this are not examples of genuine possession, nor was the arrow dance we saw at Henebedda which was danced at our request, and we believe that all, or almost all, the arrow dances described in literature must simply be regarded as more or less accurate rehearsals[2].

Further, the accounts given by various authors show that the dances they saw were danced with varying degrees of frenzy, the difference in some instances being so marked as to give force to the Sarasins' suggestion that the arrow dance varies in detail in different communities.

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 512, 513.

[2] The pantomime of honey gathering enacted for our benefit by the Henebedda Veddas, and those of Sitala Wanniya, show that the Veddas are good actors and enter thoroughly into the spirit of the parts they take.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann I-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 787 We were told at Bandaraduwa that if men had no luck in hunting they might thrust an arrow into the ground, decorate it with leaves of the *na* tree (*Mesua ferruginea*) or the *mille*, and dance round it. If a shaman were present, which was not necessary, he would naturally take part in this, and any number might participate. This dance was performed at our request, the shaman and a Vedda called Tambia taking part in it. Two clusters of *na* leaves were tied to an arrow, one just below the feathers and another immediately above the blade. This was struck in the ground (Plate XXVII, fig. 1) and the dancers slowly moved round it singing an invocation (No. XV). Soon they both became possessed, the shaman falling into the arms of his supporter (Plate XXVII, fig. 2), almost immediately after which he came to one of the onlookers and promised him a sambar deer if he would hunt in a westerly direction early the next morning. Several times during the dance the performers touched the leaves tied to the upper part of the arrow, and bending low gathered them up to their faces (as in Plate XXVIII, fig. 1), while their hair mingled with the leaves. The shaman afterwards explained that the *yaka* first came to the arrow and the leaves tied to it, and then entered the persons of the dancers who became possessed. Before the *yaka* left the dancers beat low over the arrow shaking their heads violently, and after the dance both men salaamed to the arrow.

776 The *yaka* invoked in this dance was sometimes called Itale Yaka (Arrow Yaka), and though identical with Kande Yaka, there was nevertheless a tendency to think of Itale Yaka as a separate spirit, who was not so generally well disposed as Kande Yaka. We discovered this by the shaman refusing to sing the invocation into the phonograph when we were surrounded by children, lest his attention being attracted, the *yaka* should come, which might be dangerous to the little ones. It must be [97] remembered that the Bandaraduwa community had been much exposed to foreign influence, so that there is nothing surprising in their *yaka* having to a certain extent assumed the dangerous complexion of Sinhalese and Tamil demons.

535 Although the arrow dance originally had, and still has, a religious significance, since it is danced to procure game and as

535
787

Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony. Arrow with *Na* leaves attached (Bandaraduwa)*

Fig. 2. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*

[facing p.216]

535
787

Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*

[516]

Fig. 2. The Adukku Denawa ceremony (Henebedda)

[facing p.216]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535

a means of propitiating Kande Yaka or interesting him in the hunters, it may also be danced for pleasure. In this case it seems to lose much of its peculiar character and tends to degenerate into a dance made up of fragments of the dances proper to a number of different ceremonies, which varies in constitution according to the fancy of the dancers. But that such performances are derived from ceremonial dances is shown by the imitation of the actions of the shaman which one or more of the dancers may introduce.

The dance we cite next was performed in the courtyard of the Public Works Department bungalow at Ambilinne, where we gave a night's lodging to four of the Henebedda Veddas. These were some of the first Veddas we met and the dance they performed that evening was the first Vedda dance we had seen, and it was not until we had seen a number of Vedda ceremonies that we recognised that the dance in question was a parody of their own religious dances, performed for their own amusement after what was to them an unusually good meal[1].

After a little singing three or four men began to dance, the time being about 9 p.m. Their action was quite unconstrained, and each man went his own way, though a rhythm was supplied by the song refrain and the slapping of their hands on their chests and flanks. In the opening figure, in which an arrow was planted in the ground, the performers began to move round it right hands inwards and clockwise, but very soon one performer was circling anti-clockwise between the other two going clockwise. The two performers who had not planted their arrows held these in their hands in front of them, one hand lightly grasping the blade and the other the head of the arrow, while with body somewhat bent forward they moved the arrows from side to side as they danced. The steps were taken with legs tolerably wide apart, the weight of the body being supported on one leg while the other was scraped along the ground by somewhat tilting the pelvis. This movement took place alternately on the two legs, though sometimes a double pat was substituted

[1] In this respect our dance resembles that witnessed by M. Deschamps (*Les Pays des Veddas*, pp. 387, 388), which was danced spontaneously by a number of village Veddas of Hatamana.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 for the simple scrape of the ground. After some time when the circle had become quite broken the three dancers grunted loudly "Oh-h-h," and held their arrows up to the sky toward which they waved them before suddenly falling flat on their backs. They were lifted up and supported by a companion, and they then approached the Sinhalese headman who was present and promised him and one of us a white buffalo each for the next day. This was done in a manner we afterwards recognised to have been an excellent imitation of the actions of one possessed by the *yaku*, though it is certain that this dance was not a real possession dance; while the condition of the pulse in the dancers, surprisingly quiet in view of the violent exercise they had taken, showed that the falling down was not due to exhaustion. In other figures no arrow was planted in the ground and the dance did not begin with a circular movement; in some of these figures the point of the arrow which is in the right hand may be lowered almost to the ground, and the obliquely inclined arrow swept forward and backward perhaps in imitation of a shaman possessed by Kande Yaka tracking the sambar in the manner described in the account of the *kirikoraha*.

The Kirikoraha Ceremony.

796 The pantomimic ceremonial dance by which the favour of the spirits (*yaku*) of the hunting hero Kande Wanniya and his brother Bilindi is secured is called *kirikoraha*. It must be noted that this term, literally translated, signifies "milk bowl," and though the presentation to the *yaku* of a *kirikoraha*, i.e. a pot containing coconut milk, is essential in several other ceremonies they were not called *kirikoraha*. The "milk" consists of the fluid which can be squeezed from the shredded meat of the [272] coconut and is mixed with water. If the coconut juice be not diluted excessively the fluid so produced has a very pleasant flavour, and in appearance is not unlike milk[1]. Whenever "milk" is spoken of as offered to the *yaku* this fluid is meant: the "water" of the coconut is not valued, and though it may be used in preparing the milk instead of water (as was the case at

[1] This is the usual method throughout Ceylon of making the coconut milk so largely used as a flavouring agent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the Henebedda *kirikoraha*) it is usually poured on the ground without any ceremony. 796

A description of the phenomena of "possession" of the Vedda shaman by the *yaku* has already been given in Chapter VI, so that nothing need be said on that matter in connection with this dance or any of the ceremonies described in this chapter, in all of which "possession" occurred. 796 787

The essential features of the *kirikoraha* are two in number. The first of these is the offering of coconut milk and generally of other food to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka and sometimes other *yaku* regarded as their attendants. Secondly the pantomimic representation by the shaman, while possessed by Kande Yaka, of Kande Wanniya tracking and shooting a sambar deer. This pantomime seems to occur only when "possession" by Kande Yaka takes place, for whenever any pantomime of this sort was enacted, even in the most shortened and conventional form, as in the Nae Yaku ceremony (described on pp. 233 to 237 of this chapter), the shaman was held to be possessed by Kande Yaka. [782]

We witnessed four *kirikoraha* ceremonies during our stay in the Vedda country. One was performed by the Henebedda Veddas in thanksgiving for a fine buck which one of them had shot, and the other three were undertaken at our request, but we have no doubt that they were accurately performed; for the Veddas were always pleased to perform any ceremonial dance provided the correct offering were given, as thereby they gained the favour of the *yaku*, and it was seldom that they were able to offer such food as we gave them for the purpose. The *kirikoraha* ceremony appears to be held equally as a thanksgiving for game killed and in order to obtain success in the future. 796

The Kirikoraha at Bendiyagalge. A fine buck was killed late in the afternoon of the 7th of February, 1908, and was carried to a flat rock between our camp and the Bendiyagalge caves and rapidly skinned and cut up during the short tropical twilight. A *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed the next morning, before taking part in which all the men went to the neighbouring stream and bathed, and afterwards made an offering of food to the *yaku*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Some rice with coconut and chillies had previously been cooked at the cave together with certain portions of the deer, the flesh from the head, sternum and front of the ribs, and the whole was brought down to the *talawa*. This food formed the offering (*aduk*), and the ceremony of *adukku denawa* or "offering the food" was performed before the dance began. The shaman, Randu Wanniya, squatted in front of the food, and with his hands together repeated a dedicatory invocation to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, which lasted nearly ten minutes, and consisted mainly, if not entirely, of repetitions of invocation No. XIX. It was performed in gratitude for all deer and sambar killed, and in it the *yaku* were invited to accept the offering of food which was left for them for a short time and afterwards eaten by the Veddas themselves. Fig. 2 of Plate XXVIII shows the shaman invoking the *yaku* with the offering in front of him. This ceremony, called *adukku denawa* (literally "the giving of cooked food"), is always held before a *kirikoraha* when game has been killed, but it is not itself part of the latter ceremony.

An open part of the *talawa* near the caves was selected as a dancing ground, and a tripod called *mukkaliya* was made by binding three sticks together on which an earthen pot, the *kirikoraha*, was placed, and a ceremonial arrow (*aude*) laid upon it.

The shaman took a coconut and the *aude*, held them to his head and salaamed while Poromala smeared some resin on a stick and afterwards censed the *aude* which was held so that the smoke might eddy round it, for thus would Kande Yaka smell the incense and be pleased (Plate XXIX, fig. 1). At the same time the shaman repeated the invocation (No. XIX) to Kande Yaka.

This appeared to be one of the many incidents pointing to the fact that when *yaku* are invoked they first come to their special vehicles (Kande always to an *aude*, other *yaku* to leaves, swords and various articles), and from these enter the person of the shaman.

796 All sang the invocation, and the shaman danced round the
535 tripod holding the *aude* and coconut together in both hands and
787 waving them rhythmically as he performed the orthodox Vedda step, i.e. one pace with each foot followed by a couple of pats on the ground with the ball of the same foot, every step being

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
787
535

[417]

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, censing the *anda* and coconut (Hemabedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *anda* and coconut (Hemabedda)

[facing p. 220]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
1787
535

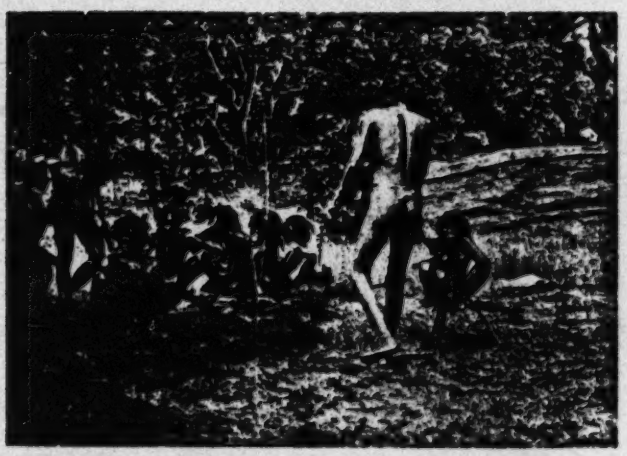


Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *aude* and coconut (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman breaking the coconut (Henebedda)

[facing p. 220b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
787
535

followed by a half turn of the body to the accompaniment of sounds produced by some of those who were not dancing slapping their sides. The shaman next sang the invocation to Bilindi Yaka (No. XXI), and after a short time he showed signs of becoming possessed; he shivered and shook his head, and with the *aude* in his right hand he struck the coconut which he held in his left and broke it in half (Plate XXX, fig. 2), letting the water fall into the *kirikoraha*. The way in which the nut split was prophetic; if a clean break was made the animal to be promised later would be a female, but if the edges were jagged a male would be shot. The shaman was now possessed by Bilindi Yaka, and with half the nut in each hand came to each of us in turn, placed his arms on our shoulders, and in the hoarse gasping voice of the *yaka* promised us good hunting and protection from wild animals.

Two of the younger Veddas, Poromala and Sita Wanniya, scraped the meat of the coconut with the *aude* to make the milk, and afterwards placed one half shell on the end of one of the sticks forming the tripod, and the other below the *kirikoraha*. Leaves taken from any tree, but said to represent betel leaves, were also placed in the *kirikoraha*. There was no reason for the particular position of the coconut shells, but as they were considered part of the offering to the *yaku*, it would have been considered disrespectful to the *yaku* to place them on the ground. This rule was observed in all the dances that we witnessed. All sang the invocation again, and the shaman, Randu Wanniya, continued to dance, holding the handle of the *aude* in the right hand and the point of the blade in the left, turning it with a rotatory movement as he danced, gradually swaying his body more and more and lifting his feet higher from the ground. He went to the *kirikoraha* and inspected the milk, letting it run through his fingers (Plate XXXI, fig. 1), and dropping some on the *aude* to see if it was rich enough. Apparently he was satisfied with its quality, and soon he fell back into the arms of Sita Wanniya who supported him. After a short time he revived with much quivering of muscles and gasping for breath, and taking a handful of the coconut milk he shouted and approached Tissahami the Vedda Arachi[1] (who

[1] This man, concerning whom something has been said on p. 41, was known to

796 was then staying in our camp) and scattered the milk over him,
535 while with the right hand on his shoulder he expressed his
787 pleasure in seeing him and promised him luck in hunting. Then after prophesying good hunting to each of us in turn and to several of the Veddas, Bilindi Yaka left the shaman.

Randu Wanniya again danced eastward round the *kirikoraha*, holding the *aude* in both hands, but soon he began to crouch and point it to the ground, and then pretended to thrust it at imaginary footprints (Plate XXXI, fig. 2). His excited manner showed that he was now possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he represented following the slot of a sambar. Soon Sita Wanniya took the *aude* away from him and gave him a bow and arrow, and the tracking continued amidst intense excitement (Plate XXXII, fig. 1). Sita Wanniya followed closely, ready to support the shaman if he should fall, while others pointed out the slot to him till at last, a basket having been placed on the ground, he drew his bow and transfixed it.

796 Plate XXXII, fig. 2 shows the group round the shaman as
787 the arrow left the bow. As the arrow sped the shaman fell back seemingly exhausted and almost senseless. The *yaka* did not, however, finally depart from the shaman, but merely went to the quarry to ascertain if his arrow had proved fatal. The shaman soon came to himself, apparently satisfied, and bent his head (Plate XXXIII, fig. 1) over the *kirikoraha*, and then shouting "Ah, ah!" in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaku* came to each of us in turn and placed the *aude* on our heads, thereby granting us jungle favour, after which he went to several of the Veddas prophesying good luck in hunting to each of them (Plate XXXIII, fig. 2). Then taking the half shells of the coconut in either hand and waving them about, he danced round the *kirikoraha* and bent his head over the pot so that the *yaka* might drink, and afterwards fell into the arms of Sita Wanniya, who had been following, ready to support him. Again the shaman revived, and, putting his arms on our interpreter, promised him victory in all undertakings. Then returning to the *kirikoraha*, and having given the *aude* to one of

the Henebedda community and was much respected both because of his Vedda blood and because of his renown as a charmer and medicine man (*vaderale*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman examines the offering of coconut milk (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman tracking the sambar (Henebedda)

[facing p. 222]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

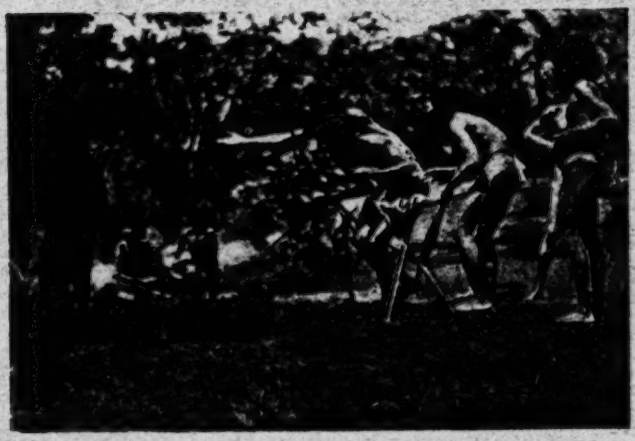


Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman tracking the sambar (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman shoots the sambar (Henebedda)

[facing p. 222 b]

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman bends his head over the coconut milk (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman possessed by Bilindi Yaka promises good hunting (Henebedda)

[facing p. 222 g]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

Plate XXXIV

Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot (Henebedda)

[facing p. 222 d]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the onlookers, who were all willing assistants, he filled the palms of his hands with milk and bounded forward, and raising his hands with every step he scattered the milk, and in this manner the *yaku* within him showed his pleasure. Next he took the *kirikoraha* from the tripod with both hands (Plate XXXIV, fig. 1), spun it on the ground, and immediately it left his hands he fell back. The spinning was prophetic, for in that direction towards which the bowl dipped as it came to rest, there game would be found; and on this occasion it dipped to the north. When the shaman revived a few seconds later, Kande Yaka had left him, and he was possessed by Bilindi Yaka again. With shouts, gasping and trembling, he came to most of the onlookers and promised good hunting in the usual manner, then he took the *kirikoraha* and spun it, but when it left his hands the spirit departed from the shaman and he fell back.

The dance was now over, and all were eager to partake of the coconut milk which had been offered to the *yaku*, for none of it might be wasted. All the men took a little, and also fed the children with it, but the women were not allowed to partake of it. However, as the mere contact of the milk had virtue the shaman rubbed some on their heads. In other less sophisticated communities women were not looked upon as unclean, and they shared in this and other food offered to the *yaku*. As has already been stated there is little doubt that the idea of women being unclean has been borrowed from the Sinhalese, among whom it is very strongly held. A little of the contents of the *kirikoraha* might also be rubbed on the heads of the dogs which were supposed to be more likely to hunt successfully after this.

The Kirikoraha at Sitala Wanniya. Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were all invoked at the *kirikoraha* held at Sitala Wanniya. Indigollae was held to be the principal attendant of Kande Yaka, and though the invocation sung to him refers to "seven pots of blood" our informants were unable to give us any meaning for this[1].

Handuna, the shaman of the Sitala Wanniya community, did

[1] This matter is briefly discussed in Chapter X after the invocation (No. XXXII) to Indigollae Yaka.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 not possess an *anda*, having given his to a white man who knew not its value, but since an *anda* must be used when invoking Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, Handuna unfastened the blade from one of his shooting arrows to represent an *anda*. Having put on the *hangala* he burnt some resin and censed the *hirihovuka*. This had been placed on a support of the usual form in the centre of the dancing ground, and the arrow blade and some betel leaves had been placed in it. Two pots of boiled rice had been placed upon a small platform or altar (*maesa*) which had been built for, and used in, another ceremony.

The shaman raised the coconut and salaamed to the 796 *hirihovuka* and then danced round and round it, singing the 535 invocation given in Chapter X (No. XVI) and exhibiting the 787 nut to the *yaka* and thrusting at the pot as he danced though not actually hitting it. The step was the usual one with many half turns and performed clockwise. Handuna now invoked Bilindi Yaka (Chapter X, invocation No. XVIII) and soon he fell back and was supported for a few seconds, but revived almost immediately, when he became possessed by Bilindi Yaka. An axe was given him by one of the Veddas with which he hit the coconut so as to split it, letting the water pour out on the ground. Then with a half coconut in each hand he danced up to Vela shouting "Houh! houh!" and held the nuts against his chest while with head bent and body swaying he said, "You have offered me coconut, and I have come, why did you call me?" For coconut, instead of the usual word *pol* he used *suda ewa*, literally "the white one" or "the white thing." Again he danced round the pot and bent his head low over it, in this way showing his satisfaction with the offering. Whilst he continued to dance Vela and Kaira made the coconut milk, putting the remains of the flesh of the nut on the pots of rice which had been placed on the *maesa*. Handuna now took the arrow blade from the *hirihovuka* and danced with it, holding its ends in either hand and twirling it round between his fingers; taking it in his right hand, he stabbed sharply at the pot as he danced round it, taking care, however, never to hit the pot. He dipped the arrow into the pot and examined the milk on the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

1796
535
1787

blade, then scattered it to show that he was pleased, shouting several times *Has Bilindi! Has Bilindi!* to which Kaira always answered *dinar* or "Lord." He danced again, stretching alternately his right and left arms, and about this time Bilindi Yaka left and Kande Yaka entered him without any outward signs, so that we did not recognise the change which had taken place until presently he danced round the *kirihevake* with one arm extended and holding the arrow blade by its centre. We were told that he was possessed by Kande Yaka, who in his person performed the traditional pantomime of tracking the sambar by its slots, pointing at them with the arrow. This scene was not acted so thoroughly as it was at Bendiyagalge. Handuna picked up a few leaves and held them across the arrow to represent a bow whilst he crouched in a position ready to shoot; then, dipping his hand in the *kirihevake* he dropped some milk on the leaves and got up and danced. Filling the palms of his hands with the milk he went to Kaira and said: "The sambar you shall shoot shall bleed like this milk dripping." Coming to one of us he placed one arm on his shoulder, holding a betel leaf moist with milk in the other outstretched hand, and prophesied sambar to the bow of Kaira. With head slightly thrown back and rapt expression he told of Indigollae and the seven pots of blood—and now it seemed that Kande Yaka went and Indigollae Yaka came[1]. Before going back to the *kirihevake* Handuna gave one of us (C.G.S.) a betel leaf as a sign of favour, and then taking another from the *kirihevake* he allowed some milk to drip over it before he let it fall to the ground. Then with the arrow head he made two slits in the leaf not quite extending to the base, and again dipped it in the milk. Next he went to Vela and passed the slit leaf slowly over his head and finally slapped it on his chest. He did the same thing to Kaira with an uncut leaf, and it was noted that when the leaves fell to the ground off the men's chests they were picked up carefully and put in the *kirihevake*. The cuts in the leaf denoted that the sambar promised to Vela would be horned. The manner in which the leaf falls is also considered prophetic; when, as in this case, it falls with its

[1] His invocation is given in Chapter X, No. XXXII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

under surface upwards, the quarry will take long to kill; if, on the other hand, the leaf fall with its upper surface upwards, death will be speedy.

After this Handuna again danced round the *kirikoraha*, holding the arrow in it, and showed his favour to each of the male onlookers by passing a milky betel leaf over their heads and placing it on their chests. This was repeated several times alternating with dances and quiverings over the pot before Handuna finally shook his head over the pot and fell back with a shout, the *yaka* having left him.

Now Indigollae Yakini, the wife of Indigollae Yaka, was invoked, and we were told that Kaira who performed this dance would have worn beads on his wrists had he possessed them. He danced in the usual way round the *kirikoraha* with the arrow head which transfixed a betel leaf in one hand, when suddenly dropping his head over the *kirikoraha* he shouted and apparently became possessed by the *yakini*. Gasping and shaking he went to both Handuna and Vela and put milky betel leaves on their chests, and spoke to them, raising his arms alternately and shuffling his feet. He returned to the pot and danced, stretching his arms and then crossing them across his body as he would have done had he been holding a couple of *ande*, swaying his body and moving vigorously. Several times he bent over the *kirikoraha* and each time leapt back with a shout and danced again. At last Handuna pointed to the offering of rice on the *maesa*, which he approached and inspected while gasping and shaking, then evidently satisfied with this he sprang forward to the *kirikoraha*, dropped his head over it and fell back exhausted, but no longer possessed by any *yaka*.

The Kirikoraha at Uniche. The *kirikoraha* performed at Maha Oya by Wannaku of Uniche seemed to be intermediate between the ceremony of the wilder Veddas where the original idea, namely Kande Yaka tracking the elk, was the dominant feature, and that danced by the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula where this *motif* was omitted.

A *maesa* was built (though not elaborated into a *bulutyahana* as at Unuwatura Bubula), a white cloth was laid over it and betel leaves, areca nuts, bananas, coconuts, and two pots of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cooked rice were placed on it, as well as the *kirikoruha* itself containing the coconut milk, in which two *aude* had been placed. All these offerings were then covered with a red cloth, the red colour being said to be necessary.

796
535
787

Before describing the dance it must be explained that the Uniche Veddas had come to Maha Oya, some twenty-four miles from their home, and the shaman had not brought his *aude* with him, so we offered to lend him two, a small one we had collected at Unuwatura Bubula, and a particularly fine one lent to us by Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, the Sinhalese headman already referred to, who in his youth had lived a great deal among Veddas, and from whom he had received the *aude*. This *aude*, evidently an old one, pleased Wannaku greatly and he exclaimed with joy: "This is indeed an *aude* for Kande Yaka[1]." We did not tell him whence we had obtained them, but he seemed impressed that a white man should possess such a good Vedda *aude*.

Wannaku put on the *hangala* and salaamed to the *maesa*, and whilst the drum was beaten sang the invocation given in Chapter X, No. XXII, to Bilindi Yaka. He danced in front of the *maesa* facing east, slowly at first, but gradually he began to sway his body more rapidly and with greater vigour and soon became possessed by Bilindi Yaka. The shaman now picked up the large *aude* and, after dancing with it in his hands for a few seconds, flung it from him to the ground with disgust, exclaiming angrily: "This is not my arrow, this has been used by a Sinhalese." Someone handed him the small *aude* and he seemed satisfied and danced with this. Of course it was quite possible for Wannaku to have discovered the history of the *aude* from our servants or from the villagers, or it may even have been mentioned quite casually in conversation with them and not have made much impression on him at the time, but flashing into consciousness in the excitement of the dance it may have appeared an important and till then unknown fact. On questioning Wannaku after the dance he denied any previous knowledge but said quite simply that he was possessed

[1] However, when the dance took place the next day he used this *aude* when invoking Bilindi Yaka.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

by Bilindi Yaka and "as a man knows his own betel pouch so Bilindi Yaka would know his own *aude*."

The shaman bent his head over the *hiriberuke* and inspected it, then putting his hand into it he scattered the milk on the ground two or three times, before filling his palm with milk and letting it fall over the *aude*, in this way testing the quality of the offering. With the arrow in one hand he stood in front of the *mesa* shaking and shouting. Now he took a betel leaf from the *hiriberuke*, fixed it on the point of the *aude* and as a sign of favour put this on an old Vedda's chest, asking at the same time why he had been invoked: "Is anyone sick?" The old man replied that no one was ill, they had merely called him to take the offerings on the *mesa*. So the *yaka* was pleased and with rapt expression the shaman danced, and again dripped milk over the *aude*, saying at the same time that he must go. He repeated this several times, all the while quivering and gasping and saying that now he would leave, but before finally departing the spirit again showed favour to the old Vedda, influencing the shaman to put a milky betel leaf on his chest; then the shaman leapt back suddenly and the *yaka* left him.

After a short interval the shaman danced again and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he called by the invocation No. XVII; soon he made signs that he wanted something, when the Veddas understood that he lacked a second *aude*, and not having another, one of the Veddas gave him a knife, which the shaman preferred to the rejected *aude*. He held the *aude* and the knife crosswise, these now representing the bow and arrow of Kande Yaka, and dancing wildly the shaman feigned to test the imaginary bow, then leaning both arms on the *mesa* he shivered and shook, at the same time declaring that the bow was a strong and good one. Again holding the arrow blade and knife like a bow and arrow he followed the track of an imaginary sambar for a few yards; he pointed to a spot on the ground and said the next *hiriberuke* should be built there. Then taking some milk from the *hiriberuke* he let some fall on the arrow and spilled some on the ground, and we were told that this represented Kande Wanniya

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

drinking after the kill. After a little more dancing the shaman fell back into the arms of his supporter and the spirit left him. 796 535 787

The Kirikoraha at Unuwatura Bubula. When dancing to Kande Yaka at Unuwatura Bubula the Veddas made a *bulatyahana* (Plate XXXV); this, we were told, would be built when invoking many *yaka*, but the *kirikoraha* would never be danced without it. The *bulatyahana* seemed to be an elaborated *maesa* with the framework carried up to form a back and slanting roof over which a cloth, specially kept for this purpose, was hung and fastened down. On the shelf of the *bulatyahana* two *aude* and a trident of the ordinary Hindu pattern were placed together with betel leaves and areca nut. The *kirikoraha* containing coconut milk and betel leaves stood on a rice-mortar beside it and a pot of cooked rice was put on the ground.

The shaman danced in front of the *bulatyahana* holding in his hands a new piece of cloth (a coloured handkerchief which we gave him) specially obtained for the purpose. He swayed his body and raised the cloth to his head while lifting his feet and patting the ground alternately with his right and left foot, but not moving from the front of the *bulatyahana*, that is to say confining his dancing to a space three or four feet long. He exchanged the handkerchief for the trident and placing a betel leaf on the point he danced with this and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka. Putting his hands into the *kirikoraha*, he examined the milk and expressed his satisfaction by shouting and clapping his hands. Again he danced to and fro in front of the *bulatyahana* with the trident in his hand. The *kirikoraha* was taken off the rice-mortar and put on the *bulatyahana*, and the pot of cooked rice was put in its place on the rice-mortar.

The dancer then approached a sick shaman who, as mentioned on p. 263, had coughed up a considerable amount of blood at the end of the *alutyahagama* ceremony performed previously, and fed him with some rice which he brought to him in a betel leaf. In this way Kande Yaka showed his benevolence towards the sick man, for it was considered that the *yaka* food would cure him. Returning to the *bulatyahana* the shaman quivered and shook his head and examined the [755]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 rice, then he came to us and in the usual agitated manner of
535 one possessed by the *yaku* said that he had come because we
787 had asked for him. After some more dancing a little longer in front of the *bulatyakanu* and after much bending and shaking over it and the rice put the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya left the shaman and the ceremony ended.

Nae Yaku Ceremonies.

769 The large part the *Nae Yaku* play in the life of the Veddas
535 and the great deference paid to them have been treated in the chapters on religion. We witnessed two *Nae Yaku* ceremonies which took place at Sitala Wanniya and Bandaraduwa respectively. The Bandaraduwa ceremony was performed on the seventh day after the death of the individual whose spirit was invoked, and we were allowed to prepare a dancing ground in the jungle, where it seemed that a tolerably good series of photographs might be obtained. However, the Veddas were obviously apprehensive of the spirit of the deceased until the ceremony had taken place, and insisted on performing it early in the morning with the result that the photographs obtained were all underexposed. We have however thought it best to publish a number of these without retouching them, an exception being made in the case of the two photographs reproduced in Plates XXXVI, fig. 2, and XXXVIII, fig. 1, the value of which do not depend on the facial expression of the performers while they were so underexposed that all detail would have been lost in a reproduction.

The ceremony performed at Sitala Wanniya was danced expressly because we wished to see it, but Handuna, the most important man in this community, was delighted when we suggested that they should dance to the *Nae Yaku*, because he said it would please the *yaku*, for when alone the community could seldom provide such good things to offer them as we promised to give.

Nae Yaku Ceremony at Sitala Wanniya. Although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas told us that the *Nae Yaku* could not come without Kande Yaka, Kande Yaka was not invoked a

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XXXV

796
787
535
417

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the *bulatyahana* (Unuwatura Bubula)

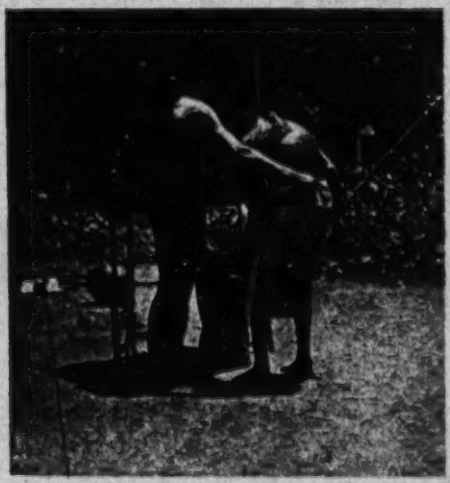


Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman before the *bulatyahana* (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 238]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535

the *Nat Yaku* ceremony that they performed for our benefit; the spirits of certain named relatives being called upon immediately. This may have been an omission caused by the ceremony having been begun in the spirit of a rehearsal (though it was certainly continued in earnest), but it seems more probable to us that this was not a mistake, as it was clearly stated that when a *Nat Yaka* is invoked for the first time after a death Kande Yaka is called upon at the beginning of the ceremony to bring the new *yaka*. The two *yaku* invoked at this ceremony were remembered by the community as influential men, and had probably been invoked frequently, and thus though still looked upon as attendants of Kande Yaka in a general way, they had probably gained a certain independence. Two pots of rice were cooked with coconut milk and placed on the *maesa* which was already in existence, having been built for one of the other dances, and an earthenware bowl of coconut milk was supported on a stake driven into the ground in the centre of the dancing plot. This bowl, the *kirikoraha*, was filled with coconut milk, and betel leaves were put in it. Kaira put on a hangalla, and held a piece of cloth in his hands. It was decided that the father-in-law of Handuna should be called, therefore an invocation was sung to him, and Kaira danced with the piece of cloth in his hand holding it at times over his head, and soon began to shout and leap showing that he was possessed. He went to Handuna, shouted and waved his cloth before him, and he too fell back and became possessed. There seemed to be no doubt that both Handuna and Kaira were considered to be possessed by the same *yaka*, i.e. by the spirit of the former's father-in-law Tuta Gamarale. Both bent their heads low over the *kirikoraha* and inspected the milk, then examined the offering of cooked rice, and returned to the *kirikoraha* quivering and gasping, and scattered some of the milk as a sign of pleasure. Then Kaira spoke to Vela in the low gasping voice of the *yaka* and stretched his arms towards Vela's child, who was suffering from yaws, and covered both the child and its mother with his cloth. He treated the other children in the same way, and also sprinkled coconut milk on their heads, and in the hurried *yaka* manner of one possessed smeared their faces with the milk, and we were told

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535

that this was the manner in which the *yaka* of Tuta Gamarale usually showed favour to his grandchildren. Handuna and Kaira both returned to the *kirikoraka*, and shivering and quaking they bent their heads over it, shaking their hair over their faces, then both danced wildly (Handuna with an arrow in his hand), scattering the milk about, in this way showing their satisfaction with the offerings prepared for them. Both Handuna and Kaira went to several of the Vedda onlookers, and waving their cloths promised luck in hunting or favour of some kind. Then coming to each of us, they said while shuffling their feet and shaking their cloths "My grandchildren called me to help them, now you are here too, do you help them also." After feeding some of the small children with coconut milk they both returned to the *kirikoraka* and bent their heads low over it, crying, "Oh," and fell back, and the *yaka* of Tuta Gamarale left them.

A good deal of discussion followed among the Veddas, as many considered that the father of Handuna should be invoked, but all declared they were too tired to dance. At last Handuna prevailed upon his son-in-law Kaira to dance, explaining to us that they seldom had such good food as that which they were able to offer to-day and it pleased the *yaka* greatly, so his father should be called to share it.

So Kaira took the handkerchief and danced again, soon becoming possessed by Huda the father of Handuna. After showing favour to the progeny of Huda as before by holding the cloth over their heads he fell supine into the arms of Vela and it seemed as if the *yaka* was about to depart. Some of the men and boys began immediately to repeat the invocation to prevent this from happening, and after some seconds of immobility Kaira began to tremble slightly, and raised his right hand limply, let it fall again, and once more became inert. Then all joined vigorously in the invocation, and the wife of Kaira smeared his face with coconut milk, and with the aid of a leaf-cone fed him with the milk, that is to say, she managed to convey a few drops into his mouth, but still he remained unmoved. As this was ineffectual several of the grandchildren of the man whose spirit possessed Kaira fed the latter in the same way;

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela did so also, with the result that Kaira dropped his head forward, shook violently and nodded his head sideways in a clumsy drunken fashion, and in a few seconds, still supported, jerked his limbs forwards and moved to the offering, after which he came back to where the women were standing and fell again into the arms of Vela. His chin was thrown back and his whole body trembled, while he gasped a word or two occasionally and fanned himself with his cloth vigorously. He held the cloth over the child suffering from yaws and promised to cure him, then putting both hands on Handuna he let his head fall on the latter's chest, and while trembling and shuffling his feet asked how Handuna fared. Handuna replied that game was scarce, and Kaira then spoke to the wife of Handuna and again to Handuna, and promised help. Then leaving Handuna he danced with wild leaping steps round the *kirikoraha* and gasped that now he must go and so leapt to the *maesa*, bent his head over the offering, and fell back exhausted. But he soon began to dance again, twirling the arrow blade between his fingers, till after a short time he returned to the *maesa*, and again bent his head over the offering; then with a great shout he took the pot of rice in both hands and spun it on the ground, and as he did so the *yaka* left him and he fell back. 769 535

Spinning the pot had the same significance here as at Henebedda, the direction towards which the pot dipped showing where game would be found. In this instance the pot was so full of rice that it did not dip at all, but this was considered a good omen as game might be expected on all sides. 769 787

After all was over Handuna took an arrow, and standing by the *maesa* pointed the arrow to the pots, and called upon all the *Nae Yaku* to feed. The pots were soon removed, the rice they contained was eaten, and the betel leaves from the *kirikoraha* chewed, but the milk in the *kirikoraha* was poured over a heap of twigs laid on the ground, being thus devoted to the *yaku*. 769

Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa. Some account has already been given in Chapter II of the abnormal conditions prevailing at Bandaraduwa, so it will only be necessary to touch lightly upon this subject here. Some twenty years back these Kovil Vanamai Veddas, of whom the Bandaraduwa Veddas 177 769

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 are the remains, lived much the same life as the Henebedda
769 Veddas now live, and like them were in transition between a purely hunting, honey-collecting life and the settled condition of the village Veddas who are mainly dependent on their chena produce. When we visited Bandaraduwa the Veddas were in a sorry condition and had settled down among the Sinhalese. It is true they dwelt in separate huts, but they were built on the same chena which had been allotted by the Government to them all, and like the Sinhalese they were paying taxes[1]. Naturally living in such close contact with the Sinhalese they have been influenced by them, and intermarriage has taken place, so that in many cases the Vedda identity has been lost. However, those of them who still considered themselves Veddas have retained a number of their old songs and many of their old customs, as comparison with the uncontaminated Sitala Wanniya Veddas showed. But even these customs, though Vedda at root, had been largely coloured and often overlaid by Sinhalese beliefs, so that when a death occurred not only was it necessary to make offering to the new Nae Yaka but it was equally important to propitiate the nearest Buddhist priest.

A *kirikoraka* was prepared in the usual way, and betel
769 leaves put in it as well as the coconut milk. The shaman
535 Tissahami, wearing a *kangala*, placed two *aude* on the *kirikoraha* and salaamed to the bowl. (Plate XXXVI, fig. 1.) Then he began to dance in the usual manner to the accompaniment of a drum played by a Vedda lad, first holding one *aude* and then one in each hand, that in the right hand being for Kande Yaka and that in the left for the *yaka* of the deceased Tuta. The use of the drum, which was of Sinhalese manufacture, must be regarded as an innovation, for although these people used them, and the Bendiyagalge people said they would if they had them,
[177] the Sitala Wanniya Veddas declared that true Veddas never possessed or used a drum[2].

[1] It must be remembered that about sixty years ago Bailey, a Government official, encouraged the Veddas of Nilgala to make chena and since then the custom has spread. Sixty years ago these Veddas, and in fact all except the long established coast and village Veddas, must have lived a life very little different from that of the Sitala Wanniya group of to-day.

[2] The readiness with which this community accepted an innovation was demonstrated

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman salaams to the offering (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman pretends to stab the offering (Bandaraduwa)*

[facing p. 234a]

769
535

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed falls into the arms of a supporter (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman sprinkles milk from the offering on the brothers of the deceased (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 234 b]

769
535

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka tracks the sambar (Bandaraduwa)*

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the brother of the deceased falls back possessed (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 234 c]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535
787

At the same time an invocation was sung, presumably to Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaka*, but our notes are not quite clear about this; it was however certain that Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nae Yaka* all came, indeed that the last was unable to come without Kande Yaka, but it was not clear when each *yaka* came and went, and it seemed quite possible for the shaman to be possessed by several *yaku* at once.

As the shaman danced he stabbed at the *kirikoraha* with both the *aude* (Plate XXXVI, fig. 2), in this way the *Nae Yaka* by whom he was possessed was pleased to show his power. Sometimes as Tissahami made the usual half turn on his heels he held the *aude* against his hips pointed end outwards. Soon he began to quiver and bend his head forward, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers, into whose arms he fell back (Plate XXXVII, fig. 1). After lying still for a few seconds he revived and began to dance wildly, stabbing the *aude* in the air; this was in order to frighten people, for although the feeling of the *Nae Yaka* towards his living relatives was friendly, provided always that he had been well treated by them and had been offered sufficient rice, coconut milk and betel leaves, the *yaka* was not averse to showing his newly acquired power. After this, in order to show his favour to his relatives the shaman went to both the brothers of the dead man in turn and sprinkled them with coconut milk from the *kirikoraha* (Plate XXXVII, fig. 2), he put his arms on their shoulders and promised them luck in hunting, and taking two betel leaves from the *kirikoraha* he put one on the chest of each man, and the leaves being wet with the milk stayed where they were placed for a short time. Suddenly leaping away the shaman, now apparently possessed by Kande Yaka and probably with the spirit of the *Nae Yaka* still within him, tracked an imaginary sambar round the dancing ground, holding the two *aude* crosswise to represent a bow and arrow. This is shown in Plate XXXVIII, fig. 1, which also shows the betel leaves on the chest

by the shaman who wanted to wear Sinhalese leggings with bells, although he said these had not been worn before in a Vedda ceremony. The leglets, which he greatly admired, had been worn by a peasant Sinhalese at a devil ceremony which had been held two days before at a village a few miles distant.

[177]

1,Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535
787

of each of the two brothers of the deceased. The shaman made no feint to shoot but soon put the *aude* on the *kirihoraha*, and taking a pot of rice which had been prepared twirled it vigorously in his hands, and though this may have represented Kande Wanniya spinning the rice pot for prophecy, the shaman put the pot down without actually spinning it. Supported by one of the Veddas he again danced round the *kirihoraha* and swayed his body violently; at times he would spring suddenly to one side stabbing fiercely at the air, after which (bending over the *kirihoraha*) he fell back and remained perfectly still with rapt expression and head slightly bent, one hand resting on the edge of the milk pot. It seemed as though the Yaka was about to leave the shaman, but as the relatives did not desire this (perhaps because the Yaka had not yet fed them as a sign of greater favour) they all sang the invocation together. The Yaka heard them, for suddenly the shaman began to tremble, the trembling grew to a vigorous shaking, and he sprang forward and again bent his head over the *kirihoraha*; then with body bent and head drooping he moved a little way, taking short leaping steps, and again fell back exhausted. But he soon revived and took the *aude* and approached the dead man's brothers in turn, who both became possessed by the *Nae Yaka* and fell back. Then the shaman smeared their bodies with coconut milk, throwing some into their mouths, and they soon showed signs of life again. Plate XXXVIII, fig. 2, and Plate XXXIX, fig. 1, show the two brothers of the deceased possessed by the *Nae Yaka*; in the latter figure the body of the unconscious man has been smeared with the contents of the *kirihoraha*, while the remains of that with which he had been fed hangs about his mouth and chin. It will be observed that in both these figures the supporters are Sinhalese; this was because there were not enough grown Vedda men in the community to support the man possessed by Yaku. All this time the invocation was being repeated by one of the youngest Veddas present, who we were told was the dead man's sister's son, that is the dead man's potential son-in-law. The shaman now fed the dead man's brothers with rice from the offering, and then fell exhausted to the ground. One of the officiators immediately came

769
535
787

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the other brother of the deceased is also possessed (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Nae Yaku embraces the brothers of the deceased (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 236a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XL

769
535
787

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the Nae Yaka shows his power (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman feeds the members of the community (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 236 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXE Vedda AXE

to his assistance when he began to quiver and sway, then moved and put both arms round one of the dead man's brothers as a sign of kindness from the deceased. (Plate XXXIX, fig. 2.) The brothers said: "It was good of you to come. See we have given you food, now do not come back again," and the *yaks* agreed. The shaman then took the *aude* and transfixed a betel leaf with each and danced and again showed favour to the relatives by giving them each another betel leaf, after which one of the relatives danced, but the shaman threatened to stab with the *aude* the men who were not relatives of the dead man. (Plate XL., fig. 1.) Soon both the shaman and the two brothers fell back and the Yaka departed from them. When the shaman revived, he bent his head over the *kirihoraks* as a sign of respect; then holding both hands over the rice pot he repeated a silent charm, asking any of the other *yaku* who might have come to the ceremony to depart peacefully. After this he fed each relative of the dead man, holding the *kirihoraks* to their mouths, as is shown in Plate XL., fig. 2.

769
535
787

The Invocation of Bambura Yaka.

The Veddas invoke Bambura Yaka for help in getting pig and yams, both staple foods, the latter being an extremely important element in their diet. The dance is pantomimic, and depicts a boar hunt in which Bambura, the boar-hunting hero, was aided by a Vedda woman, who killed the pig with an arrow she shot from her husband's bow and whose spirit is therefore called Dunne Yakini (Bow Spirit), while the spirit of this woman's husband who turned the boar with his yam stick (*ule*) has become Ule Yaka, that is (Yam-stick Spirit). This ceremony, though not so widely spread, is as dramatic as that in which Kande Yaka stalks and kills sambar deer. We saw it danced by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya and by Wannaku of Uniche.

776
535
773
796

The invocation of Bambura Yaka at Sitala Wanniya. The dance at Sitala Wanniya will be described first, since the story was told us here in its more complete form. Once long ago many Vedda men and women went out in search of yams,

776
773
796

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 and they took their dogs with them. While all were busy
773 digging yams, the dogs strayed in the jungle and soon put up
796 a boar, to which they gave chase, giving tongue. The men hearing the dogs followed them and soon came up with the boar at bay, which immediately charged them. None of the men could kill the boar, but a woman, whose spirit afterwards became Dunne Yakini, picked up a bow and arrow and killed the boar with the help of her husband Ule Yaka and his brother, who became Kuda Ule Yaka, i.e. Little Yam-stick Yaka. Although Bambura Yaka takes no part in the story as it was told us, he is the important *yaka* of the ceremony; it is he who is especially invoked, Dunne Yakini, her husband and brother-in-law coming in as his attendants, as do a varying number of other *yaka*s, presumably the spirits of those who joined in the boar hunt[1].

535 During the dance Bambura Yaka and all his attendants
796 were present, so that it was not at all clear which part of the dance represented the actions of Bambura Yaka himself, since after the first complete possession *yaka* entered and departed from the shaman without any obvious signs. But we were told after the dance that Bambura was returning to his cave at Lewangala carrying yams and a couple of the large monitor lizards when he came across the hunt.

The properties for this dance are rather complicated and were carefully prepared on the dancing ground, all the men helping in the work and charms being sung the while. The necessary sticks were cut and two flat reddish stones found by a stream were placed below the *maesa* which was built with a double platform, a bundle of grass, leaves and twigs bound together to represent the boar being suspended from the lower platform. The stones were called Kuda Lewangala and Maha Lewangala respectively, and represented the red rocks or rocky hills of Lewangala, the unknown land in which Bambura lived and which is still the chief abiding place of his *yaka*. The majority of these properties are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1.

[1] We may here refer to a matter we discuss at greater length in Chapter X. It is certain that the invocations (Nos. XXVII and XXVIII) used at the Bambura Yaka ceremony and specially addressed to Bambura, which were only partially understood by those who sang them, originally applied to honey collecting.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

On the stones Handuna and Kaira mixed their pigments, lime, turmeric, water and charcoal, while all chanting together they decorated with spots and bars the various sticks which were to form the bows, arrows, yam sticks and carrying sticks sacred to the *yaku* who were soon to be invoked[1].

As already stated the boar was suspended below the *massa* by a creeper, and another creeper fastened to the "boar" was held by a small boy who stood a little back in the bush.

The objects prepared for the Bambura Yaka dance at Sitala Wanniya were as follows:

(i) The *mulpola itiya*; the meaning of these words is doubtful, though *itiya* was said to signify an ancient weapon. This was said to be for the use of Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and is a rough stick about 5 feet 6 in. long (figure 9 *a*) pointed at one end, above which the bark is shaved off for about 6 in., which part was decorated with bars of red and black pigment. This was said to be a yam stick, and it was explained that because of this the bark was not peeled except at the point, for a man would cut any stick in the jungle and dig up yams with it.

(ii) The *ule* (figure 9 *b*) or ceremonial arrow belonging to the Yaka is a peeled stick about 6 feet long, pointed at one end and decorated with rings of red and black pigment. Three pieces of bast are tied to the upper end, a few inches from the top, to represent the feathers of an arrow.

(iii) The *harimitiya* is a stout stick about 3 feet 6 in. long, decorated with rings of red and black pigment, and was used by Bambura Yaka as a staff.

(iv) The *hastapata* (figure 9 *c*) is a peeled stick nearly 6 feet long, spatulate at one end and decorated with bars of red and black in the manner indicated in the drawing.

(v) The *ran hadawa* (literally "golden sword") is similar to the *hastapata*, and totally unlike the *ran hadawa* used in the Rahu Yaka ceremony and figured on p. 256.

(vi) The bow of the Dunne Yakini has the bark stripped from the outer surfaces only, and is decorated with spots of red

[1] On asking the reason for this ornamentation of the properties we were told that the *yaku* would be pleased when they saw the decorations, for the spots of pigment represented the flowers of Lewangala.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796
293

Fig. 9. Some of the objects used in the Bambara Tala ceremony.
(a) *Mashpale* stick × $\frac{1}{10}$. (b) *Ulu* × $\frac{1}{10}$. (c) *Mashpale* × $\frac{1}{10}$.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and black pigment. It closely resembled that used in the Bambura Yaka ceremony at Uniche. 535 796

(vii) The *tadiya* is well seen in Plate XLI, fig. 1. It is a short stout stick, and represents a carrying stick or *pinge* which is used throughout Ceylon; however, it was quite unlike one, as these are long and springy and resemble a bow; moreover, Veddas usually unstring their bows and use them as carrying sticks.

(viii) The *simiti* or book (explained as book of omens, and said to be borrowed from Sinhalese ceremonies) was made of a couple of broad strips of bark in imitation of the *ola* books used in Ceylon[1]. [787 177]

The *hanlapete* and *ran hadunu* were said to belong to Devatayo of those names, but nothing was known about them. Devatayo or Dewa are Sinhalese spirits distinct from the *yaku* according to Sinhalese beliefs, but Handuna, our best informant at Sitala Wanniya, said Devatayo were the same as *yaku*. Obviously they had been introduced and assimilated to the Vedda *yaku*.

After all the sticks had been painted some cooked yams were tied up in leaves and bound to one end of the *tadiya*, and some wisps of grass were tied to the other to represent monitor lizards (Plate XLI, fig. 1), the whole was then put on the lower stage of the *massa* with cooked yams for all the *yaku*, while a portion of yams was placed on the upper stage for Korimisaala Yaka, but no reason could be discovered why his food was kept apart from the rest. The dance began by Handuna singing an invocation (No. XXIX) to Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and Kaira, who wore a *hangala*, held the *mulpola itiya* in his right hand, letting the decorated end rest in his left, then he danced slowly round and round in front of the *massa* facing east, the direction whence the boar of the story came. The *mulpola itiya* was soon changed for the *ran hadunu*, and now Kaira made long leaping steps, widening his circle as he moved in front of the *massa* and

[1] The *simiti* omen or book is perhaps the most curious of all the properties. It was said that Bambura Yaka could read and write, and that he was the only Yaka who had these accomplishments, though nothing was known as to how he had learned them. But certainly this part of the ritual was old and must be the result of quite ancient contact with a Buddhistic people.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

535
796

turning the stick over in his hand. At this time he became possessed by Ule Yaka, and after dancing in a circle for a few minutes he began to leap to and fro in front of the *maesa* and thrust at the ground with his stick, at the same time warning the *yaka* that the boar he was hunting was very dangerous and that they must be prepared to help him should it charge him. Then he approached Handuna and one of us, saying "The boar is very fierce but I will kill it." Again he went to Handuna and laid the *ran handuna* across the latter's chest and held it to him with both arms and repeated his boast of killing the boar but he also begged for assistance if he should meet with an accident. He again leapt to and fro beating his sides, and taking the *tadiya* from the *maesa*, held it first on his shoulder then behind his head and brandished it in the air so that Bambura Yaka might see the good things attached to it, and if he were pleased with the offering he too might come to assist Ule Yaka if the boar should attack him. Then taking Vela by the hand, he spoke to him quietly and pointed as though he saw the boar, and crouching, he stepped forward noiselessly but again sprang back and danced with the *ule* and *tadiya*, then putting the *tadiya* down, turned the *ule* over in his hands and danced with long leaping strides. Soon he left off dancing and merely bounded to and fro trying to thrust at the "boar" below the *maesa*, but the small boy holding the creeper attached to it pulled the "boar" away each time Kaira thrust at it. After a few attempts he came to each of us in turn, pressing the *ule* against our chests, and with head bent forward and taking short steps alternately to the right and left he spoke to us as though we were Bambura Yaka and said, "This boar is difficult to kill, grant that I may succeed." As he spoke he raised his hand and pointed. Then shouting *uei uei uaw* (the words with which dogs are put on a trail) he called the dogs (mentioned in the story) Sanjala, Bahira Pandi, Neti, and Kali, and went through the pantomime of laying them on the trail, gasping and panting the while and hitting his chest saying, "This is a fierce big boar and I will kill it." Again he leapt to and fro and thrust at the "boar" without success, then with a great charge and a shout wounded the "boar" and fell back exhausted into

535
796

Fig. 1. Bambara Yaba ceremony, preparing the fadjye (Sibale Wanniye)

[417]

Fig. 2. The Bambara Yaba ceremony begins by Hambara singing an invocation (Sibale Wanniye)

[facing p. 242 a]

535
796

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar wounds the hunter (Sitala Wanniya)*

[917]

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar is at length killed (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 b]

535
796

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the bow of Dunne Yakini (Sitala Wanniya)*

[482]

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Kaira dances with the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

the arms of his supporter. However, the "boar" was not yet dead and the *yaka* did not leave Kaira, who rested for a few seconds, and when he sprang forward with a shout and danced again and spoke to Handuna, saying, "I have succeeded in wounding the boar, now I will kill it" he was still possessed by Ule Yaka. Then the whole pantomime was repeated, the boasts, the attempts to kill the boar, and the laying of the dogs on the scent. At last the "boar" was wounded again, for a squeal was set up by the small boy who manipulated the creeper; then with a final thrust the *yaka* killed it, and as the *ule* was carefully withdrawn the "boar" gave a long dying squeal. Then the yaka left Kaira.

Soon Kaira began to dance again still holding the *ule*, and moving slowly at first but soon more energetically, and now he became possessed by Koriminaala Yaka. He danced as before, calling the dogs in the same way as when he was possessed by Ule Yaka and thrust at the boar in like manner, but this time the boar must have turned on him, as with a grunt "honk, honk," the boar swung forward and Kaira stumbled and then hobbled painfully supporting himself on the *ule*, his right leg dragging stiffly on the ground (Plate XLII, fig. 1).

The other men came forward and "medicined" the leg, that is, while one of them supported Kaira the other took a leaf and hurriedly wiped the limb from the back of the knee downwards. This evidently cured him, and he made another attempt to kill the boar, and was again wounded and again cured in the same way. Then he made one more charge, and the *ule* pierced the back of the "boar," wounding it mortally, and as Kaira fell back exhausted the Yaka left him (Plate XLII, fig. 2). As the *ule* was extracted the dying boar again gave forth a last squeal. After a short rest the ceremonial bow prepared for Dunne Yakini was wrapped in a cloth, and Handuna knelt down and held it on his head with both hands while Kaira and Vela sang an invocation almost certainly to Dunne Yakini, but unfortunately no note was taken of this (Plate XLIII, fig. 1)[1]. Kaira salaamed

[1] There was some experimenting before Kaira took the bow; the plate shows one of the younger members of the community holding it, but as he was not found satisfactory Handuna took it himself.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 to the bow and said, "Behold this golden bow is brought,
796 covered by a clean cloth," and taking it from Handuna proceeded to dance with it at first holding it behind his head, then bringing it forward unwrapped it, placed it on Handuna's shoulder, and spoke in the usual *yaka* voice. He again danced with the bow and tried the string, and expressed his pleasure by gasping and hitting his chest. Then he put it on the *massa* and fell exhausted.

Although we have no definite note it seems quite evident that at this time Kaira was possessed by Dunne Yakini.

Kaira then danced with the *kariwittiya* taking the usual dance steps but supporting himself with the *kariwittiya*, and he soon became possessed by Bambura Yaka. One of the lads now held the *tadiya*, then Kaira made a mock search for it for some minutes before he took it from the child. He danced with it over his shoulder with body bent and the *kariwittiya* still in his hand (Plate XLIII, fig. 2). He thus enacted Bambura Yaka returning to the cave with good things on his *tadiya*, and he shouted as every Vedda does when within hearing of home. Seeing the children he seemed to threaten them with his stick, and they ran away laughing; this was repeated several times. He tried to frighten the children away as he did not want them to see the food he had procured. Then he led Vela behind the *massa*, and pointing and speaking in a whisper with a great air of secrecy told him that if he went to a certain place where "there was high land by a stream" he should find a wild pig and kill it. For pig he used the *yaka* word *hossa dikka*, which apparently means "long snout." He led Handuna in the opposite direction, and speaking with like precaution promised that he should find and kill sambar, using the *yaka* name *gowru magalla*.

He took the book, spoke to Handuna and Vela, and next taking yams from the *massa* presented some to each of us and to all the Veddas present, for in this way Bambura Yaka showed his good will. All the time he was distributing the yams Kaira hurried, gasped, and trembled. Before Bambura Yaka left him Kaira hit the upper stage of the *massa* with the *kariwittiya*, and shouted "Hoi, hoi," to drive Koriminaala Yaka

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

away. Then he fell back, Handuna took the *tadiya*, and the dance ended. 535 796

All the properties of Bambura Yaka and his attendants were replaced on the *massa* and some water was sprinkled over them, this we were told being water for them to drink, for as no man eats without drinking afterwards, so the *yaku* require water to drink after food has been offered to them.

Handuna repeated charms over them, saying, "We have given you food and treated you well; if we have made any mistakes excuse us and do no harm to our families or ourselves." The whole ceremony was remarkable for the general feeling of cheerfulness and goodfellowship, jokes were frequently made, and obviously the Veddas had nothing to fear from the *yaku* in the ordinary course of events.

The Bambura Yaka Ceremony at Uniche. The dance to Bambura Yaka performed by Wannaku of Uniche differed only very slightly from that performed at Sitala Wanniya, yet in order to show these differences it will be necessary to describe the dance in detail. Wannaku, who visited us at Maha Oya in the Eastern Province, told us that Bambura Yaka was sometimes called Ala Yaka, i.e. Yam Yaka, as he helped men to find yams.

A *massa* was built and leaves laid on it over which a white cloth[1] was laid, and on this yams, a coconut, and a pumpkin were placed, while some of the properties of the Bambura Yaka ceremony leaned against the *massa*. These objects consisted of a roughly made bow decorated with bars of red and black (figure 10 *a*), two ordinary arrows and two long sticks which represented the special arrows of the *yaka*. They are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1, leaning against the *massa*; a ring of bark is left at the top of each stick, and this is split to represent the feathers of an arrow, the peeled portion of both sticks being decorated with bars of red and yellow pigment. The upper ends of these sticks are pared down so as to represent two flattened surfaces as is shown in figure 10 *b*, which is drawn 535 796 293

[1] Among the Sinhalese and Tamils it is customary not only to hang a ceiling cloth but even to cover the walls, table and chairs with cloths when receiving an honoured guest.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796
[293]

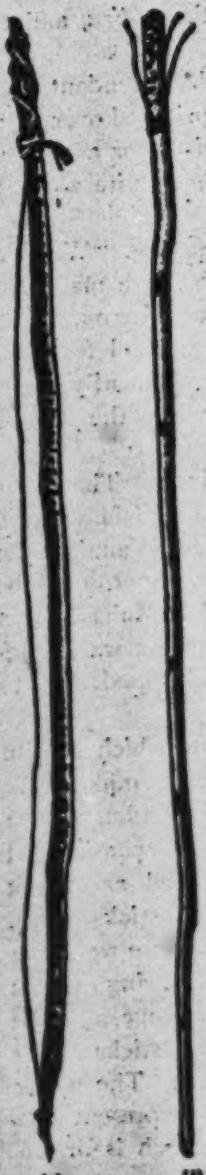


Fig. 10. Ceremonial bow and arrow of Bambura Yaka. $\times \frac{1}{10}$

to a scale of about one-tenth. Below the *maesa*, suspended by a creeper, is the *welemula*, which is merely a bundle of leaves filled with sand to represent the wild boar.

Wannaku, the shaman, put on a *hangula*, and salaamed to the *maesa*, and then sang a curious invocation (No. XXVIII), while a lad beat the drum. Wannaku now exhibited all the *yaka* properties, dancing with each in turn. Wannaku did not tell us the story of Bambura Yaka, and as our many questions did not elicit it we may presume that he did not know it, so we did not find out whether all the properties belonged to Bambura Yaka or whether, as at Sitala Wanniya, which we visited afterwards, some belonged to his attendants.

After a short time Wannaku bent his head over the *maesa*, shouted, let down his hair, and became possessed. He picked up each of the big *yaka* arrows in turn and danced with them shouting, and thus showing that he was pleased with them. Up to this time he had not danced round the *maesa*, only in front of it, that is, facing east towards Inginiyagala, the home of Bambura.

The shaman next took up the bow and arrow and danced wildly in all directions, pulling at the bowstring to see if it were strong enough, although he did not let fly. Being at last satisfied with his weapon he aimed at the *welemula* and shot, and although he hit it he only wounded the "boar," so the shaman continued to dance as though following the animal, but although he occasionally pulled hard on

535
796
417

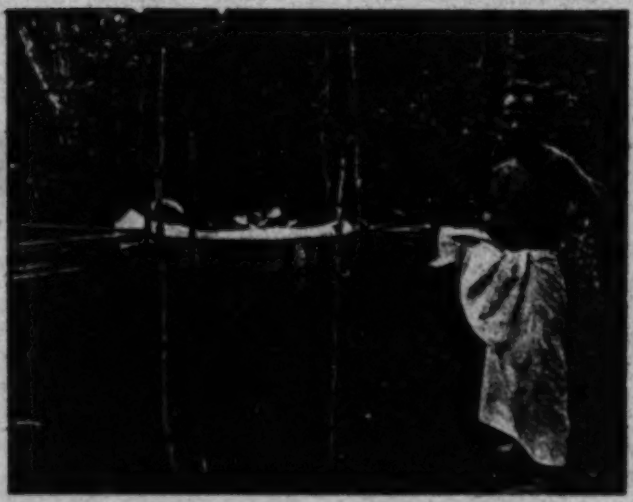


Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, offerings and properties prepared for the ceremony by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Wannaku kills the boar (Maha Oya)*

[facing p. 246]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the bowstring aiming in the air he did not loose his arrow. Soon he slipped down on one knee letting the other leg trail on the ground, and we were told that the wild boar had turned and charged him. Immediately one of the Vedda onlookers sprang forward and "medicined" the leg, that is to say, he wiped it down with a leaf as though he swept the pain from the leg to the earth, and the shaman, apparently cured, continued to hunt. Three times he shot at the *welemula* and hit it each time, then leaning back in the arms of his supporter he gasped: "I have shot the boar, now I am going." After more gasping and quivering he fell into his supporter's arms and the *yaka* left him.

535
796

After the ceremony all the food was eaten except the pumpkin which was left to rot on the *maesa*. Wannaku told us that the *yaku* would come and eat this, getting under the *maesa* and sucking the goodness out of it; the pumpkin would remain there and would look perfect, but should anyone cook it and try to eat it, he would find its substance was gone, so that it would be like trying to eat grass. As we asked to keep the bow and arrows, which would otherwise have been left to rot on the *maesa*, Wannaku sprinkled some water over them and muttered an explanation to the *yaku* before giving them to us.

The Pata Yaku Ceremony.

All Veddas recognise childbirth as a time of extreme pain and even danger to women, and the individuals of the Sitala Wanniya group invoke the aid of the *yaku* as soon as pregnancy is diagnosed[1]. A week before we arrived at Sitala Wanniya this ceremony had been held on behalf of Bevini, the wife of Vela, who did not appear to be at all far advanced in pregnancy. On the other hand, Mari, the wife of Pema, on whose account the Pata Yaku dance which we witnessed was performed, appeared to be quite six months pregnant. The delay had probably been caused only by the lack of the good things which it was necessary to offer to the *yaku* on these occasions, and both Pema and his father-in-law Nila seemed very gratified when

843
796

[1] We did not hear of this ceremony among the Veddas of any other group.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 we provided the rice and coconut necessary for the ceremony.
796 This food is always eaten by the community after the *yaku* have inspected it.

The *yaku* invoked to ensure safety during pregnancy and
843 childbirth are three in number and are called Pata (bark) Yaku.
796 No story could be discovered concerning them, nor could any
796 reason be elicited for the name Pata (bark) or the large quantity of bast which is used in the dance. This can be taken from any tree in the jungle, and is torn into strips about half-an-inch broad. It may, however, be suggested that these particular *yaku* require the *inner* bark of trees as a resting-place just as the *yaku* invoked to come to the *kolamaduwa* or *alutyakagama* come first to the leaves used in making these structures, and then may or may not enter the person of the shaman, while they may take refuge again in the leaves after they leave the shaman. In the instances cited the leafy structures were beaten with sticks after the ceremony to drive the *yaku* away; this ritual was not observed in the Pata Yaku ceremony, but it must be remembered that only three *yaku* were invoked and the shaman may have been thoroughly satisfied that they had gone away from the place, while, on the other hand, in the two other ceremonies we were told that hosts of attendant *yaku* rested amid the leaves, and that the more important spirits alone entered the persons of the dancers.

The properties used in the Pata Yaku ceremony held for
843 Mari at Sitala Wanniya were as follows: three stout posts,
796 which were thrust into the ground in a line; the tallest was about 2 ft 6 in. high and the shortest somewhat less than 2 ft, the upper ends of all being forked and large quantities of strips of bast lashed to them. These bast covered stakes are called
[293] the *usmukaliya*, *medamukaliya* and *balakanna*, i.e. the high, middle and young post respectively, and each one belongs to one of the Pata Yaku. The *wilakodiya* or *kude* (umbrella), which belongs to all the Pata Yaku, is a similar bunch of bast strips tied to a rather longer stick which is not driven into the ground. The *amanula* is a stout stick about 18 inches long, to which bunches of bast are tied at each end and doubled back so as to present somewhat the appearance of a dumbbell. All these

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843
796

properties had been used previously in the ceremony performed for Bevini[1].

843
796
535

Two dancers must take part in the ceremony, and one of them should be the woman's father, whether he be shaman or not; if the woman has no father, or if he is unable to dance, her paternal uncle or her husband may take his part. In the ceremony we witnessed Nila, the father of Mari, and Vela, who was no relation to her, both wore the *hangala*. Nila also wore wristlets and cross shoulder straps of bark which represented beads.

As usual all the women and children collected at one side of the cleared space to watch the ceremony, and Mari joined the other women in preparing the offering of cooked food. An arrow was struck (Plate XLV, fig. 1) in the ground beside the *usmukaliya*, and Nila, standing in front of the three posts, began an invocation (No. XXX) which was soon taken up by the other men. Nila salaamed, took the arrow out of the earth and began to dance round the three posts, and then in and out between them, without observing any particular order, holding the end of the shaft with one hand and the head of the arrow with the other. The usual steps and movements were performed, the knees bent, the body inclined from the waist and swaying to and fro, the arms with the arrow between them being moved to and fro, but not raised higher than the chest. Vela followed Nila closely; it appeared that he should have held an arrow, but not having one, he did the next best thing and pretended that he had one, holding his hands as though there was an arrow between them.

Suddenly when between two of the posts Nila dropped the arrow on the ground and leapt over it. Kaira, one of the onlookers, immediately picked it up and returned it to Nila. Nila then dropped the arrow between the other two posts and again leapt over it. This was repeated several times, Kaira always picking up the arrow and returning it to Nila, whose movements Vela imitated. Although we asked numerous questions as to the meaning of this figure no reason could be supplied, "Our fathers did it" was all the information we could obtain. The movements had gradually become quicker and

[1] See genealogy, p. 61.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843
796
535

wilder till after a final leap between the posts Nila fell supine with outstretched arms, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers. The *yaka* of the high post now possessed Nila who, after a few minutes' immobility, began to shiver and gasp, then springing forward he danced to the posts with shuffling feet and head bent forward, and examined each one in turn. This he did by dropping his head on them so that his face was partly buried in the bast, his supporter always close behind him (Plate XLV, fig. 2). We were told that Nila was now possessed by all three *yaku*, who appear to have entered him as he bent over the posts. The exact moment of the entry and exit of the *yaka* into the person of the shaman was often very ill-defined, although in this instance, and indeed in most cases when more than one *yaka* was present at a dance, it was clear when the first *yaka* arrived, it seemed that the other *yaka* entered the shaman without giving any immediate sign of their presence.

The *yaku* speaking through Nila signified that they were pleased with the posts built for their reception. Then Nila picked up the *wila* and shouting, apparently with approval, held it up by each end and whirled the handle round making the bast strands fly out, then he approached Mari and waved it over [587] her head and rested it there, so that her head was buried in the bast for several seconds while Nila predicted a male child (Plate XLVI, fig. 1)[1]. Nila then danced to Handuna and waved the *wila* over him. No particular reason was given for [554] this, Handuna being no relation to the woman, but he was the most important old man in the community.

After covering Handuna with the *wila*, Nila danced wildly, always with the rapt expression of a man possessed by a *yaku*, showing his pleasure by holding the *wila* aloft and whirling it round and round. Then Nila put down the *wila* and took the *amanula* and dancing with it in his hand he approached Mari stretching it out towards her, but he only stayed a few seconds and passed on to Handuna and falling on the latter's chest spoke and again foretold the birth of a male child to Mari.

[1] The sex of the child is determined by the position assumed by the strips of bast as they fall over the woman's head. If most fall over the woman's face the child will be a girl, if over the occiput a boy.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843
535
796

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman buries his face in the *uruwahaliya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250a]

843
535
796
[1987]

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman predicts the sex of the child (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, Nila prays for his daughter's safe delivery (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nila exchanged the *amamula* for the *wila*, and coming to Mari again, raised the *wila* above her head and lowered it to the ground, letting the bast strips brush her face and body and then sweep the ground. This was done in order to wipe away the pain of labour. Then he leapt back to the centre of the cleared space and danced in and out between the three posts, hitting them with the *wila*. This was probably a sign of pleasure, for the driving away of *yaku* by striking their resting place would probably only take place at the end of the ceremony. He again approached Mari and fell back into the arms of his supporter, only remaining quiet for a few seconds until, trembling and gasping, he bent his head over the *usmukaliya* and buried his face in the bast. After doing this over each post he returned to the *usmukaliya* and said he must go, speaking in the usual husky and gasping *yaku* voice; then he fell exhausted into the arms of his supporter. All the Veddas now began to sing the invocation, and it was clear that the *yaku* had not departed from Nila for he soon began to quiver and gasp again, and sprang forward and danced between the three posts; then he began to search for something, lifting the strands of bast on the *usmukaliya*, and after an exaggerated pantomimic search he found the *wila*, turning this in his hands so that the bast swung at right angles, he waved it over each of the three posts; then turning to the *usmukaliya*, bent his head low over it and fell back exhausted. The *yaku* now left him and he recovered consciousness without any quivering or trembling, salaamed to the *usmukaliya* and sat down to rest. All the properties were immediately piled together under a tree. It may be noted that although Vela began to dance with Nila, he did not become possessed and so took no part in the latter portion of the dance.

843
535
796
[A4]

After a short rest Nila went to the pile and holding a few strands of bast in one hand (Plate XLVI, fig. 2) repeated the following prayer to the Pata Yaku for his daughter's safety a number of times:—

[539]

Ant! mapt darwasta hiri antardunk wandu epā mi wara.
Gada yanta denda ituna.

Ant! (May) any harm not happen to my child this time.
(You) must permit (her) to land (i.e. to escape from her sea of troubles).

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

THE DOLA YAKA CEREMONY.

222 437 Collecting honey is almost as important to the Vedda as hunting, for not only is honey valuable as food but it is one of the most important articles of barter, and every year at the end of the honey season the Moorman pedlar[1] penetrates into the wildest parts of the jungle with iron, cloth, pots and beads to exchange for the highly prized jungle honey.

222 776 796 Nor is honey collecting without risk, for the "Little People of the Rocks" can be very angry, and their sting is deadly. Hence the Veddas ask for success in honey collecting from their natural protectors the *yaku*, and Dola Yaka is especially invoked for this purpose. Although there is no tradition concerning his actions or his dwelling place his aid is invoked for success in collecting *bambara* honey from trees, and for the more dangerous task of cutting the combs from the craggy hill tops and rock faces in which the colonies of the rock bee make their homes. The successful invocation of Dola Yaka can only take place in the early afternoon at the time when the bees are most active in visiting flowers.

796 778 A *massa* with a single platform about 4 ft 6 in. from the ground was built, and two arrows were fixed in the centre of the space cleared for the dance (Plate XLVII). A betel leaf was placed on the top of each and pressed down on the shaft so that it rested on the feathers, and a small bead necklace was looped over the head of each arrow and rested on the betel leaf. These leaves were said to represent the large bundles of leaves which the Veddas use to smoke the bees from the comb, and the necklaces represent the creeper by which the twigs would be tied together and by which it would be lowered over the cliff edge. It was noted that one arrow was taller than the other, and we were told that the taller arrow was the one which would be used in cutting the comb, and that when the honey was taken it would be thrust through the withy binding the bundle of leaves used

[1] The term Moorman is applied to the numerous Mohammedans who make their living as shopkeepers and pedlars. Many of them are proud of their alleged Arabic descent, but it is only in a minority that skin colour or features suggest Arab blood, and the appearance of the majority of Moormen scarcely differs from that of the Tamils of the East Coast, among whom their most considerable settlements are found.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XLVII

796
778

Dola Yaka ceremony, the offering to the Yaka (Sitala Wannigya)

[facing p.252]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

as a smoker; the other was "just an arrow" and did not appear to fulfil any specific purpose. Small leafy twigs from the surrounding trees were placed on the ground round the arrows, and on these a number of betel leaves and areca nuts were placed as an offering, the twigs being a device for preventing the offering to the *yaku* from touching the ground. 796 778

All the adult men of the community decided to take part in this dance, as only those who become possessed by Dola Yaka would derive benefit from the ceremony, that is, obtain special favour and help from him in gathering honey. In order to provide a supporter for each man, the dance was performed in two parts, Nila, Kaira and Pema taking part in the first performance. The ceremony began by these men walking several times round the arrows singing an invocation (No. XXXI) as they moved clockwise and occasionally salaamed to the arrows. Soon they began to dance and at times passed their hands, palms downwards, over the top of the arrows. This was the old custom; the reason for it was not known. After a little while Nila fell and was supported, soon all three dancers became possessed and bending forward shook their heads over the arrows. Then Nila taking the lead, they all moved to one end of the dancing ground, where they assumed the strained attitude of men listening attentively for the distant hum of bees, with body bent forward, one hand to the ear and the other raised as if to impose silence on their companions. Suddenly they all leapt back to the arrows and danced round them wildly, and shook their heads low over them; again they listened for the bees and beat their chests with joy, crying, "We hear many bees, there will be plenty of honey." 796 535 787

Returning to the arrows they danced round them again, at times falling back into the arms of their supporters, and again springing forward to dance. Nila gave each of us a betel leaf as a sign of favour from Dola Yaka, and then spoke in a gasping voice to Handuna who answered him. All beat their bodies with both hands, driving away imaginary bees. Again they listened for the bees, and this time picked up some leafy twigs and pretending they were alight shook them beneath the *maesa*, which now represented a comb, but they soon sprang back and 796 535

Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

rushed to the opposite side of the dancing ground to get away from the angry bees. After repeating this pantomime, Nila, with much gasping and shaking of the arrows, promised *hambara* combs to Handuna, wherever he went. More dancing round the arrows followed and another mock smoking was performed, after which the three men fled from the *massa* brushing the bees away and even feigning to pick some off their bodies. Then they returned to the arrows round which they danced until they all fell back and Dola Yaka departed from them.

Handuna explained to us that in dancing to Dola Yaka it was usual to hold a cloth over the head, and that Dola Yaka had remarked on the absence of cloths and warned the dancers that evil might befall them if they were to slip and fall with their heads uncovered. So two pieces of white cloth were provided for Handuna and Vela, who put on *hangala* and repeated the dance. The ceremony was identical with that already described except in two respects; in the first part of the dance Handuna and Vela held their cloths in their outstretched arms, frequently putting them over their heads and always doing so when listening for the hum of the bees, and when they prophesied to their fellows each held his cloth so as to cover both the man to whom he spoke and himself. Both men, however, put down their cloths just before the end of the dance and, pulling the arrows out of the ground, went through the pantomime of cutting the combs from below the *massa* with them.

The Invocation of the Rahu Yaku.

796
796

Sitala Wanniya was the only place at which we saw this ceremony, though the Rahu Yaku were also invoked at the *alutyahagama* ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula. At Sitala Wanniya the Rahu Yaku are called upon to cure sickness and to give good luck in collecting honey from trees. It seemed that they were not invoked to grant protection or good fortune when rock-honey was sought, this being the function of Dola Yaka. The offerings necessary to propitiate them are cocoanuts and rice, and each dancer must wear a piece of white cloth and cross shoulder straps of bark.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The story relates that there was once three brothers, and one day the youngest was very angry and quarrelled with his wife. He left her in his cave and went out hunting, and when he returned he found a strange man in the cave with his wife. The stranger escaped so quickly that the angry husband could not shoot him; but he then beat his wife, and though he did not kill her he jumped into the fire and was burnt to death and became Gini Rahu Bandar or Yaka. When they died his two brothers became Rahu Yaku also.

A post was placed in the centre of the cleared dancing space, the upper end was split and bound so as to form the support for a pot containing coconut milk, a few areca nuts and betel leaves. This was called the *wilkeraka* (lake pot), for once in the old days water was required to make the coconut milk for an offering to the Rahu Yaku, and as there was no stream near by it had to be fetched from a lake; hence the name *wilkeraka*. A *massa* (well seen in Plate LXVIII, fig. 1) about 4 ft 6 in. high was built of sticks at one side of the dancing ground, and two pots of cooked rice and coconut milk were put on it as an offering to the *yaku*. A piece of bark to represent a necklace was put on the *wilkeraka*; it was not known why it was necessary to offer a necklace to the Rahu Yaku, but it was always done[1]. Wooden *hadawa* (swords) were used when invoking Rahu Yaku; these were two flattened sticks about 18 ins. long decorated with bands of red and yellow pigment and with guards made of twigs of fresh green leaves. One of these *hadawa* without its guard is shown in fig. 11.

The use of the sword (*hadawa*) and the objects themselves are both curious, for Veddas have never used any weapon but the bow and axe, and Handuna explained that though these were called *hadawa* they really represented ceremonial arrows

[1] It was quite clear that Vedda men never wore necklaces, but *yaku*, especially dangerous *yaku*, as the Rahu Yaku were declared to be, were sometimes offered necklaces or pieces of bark to represent them. Thus at Uswewatura Bulula, Indigolla Yaka was considered especially dangerous, and the shaman kept a particular string of old and highly valued beads and used it only when making invocations to this *yaku*. These and other instances strengthen the idea expressed in Chapter VIII that beads are prized among the Veddas for their magical properties, the idea of ornament being quite secondary.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
978
577

or *aude*, yet *ran hadawa* the "golden sword" is mentioned in many of the songs and invocations, so that it seems that the whole of the Vedda ceremony of the invocation of the Rahu Yaku has been taken over from the Sinhalese, among whom the cult of Gini Rahu Bandar occurs. This borrowing must have occurred in ancient days, perhaps as long ago as the time when the Sinhalese invaded the Vedda country and carved the drip ledges on the caves, for as already mentioned the Sinhalese Rahu Bandar has become identified with three Vedda brothers whose spirits have retained only traces of the fierce nature of the Sinhalese demon. Once having borrowed the idea of a sword (*hadawa*) and invocations in which it was mentioned, its name would remain, though in course of time the implement would become assimilated to the Vedda *aude*.

796
535

Handuna and Kaira put on *hangala* and stood in front of the *wilkeruka* with the *hadawa* in their hands, and Handuna began to recite the invocation to the Rahu Yaku (No. XXXV). Kaira took up the words and repeated them, always a few words behind Handuna. Soon they began to dance slowly round the *wilkeruka* holding the *hadawa* in the same way as the *aude* is held in dances, i.e. right hand on point and left hand at the base of the handle, and as they danced they twirled them slowly in their fingers (Plate XLVIII, fig. 1). After a short time they both swayed their bodies more and the dance became more vigorous; then they began to shiver and shake their heads and became possessed by the two elder Rahu Yaku. They shouted, leaped and raised their *hadawa* in the air, twirled them round with their

Fig. 11. *Ran hadawa*. n.s.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

arms straight above their heads, and then stretching over the *wilkewake* exchanged *hadawa*. They danced a few steps and exchanged *hadawa* again, and yet once more before they bent their heads low over the *wilkewake*, by which action the *yaku* inspected the coconut milk and pronounced it very good. The exchange of swords was merely in imitation of the Rahu brothers who were said to have done this in their lifetime.

After approving of the offering of milk Handuna and Kaira, both followed by their supporters, danced to Nila, and Handuna placed his sword on the latter's chest while swaying his body and moving from one foot to the other, prophesying that Nila would have good luck in hunting and would take many combs (Plate XLVIII, fig. 2). Nila answered; Handuna and Kaira still gasping and trembling said that the *yaku* possessing them must go now, and that their brother the Fire Chief would come. There was more wild dancing round the *wilkewake*, and both men were so overcome that had their supporters not held them in their arms they must have fallen. We could not determine the exact time of the departure of the two elder Rahu Yaku and the advent of the younger brother[1]. Handuna and Kaira bent their heads simultaneously over the *wilkewake*, inspected the milk, were satisfied and continued to dance, and while a bundle of grass was brought and set on fire they raised both arms, and after holding hands over the *wilkewake* they rushed to the burning grass and danced on the fire till they put it out, then again holding hands they danced and bent their heads over the *wilkewake*. More grass was set alight, and after repeating their dance on it both fell back into their supporters' arms. In a few seconds they sprang forward and danced up to Nila: Handuna spoke in the gasping *yaku* voice and covered the swords with a cloth. More grass having been set alight the dance continued as before, first round the pot, then on the flames, and then round the pot again. While Handuna placed his sword on the chest of Nila the spirit within him spoke saying he must go soon, but both Handuna and Kaira danced again before

[1] It was perfectly clear that the idea of one *yaku* possessing two people at the same time presented no difficulty to Handuna and the rest of the Ilinda Wanniya community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

returning to Nila and giving him their *kadawa* to hold. This they did because they wanted to put them down, and they considered them too sacred and dangerous to be put on the ground, or even to be held by anyone who was not a grown man who had frequent intercourse with the spirits.

Handuna took the necklace from the *wilhevaka* and showed it to one of us (B. Z. S.), to whom he gave it, asking for a red necklace instead of the best one. Kaira followed Handuna and gave to each of us betel leaves from the *wilhevaka* as a sign of favour from the youngest of the Rahu Yaku. Then both went to the *maasa*, looked at the offering, and then fell back into their supporters' arms. We were told that the *yaka* was well pleased with the offering and was about to depart from them, but Nila sang the invocation and soon the two dancers began to tremble and shake their heads, then shouting hah! hah! they sprang forward and danced again. They picked up their *kadawa* from the *wilhevaka*, where they had been put for safety, this being considered a sufficiently sacred spot. Using the leaves which formed the hilts of their swords, they scooped out the coconut milk from the *wilhevaka* and scattered it about, and those on whom it happened to fall considered themselves lucky. Then the *yaka* spoke to Nila saying that he wished to go, and Nila answered "It is well." But before the *yaka* left Handuna and Kaira, the two men danced toward that side of the cleared spot where the women and children were grouped together, raising their *kadawa* and pointing at the group. One woman was carrying a baby suffering from yaws, and Handuna held his *kadawa* over the child's head and promised that its sores should be cured. Then Handuna and Kaira gave their *kadawa* to Nila; both bent their heads over the *maasa* and the *yaka* left them.

The necklace was replaced on the *wilhevaka* which was put with the *kadawa* on the *maasa*. Handuna and Kaira repeated a charm over them and all were removed from the *maasa*. Handuna picked a few leafy twigs, put them under a tree, then took the leaves from the *kadawa* and placed them on the freshly picked leaves, so that the hallowed leaves might not touch the ground; he then poured the remains of the coconut milk from the *wilhevaka* over them.

796
535

Fig. 1. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

[787]

Fig. 2. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the shaman prophesies good luck in hunting and honey gathering (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 258]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

When later we asked Handuna for the *hadiyas* as specimens, the request was not granted until something was given in exchange to the Rahu Yaku, as Handuna said they might cause trouble if their property were taken from them. 796

WANAGATA YAKU.

The story of the Wanagata Yaku was that once a family became imprisoned in their rock-shelter by the fall of rock which blocked the entrance to the cave, so that the whole family died and their spirits became Wanagata Yaku, who are now invoked for help in hunting. In spite of this the ceremonial with which these *yaku* are invoked did not appear to have any reference to the story. 776 773

A sapling rather more than six feet high with its head and branches was stripped of its bark and thrust into the ground in the centre of the space cleared for dancing; its upper end had been split previously so as to form a support for small objects, and long strands of bast were tied to it. A handkerchief was thrown over the top and pressed down between the split ends, and some betel leaves were placed on this. 796 535 778

The shaman wearing a *hangala* danced slowly round the post with a handkerchief in his hand, while the invocation was sung. The handkerchief was soon exchanged for an *aude*, and it was noted that this was not the same one that had been used when invoking Kande Yaka in a previous dance. In order to avoid putting the handkerchief on the ground the shaman tied it round his shoulder. Then taking some betel leaves he danced with these and the *aude* in his hands, then transfixing the betel leaves on the point of the *aude* he raised them to his head, thus offering them to the Wanagata Yaku (Plate XLIX, fig. 1). Soon he became possessed and bent his head, shaking his hair over his face as he clung to the post with one hand while his whole body quivered and shook. With a shout he seized two *aude*, and holding one in each hand came to one of us (C. G. S.) and holding both *aude* over his shoulders said, as he quivered and shifted from one foot to the other, "You have called us, what do you want?" He returned to the post, when a rice 796 535

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

mortar was brought and a bowl containing coconut milk in which betel leaves floated was placed upon it. The shaman placed a betel leaf from the bowl on the *ande* and presented one to each of us in turn, as a sign of favour on the part of the Wanagata Yaku, speaking in a hoarse gasping voice and raising his arms alternately the while. He returned to the post, and grasping the bast streamers, bent his head (Plate XLIX, fig. 2) and quivered all over before dancing round it with both *ande* in his hands; finally he clasped the post with bowed head, and the *yaku* left him.

The Alutyakagama Ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula

796

The structure of the *alutyakagama* is well shown in a number of the figures illustrating this ceremony, and is especially clear in fig. 1 of plate LII.

It seems probable that this is not a pure Vedda ceremony, but is to be regarded as an amalgamation of a dance to Kande Yaka and the Nae Yaku, whom this people called the Alutyaku (i.e. New Yaku), and of a dance to Gale Yaka only met with under this name here and at Omuni. We were unable to determine whether the *alutyakagama* structure had always been used when dancing to Gale Yaka, and had been carried from his cult to that of the Nae Yaku, or had long been considered necessary for the invocation of the Nae or Alut Yaku. Perhaps neither of these events occurred; indeed, we consider it most probable that both dances have been confused with the *kolmadurwa* or one of its early forms such as the *ruwala* ceremony which is described later on in this chapter, and which is almost certainly of foreign origin.

Unuwatura Bubula is a small and extremely poor settlement of Veddas, of whom a general description has been given on p. 47.

796
535

The dance began by Sela Kaurala repeating an invocation with a handkerchief on his head[1], while Naida Kaurala holding

[177]

[1] Unfortunately we have no exact note stating to whom this invocation was sung. It is most probable that it was to Gale Yaka, as this was the *yaka* by whom the shaman was first possessed. If this is so the fact of the handkerchief being held over the head is of interest, as Mr Parker identifies Gale Yaka with the Sinhalese Gale Deviya who is depicted with a three-tiered hat, which is also worn by his dancer, called

Plate XLIX

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman offers betel leaves to the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)

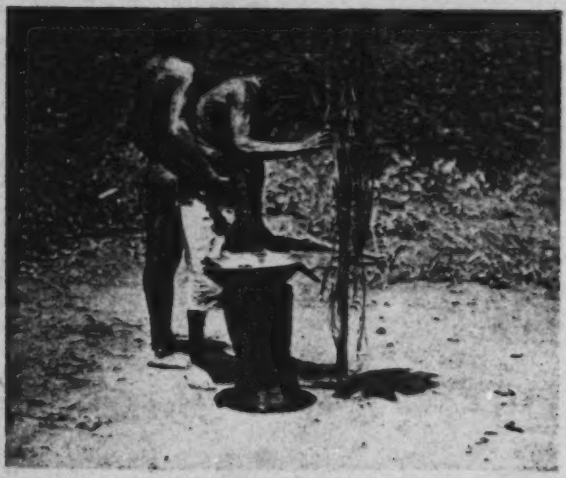


Fig. 2. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 260]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

a handkerchief between his hands danced first round the *alutyakaguma*, and then in and out between the posts, at times holding the handkerchief over his head (Plate L, fig. 1). We were told that these handkerchiefs would be kept apart for the *yaku* and would never be used for any purpose other than dancing. The shaman, Sela Kaurala, soon became agitated and was supported, and the Gale Yaka entered his person. Now he assumed the rapt expression of one possessed, pulled down his hair, and with a shout caught hold of the leaves hanging from the *alutyakaguma*, where he continued to dance in and out of the structure, shaking and hitting the hanging leaves as he passed, but frequently stopping at the west front to take hold of the bunches of leaves while quivering all over and shouting (Plate L, fig. 2). Now a rice-mortar was brought into the *alutyakaguma*, and the shaman placed the offering of cooked food upon it for the *yaku* to see and appreciate the good things provided. The *aude* was then placed on the rice pot, and the shaman, holding the leaves with both hands, shouted and shook his head, and then, taking an *aude* in either hand, picked up a few grains of rice on one of them (Plate LI, fig. 1), which he smelt, and although he did not eat them the *yaka* now pronounced the food to be good. About this time the shaman became possessed by one of the *Nae Yaku*. Three times the shaman inspected the rice, being possessed by a different *Nae Yaku* each time, and each spirit shouted his satisfaction. We were unable to discover the names of these as the shaman was taken ill after this dance, but there seemed no doubt that the dancer would know the *Nae Yaku* by whom he had been possessed. The shaman now wore two long necklaces of beads, putting them round his neck and under his arms, so as to form cross shoulder ornaments; we were told that these were for the *yakini*, but we were unable to discover whether this was one of the Alut Yakini or Gale Yakini who was mentioned in this locality.

The ceremony continued for some time as before, the shaman frequently shaking the leaves, shouting and gasping, and again inspecting the food. There was very little dancing, but this may

mumatirala, when dancing to him. Sometimes, however, when a three-tiered hat could not be obtained the dancer held a handkerchief over his head.

[197]

1cSeligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the beginning of the invocation (Unuwatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman and his supporter at the *alutyakagama* (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 261 a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate 1.1

796
535

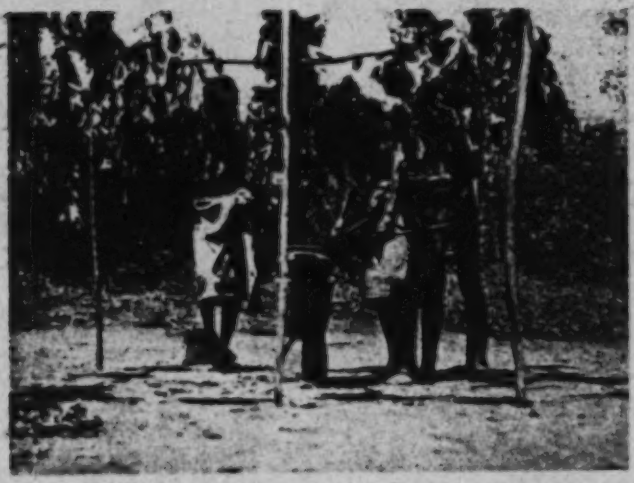


Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, testing the offering (Unuwatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman comes to us with an *aude* in each hand (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 261 b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

have been because the shaman was an old man who suffered from a severe cough. At one time, instead of picking up the rice with an *aude*, he did it with the corner of his handkerchief. Great care was always taken that neither the *aude*, the beads nor the handkerchief should be put on the ground, and when the shaman wanted to get rid of either of the two former he placed them on the rice pot; at one time when he did not require the handkerchief he tied it over his shoulder, for to place anything belonging to the *yaka* on the ground would be to offer a serious insult to them.

After some time the first rice pot was removed, and a second one was brought. Sela Kaurala squatted beside it and sang, while Naida Kaurala danced with the handkerchief in his hands. One pot of food was for the *yaka*, and one for the *yakini*. The shaman exchanged the handkerchief for an *aude* and danced with that, but soon picked up another *aude* and danced with one in each hand singing an invocation (No. XXXVII). Now he became possessed by Rahu Yaka, with the usual accompaniment of shivering and quaking and pulling at the leaves hanging from the *alutyakagama*. Some grass was brought and put under the *alutyakagama*; this was lit, and the shaman danced on the fire: more shaking and holding of the leaves followed, and then with an *aude* in each hand, which he held by the blades, he approached us (Plate LI, fig. 2) and spoke. He returned to the *alutyakagama*, and, holding the leaves with both hands, bent over the rice pot, and then danced round and in and out of the structure, hitting the pendant leaves. Meanwhile the Rahu Yaka song was repeated; at last stopping at the west side he bent his head over the rice pot and fell back. After a short rest Sela Kaurala put on the *hangala* and danced in the same way that Naida Kaurala had done, becoming possessed by Gale Yaka. There was no exceptional feature in this dance; the shaman danced at one time with the handkerchief and afterwards with the *aude*, and inspected the food, and there was much holding on to the leaves and shaking and speaking in the hoarse *yaka* voice. Before the *yaka* left the shaman he took the rice pot from the pounder and spun it (Plate LII, fig. 1); the second pot of food was brought and he spun that too. After the *yaka* had left him the shaman,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LII

796
535

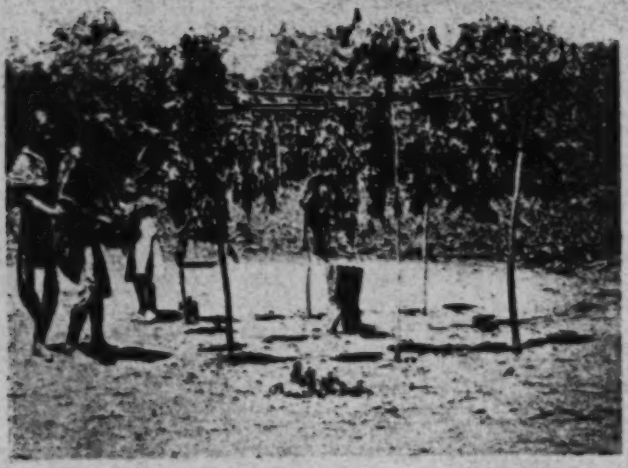


Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot of food (Unuwatura Bubula)

[417
415]

Fig. 2. Ruwala ceremony, the *ruwala* prepared by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

[facing p.262]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

still dancing, stripped the leaves from the *alutyakagama*, and, holding on to the horizontal cross bar, shook the framework violently in order to drive away any of the *yaku* who might still be resting there.

7AL 535

Unfortunately we were not able to get much trustworthy information about this or any of the other dances at Unuwatura Bubula, as Sela Kaurala, who appeared to suffer from asthma and chronic bronchitis, coughed up a good deal of blood after this dance, and was unable to discuss the ceremony with us afterwards. His pupil, Naida Kaurala, was not nearly so well informed. There were several points which we were unable to settle satisfactorily; Gale Yaku, we were told, were many and not one Yaka, yet Gale Yaka or Yaku seemed confused with Kande Yaka, for we were told that the big *anda* was for Kande Yaka and the smaller one for Bilindi Yaka. Nevertheless the shaman held both when dancing to Gale Yaka, and he spun the pot of rice, which in several other communities had been done by the shaman when possessed by Kande Yaka.

[114]

The Ruwala Ceremony.

This ceremony was danced by the Veddas of Unicho. It began by Wannaku, who was wearing a *kaugala* of new white cloth, moving slowly round the centre post of the *ruwala* holding a bunch of leaves in each hand and reciting an invocation to Ruwala Yaka and Yakini, who live on Nuwaragala. He stood close to the central pole of the *ruwala*, and at first faced towards the north, that is, not in the direction of Nuwaragala but towards the quarter whence came the *yaku* who live on Nuwaragala and other hills who are invoked in this dance. These *yaku* were not the spirits of the dead, but had always existed as *yaku*. The original home was on the other side of the ocean in Handun Kaela, the "sandal-wood jungle," which the educated, but not the peasant, Sinhalese recognise as being in India. Long ago the *yaku* made a raft and crossed the ocean, and the sail (Sin. *ruwala*) and mast of their raft are represented by the centre pole (*ruwala*) of the structure of that name, while the streamers represent the "silver" and "golden" stays of their mast.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

796
535

Plate LII, fig. 2 shows the *ruwala* built by Wannaku and his comrades at Maha Oya.

796
535
796

The dance began by Wannaku moving slowly round the central post. As he did this he sometimes waved the bundle of leaves which he held in his hands, at other times he held his hands close together in front of his body. As his dancing became quicker and more vigorous, Sina, his eldest son, placed himself behind him, and following his movements prepared to support him when he became possessed. Suddenly Wannaku fell forward assuming a cruciform attitude, his arms held stiffly at right angles to his body and his neck rigidly extended so that his head was pressed against the centre post of the *ruwala*, his supporter bearing the whole strain of holding him in this position. He still grasped the leaves in his hands, and his face was buried in the leaves tied to the centre post of the *ruwala*. He remained in this position for perhaps half a minute, then shaking violently he clutched the post in both hands. It was explained that the *yaku* were in the leaves tied to the *ruwala*, and that thence they passed into the body of the shaman, in whose shaking and quivering person they inspected and approved the structure of the *ruwala*, while the shaman clutched the central post. After a few moments the shaman danced again, this time more energetically than before, moving in and out of and round the structure of the *ruwala*, while he struck at the leaves pendant from its framework with the twigs he held in his hands. His movements became more violent, and he shouted several times. All this was explained as play on the part of the *yaku*, who thus showed their pleasure in the *ruwala* that had been built for them. Wannaku clutched at the side posts and bast streamers, and struck these with the leaves he held in his hands. The *yaku* thus examined the streamers to ascertain if they were properly made and of the right number. Wannaku then danced very energetically, and leaving the *ruwala* dragged Sina to where Mr Perera stood a few paces from the *ruwala*, and shaking and gesticulating violently spoke to him promising him success in all he undertook[1].

[1] Mr Samuel Perera, Forest Ranger, was an old friend of the Uniche community, and it was owing to his presence and assistance at our first interview with Wannaku and his fellows that we were immediately on the best of terms with them.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
78L

Wannaku again danced in and out and round the structure, then after striking the leaves and clutching the uprights of the *ruwala* he dragged his supporter towards an elderly Vedda onlooker, before whom he quivered and shouted as he had done before Mr Perera. We were told that in this case he prophesied success in hunting. After this he returned to the *ruwala*, and, still dancing and quivering, took a streamer in his left hand and shouting and dancing wiped its length with the bunch of leaves that he held in his right hand. He began this manœuvre at the east front of the *ruwala*, and taking each streamer in turn, went round in the opposite direction to the hands of a clock, but he soon turned and went round the reverse way; we were afterwards told that he should have gone clockwise all the time, and that when he did otherwise "it was a mistake." After this he danced round the central post, clutching at the leaves that hung from the roof of the *ruwala*, and at last moving so energetically and violently as to get away from his supporter Sina, who had been following his movements as best he could. About this time Sina himself became possessed, and after a few moments of extremely energetic dancing both men fell supine at the north front of the *ruwala*. Wannaku came to himself almost immediately, but Sina appeared to remain unconscious, even when lifted up and propped against the central post of the *ruwala*, while Wannaku shook bunches of leaves in his face and over his head, Wannaku meanwhile dancing energetically and repeating two words, to which the onlookers answered "Eh-h." We were told that the *yaku* in this way announced their satisfaction with the *ruwala* which had been built for them, and indicated that they were now ready to go.

Then Wannaku stumbled to the central post, to which he clung in a seemingly exhausted condition, partly supported by a Vedda, who had been following him since Sina fell to the ground. As Sina, who had been helped up by another man, still appeared in a semi-conscious condition, water was splashed over him, with the result that he soon came to himself. This was the end of the ceremonial as far as Ruwala Yaka and Ruwala Yakini were concerned, but after a short break another Vedda invoked two other *yaku*, Milalane Yaka and Milalane

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5. (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Yakini, who live on a hill called Milalanegala. This Vedda
535 danced in very much the same way as Wannaku had danced,
786 and the few differences noted, such as his less energetic steps, were doubtless due to personal idiosyncrasy. However, he did not bury his head in the leaves tied to the central post on becoming possessed, but shook the leaves which he held in his right hand in his own face, having previously struck these against those pendant from the *ruwala*. After dancing for a short time he staggered up to Wannaku and spoke, the spirits possessing him asking why they were called and whether there was sickness amongst the people. To this Wannaku answered "No," telling the spirits that he had called them at the request of the white man who wished to know them. After this the celebrant again danced in and out of and round the *ruwala*, striking at the pendant leaves. Soon he buried his head in the leaves tied to the central post, his whole body quivering, then he quickly jumped away from the pole and made his way to the Ratemahatmaya of the district, who was an onlooker, and shook the leaves in his right hand against the latter's chest, telling him he would be successful in the business he was about to undertake. This was in answer to a question that the Ratemahatmaya had shouted a short time previously. There was more dancing round the central pole, the performer striking it with the leaves which he held in his hand; after a few minutes he approached Wannaku, and striking him with the leaves said something, and again danced round the central pole which he seized in his hand and shook four times, once facing each of the cardinal points of the compass, shouting loudly as he did so. This was the means adopted by the *yakin* to test the solidity of the structure. We were told that this dance was generally per-
[755 formed in order to cure sickness, and if the pole fell or the
787 structure came to pieces the patient for whose benefit it took place would die or others would become ill. At last with many quiverings and clutchings at the central post the *yakin* took their departure.

796 A similar dance lasting a shorter time, during which the
535 dancer was possessed by Moranegala Yaka, then took place, after which Wannaku, who appeared to have quite recovered

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from his previous fatigue, invoked Walimabagala Yaka and Yakini. The dancing of these *yaks* exactly resembled that described at the beginning of the ceremony, and is therefore not further recorded.

796
535

THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

It seems very doubtful whether the *kolamaduwa* as it exists at the present day should be described as a Vedda ceremony at all, though as it was danced by the Henebedda Veddas at Bendiyagalge it merits a description. It is in any case certain that the *kolamaduwa* is not often performed, as the amount of food and other properties necessary could scarcely have been found by one small Vedda community[1]; also its main objects, the curing of disease in cattle and epidemic sickness among men, would not appeal greatly to small communities of hunters dwelling in healthy surroundings. At the present day the Henebedda Veddas make rough chena and herd cattle for the Sinhalese, but the cattle have not yet become an important factor in their lives, and the people themselves do not suffer from epidemics. Further, at Bandaraduwa, on the borders of the Eastern Province, the only other place where this dance was known among Veddas, we were told that they would perform it for the Sinhalese, and that each dancer would be paid Rs. 5 for his trouble besides being given his food. Our aged Sinhalese informant, mentioned on p. 31, told us that the *kolamaduwa* was not danced by these Veddas when he was a boy, and that he considered it had arisen as an elaboration of the *ruwala* ceremony which used to be performed in those days. The *ruwala*—already described in this chapter—itself shows signs of having been introduced from the Tamils of the east coast, though probably at a comparatively remote period. Great numbers of *yaks* and *yakini* should be invoked at the *kolamaduwa*; some,

755
535
177

[1] According to Tissahami all the following offerings were necessary for a full ceremony. Eight measures of rice and two large pots in which to cook it, 10 coconuts, 5 bundles of yams, 50 plantains, 2 sugar canes, 100 betel leaves, 12 candles, 1 lb. sandal wood, 100 balls of jaggery, ½ lb. turmeric, 1 lb. of resin, 4 coloured cloths, 5 yards of white cloth, 4 necklets of beads, 8 small baskets and 8 cloths to cover them, 4 pairs of metal bangles, 1 bottle of ghee and flowers of various kinds.

[782]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

7155
535
177

the spirits of people who frankly were not Veddas, such as Peradeniya Bandar; others, spirits of men like Panikki Vedda already referred to, famous for catching elephants and buffaloes, who were Veddas in little more than name. Others, if Veddas in name, yet behaved like Kandyan chiefs, if we may judge from their deeds quoted in the invocations, such as building dagabas and bringing paddy fields under cultivation. Some of the Maha Yakini are regarded as the wives of such chiefs, and Unapane Kiriamma is in this community regarded as the wife of Unapane Wanniya, the chief who first brought the paddy fields at Unapane under cultivation.

The Kolamaduwa Ceremony at Bendiyagalge.

796
535
778

This was admittedly not a full ceremony. Although the bower was built the correct offerings were not made nor were all the *yaku* invoked, and a disturbance which took place the next evening was said to be due to the anger of the *yaku* on account of the lack of offerings (see p. 125). Plate LIII, fig. 1 shows the *kolamaduwa* with bunches of leaves hanging from the horizontal bars of the framework and a circle of leaves called *kolavegma* suspended from the centre, that is, the crossing of the horizontal bars. The shaman, Sita Wanniya, Randu Wanniya and Kaira, holding bunches of leaves in their hands, walked round the circle within the upright posts while they sang an invocation to the *yaku* to come to the leaves of the *kolamaduwa*. Soon they began to dance (Plate LIII, fig. 2) with the usual step, gently at first, but gradually swaying and bending more and more they brushed the leaves of the *kolamaduwa* with those they held in their hands at each step.

A basket covered with a cloth had been placed on a tripod in one corner of the bower, and this should have contained various offerings for the *yakini*, including flowers and beads; not having either to offer, a few leaves had been put in it. Sita Wanniya seized this basket called *pakudama*, and danced with it in both hands, then after a short time he shouted "Ah, ah!" and became possessed by the Maha Yakini. When the Sita

796
535

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Kolamadawa ceremony, the kolamadawa (Hambaddo)

Fig. 2. Kolamadawa ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Hambaddo)

[facing p. 268a]

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Kalumadewa ceremony, the shaman and Sita Wanniya between possessed (Hanabedda)*

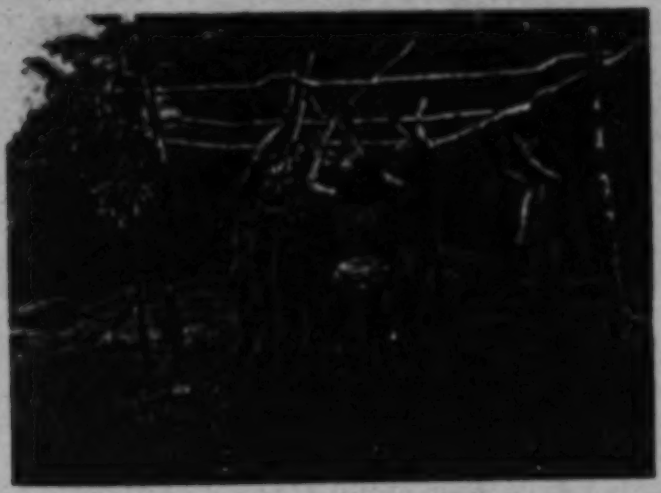


Fig. 2. Kalumadewa ceremony, shaking the leaves from the Anilumadewa (Hanabedda)*

[facing p. 268]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

Wanniya picked up the basket the shaman put his head inside the circle, and a Vedda immediately made ready to support him if he should fall. The shaman, now possessed, held on to the horizontal pieces and trembled violently, while his head and the upper part of his body were hidden by the leaves. Soon he left it and danced in and out of the *Aelanadeyna*, followed closely by a Vedda ready to support him. Sita Wanniya hid himself in the leaves of the circle in the same way for a few seconds, his whole body swaying to and fro the while. On leaving the *Aelanegama* he danced about wildly, but soon returned to put his head into the circle again, and then, swaying and tottering, danced up to us, and, speaking with the voice of the *yakini*, said, "Why have you called us? there is nothing in this basket for us, and there is no food provided." Then he returned to the circle, into which he thrust his head, while several men surrounded him and fanned him with leaves. When he emerged he again came to us, and in the person of the *yakini* asked us for bangles, and again returned to the *Aelanegama*; then several of the dancers pushed their heads into it at once. Sita Wanniya returned to us and placed the basket on each of our heads in turn, presumably as a sign of favour. Then the shaman put his head into the *Aelanegama*, and all the other dancers, having put down their bunches of leaves, now held peeled sticks to represent swords, and raised these over the shaman's head, and then slashed the leaves off the *Aelanadeyna* (Plate LIV, fig. 2). Shouting and gasping, they all came to us, those possessed by the *yaka* gasping out that they must leave; then they returned to the *Aelanadeyna* and danced in and out, raising and crossing their sticks. This was continued for a little while, the shaman several times putting his head into the circle and all using their sticks as before. The spirits left those who were possessed quietly, without producing collapse, and the performers ended the dance by silently putting their sticks on the top of the *Aelanegama*, this being done to avoid putting them on the ground, as they were now sacred to the *yaka*.

After the dance the shaman cut the *Aelanegama* from off the *Aelanadeyna* and tore off the leaves still remaining on it, in order to prevent the *yaka* returning to it.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

THE AVANA CEREMONY.

796 The *avana* ceremony which we saw at Henebedda may be described here. Mr Bibile told us that he had heard of it having been performed in his father's time by Sinhalese in the neighbourhood of Bibile, and the former Korala of Bakiella in the Eastern Province, a man particularly versed in magic and spiritual matters, knew all about this custom, while on the other hand many Veddas did not know of it. Our impression is that we are here dealing with an original Vedda custom, consisting of an offering of part of the game killed, which has been modified by the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedda country, and again adopted from them in its modified form by the Veddas.

The following account of the *avana* custom records what we 796 actually saw done on the night of February 7th, at Henebedda 224 on the occasion of the death of a fine buck. The stag, which 782 had been shot a short distance from Bendiyagalge caves, was carried to a convenient slab of rock between our camp and the caves and there cut up, an arrow being most skilfully used to skin and disjoint the animal; the throat was opened low down in the front of the neck, one or more big veins being severed, and three double handfuls of blood were smeared upon a heap of *mora* leaves which had previously been laid on a rock. Then six long narrow pieces of muscle called *anda malu* (eel flesh, because the strips of muscle are long like eels) were cut from the root of the neck as well as two morsels from the tongue, the nostril and the ears. These twelve pieces of meat, constituting 796 the offering called *avana*, were put on the blood-smeared leaves 782 for the Kadawara Yaku, who were said to be the spirits of eleven Veddas who were named and described as follows:

773 Avana Vedda, the first Vedda who instituted the rite.

Lē Vedda, the first man who smeared blood on the heap of leaves.

Mas Vedda, the first man who laid meat upon the heap of leaves.

Buta Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who sent the animal whose blood and flesh were used at the first *avana* ceremony.

Atu Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who makes noises in the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

forest near the hunter to make him believe that the game he is following has run away. 796

Bedi Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who breaks sticks and causes dead branches to fall and so frighten game away. 782 773

Kili Mas Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who cut up the animal whose flesh and blood were used at the first *avana*.

Polu Mas Vedda, who smoked part of the meat of this animal.

Melihi Vedda, the *yaka* who blinds hunters so that they cannot track the wounded game.

Ahuru Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first snapped his fingers to call his dogs.

Ihurun Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first whistled to his dogs to come hunting.

These eleven *yaku* are considered strong enough to kill folk and to send sickness; it appeared to us that the individuals of this group were not carefully differentiated but rather regarded as one power. [753]

The Korala of Bakiella who has already been mentioned said that a leaf cone (*goṭuwa*) containing blood was placed on a heap of leaves with flesh from the throat, tongue and ears of the kill and the whole offered to the 64,000 Maralu Yaku and 64,000 Kadawara Yaku. The leaf cone is a distinctly Sinhalese feature and the ceremony described by the Korala had become entirely Sinhalese in character. This is borne out by the invocation which was written down for us by the Korala. 796 782 177 539

Atu avanē lē dena mantraya Kaḍawara Rīri Yakaṭa Yakinniṭa.

Vētāla nuwara sīnāpoti bisawun wahansēge hradaya palā bihi unu Kaḍawēra Riri Yakshayā Yakshiniṭa atu awanak aetun koṭu awanak aetun, amu mas amu riri aetun.

Adat mama anḍagasā kaepa kera dennē. Mama yana issaraṭa rubera an munayak genādiṇ, ellē pāḍu kera dīlā, veḍī munē is(sara)ṭa kera dīla, amaren giyat (a) mareṇ piṭat wilā, marana pathera dīlā, waessī langaṭa mīden ennā wāgē, kambe kanuweṭa magul aetek baenda palikera wāge, ella pāḍu (ka) ra denḍa Kaḍawera Riri Yakshayā Yakshīgen warami.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
782
177
539

"The invocation to Kaḍawara Rīri Yakā and Yakinī, when presenting blood in the shelter (made) of branches.

"There was (on a former occasion) an (open) shelter of branches, there was an enclosed shelter, there were fresh meat and fresh blood for the Kaḍawara Rīri Yakshayā and Yakshinī, who having guarded (?) the pool of the General Queen at Vētāla Nuwara (the Goblin city) became demons.

"To-day also having summoned (you) I present the (same) offering. Before I go I solicit from the Kaḍawara Rīri Yakshayā and Yakshinī that they will bring a head with beautiful horns (to me), that they will make good all deficiencies, make my shots unerring [lit. present (the game) before the point of the shot], should I get into difficulty that they will overcome it, decree that I shall kill (game), (enable me) to approach a calf (fem.) like the buffalo cow comes up (to it) [i.e. without alarming it], rope a lucky tusk-elephant to the post, as though defending it (?), and that they will make good all deficiencies."

The above transliteration and translation have been prepared by Mr Parker who points out that the written invocation is full of errors, and therefore difficult to translate, but it does not contain any "Vaedi expressions" and "only a few difficult words." We have consulted Mr Parker in the hope that he might be able to throw some light on the matter of the origin of the *avana*, but although his remarks are in many ways interesting and suggestive, they do not really explain the origin of the ceremony, though he is inclined to agree with us that the ceremony is of Vedda origin[1].

[1] Mr Parker writes: "The Sinhalese have also some Vaedi Yakas though these have no connection with the eleven spirit yakas of your ceremony, who are chiefly protective. There are also 'Vaedi' Kadawara who are minor subordinates of the Kohomba (Margosa) demon or Yaka. *Kaḍawara* is a compound Tamil word meaning, according to a story that was related to me both in Ceylon (N.C.P.) and at the Tanjore temple, 'the celestial who escaped' compression by Siva the Indian god, when he clasped in his embrace six others created by his wife, and thus made them into the Kataragam God Skanda, the Indian war God, called also Kanda Kumara, with six faces and twelve arms."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER X

INVOCATIONS

THE translations of the invocations given in this chapter have been made by Mr H. Parker who has spared no pains in working out very complicated and often incomplete material. The invocations themselves were written down by our interpreters to the dictation of the Veddas, and thus naturally contained a certain number of mistakes and contractions. These are noted and explained by Mr Parker, and it should be realised that the philological and mythological explanations appended to many invocations are entirely his work and are therefore placed between inverted commas. 782 126

Neither the Veddas themselves, nor our interpreters, could give a translation of some of the invocations or even explain the meaning. In others no translation could be supplied and it was noted in the field that the meaning was probably only correct in a broad sense. In yet other invocations more or less accurate translations of the words themselves were given, but the significance could not be determined. Under these circumstances we have thought it best to give Mr Parker's translation in every case, indicating how this differs in sense from the version given us in the field in those instances in which we have reason to believe that our field version peculiarly expresses what our informants believed to be the meaning of the invocation.

These invocations fall into two main groups; the first, distinguished by their simple form, are straightforward requests to the spirits of the dead to provide game and yams, or to show their loving kindness by partaking of the food provided by their descendants. The second group although embracing a con- 782

[p. 273]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782 siderable range of beliefs are all longer and more complicated, and often contain references to events which happened before the spiritual beings to whom they are addressed attained their full power as *yaku*.

For convenience the invocations are consecutively numbered and grouped according to their purpose, for we believe that this arrangement, though not ideal, is on the whole the most suitable[1]. In each group the invocations progress from simple to more complicated.

782 It will be noted that in many if not all of these invocations
192 animals and articles of food are not mentioned by their usual
198 name, but are called by some other name or described by a periphrasis. A special vocabulary, largely but not entirely the same as that used in invoking the *yaku*, is used by the Veddas when hunting and indeed whenever travelling through the jungle. The relation of this jungle language to the other languages of the island will be discussed in Chapter XV, meanwhile it is only necessary to note that in one form or another it is spread over a great part of the island and that it is known by the name *hasle bass* "jungle language." The object of the *hasle bass* has been well explained by Mr Parker who has allowed me to take the following quotation from the proof-sheets of his work *Ancient Ceylon*. "Strange to say, the Kandias Sinhalese and the Wanniyas apparently imitate the Vaeddas while they are hunting in the forests,...and use another series of expressions...for many...animals, to the exclusion of the usual names for them. They have acquired a belief that unless a

[1] An alternative arrangement would have been to group these invocations geographically; the following list will enable the reader to do this with ease.

List of Invocations and the localities from which each were collected.

Bandarabowa. Nos. 7, 15, 26, 34.
Bulugahalandema. Nos. 9, 10.
Dambana. Nos. 2, 12, 13.
Godamaiwa. Nos. 3, 5, 20, 24.
Henebedde. Nos. 14, 19, 21.
Kalabahoka. No. 6.
Sinhala Wanniya. Nos. 1, 11, 16, 18, 23, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36.
Uaiche. Nos. 8, 17, 22, 28.
Unuwatuna Balapitiya. Nos. 25, 37.
Wellampitiya. No. 4.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

special dialect be employed while they are in the forest, they cannot expect to meet with any success in seeking honey, or hunting, or in avoiding dangerous animals. 782 192 198

"This dialect...consists of the employment of new words not only for animals but also for a few other nouns, and for verbs used to denote acts most commonly performed on such trips. In addition, all negative (that is, unlucky) modes of expression are totally debarred from use on such occasions, as well as the words meaning 'insufficient' and 'too much,' which are inauspicious as indicating dissatisfaction with the number or quantity to which they are applied."

Although in some instances the word used when addressing the *yaku* is not the precise word used by the same Veddas while hunting it is convenient, and we think reasonable, to regard the *yaku* language as a part of the *hasle bana*.

The only other linguistic feature of these invocations that requires comment is the abundant use of the adjective *ran* "golden." The significance of this in a particular and somewhat puzzling instance is discussed in a footnote to invocation No. XXI, so that it suffices here to record our belief that among the Veddas the expression is laudatory and is the equivalent of "excellent," "admirable." In invocations used while collecting honey the expression "jewelled" is used with almost equal freedom, e.g. "golden jewelled cord" in invocation No. XXVI, and is simply to be understood as a laudatory expression.

INVOCATIONS TO THE NAE YAKU.

782 539

Sitala Wanniya.

I. *Āyu bōwā. Āyu bōwā. Nae heṭṭarwā*[1], *nae sindōwā.*
Hudu hambā welafu adagaha dunnā harwā bunnā.
Kisi warudak sitanna epā, epā! hanawā bonawā.

Salutation! Salutation! Part of (our) relatives!
Multitude of relatives! Having called (you) at the (right) time (we) gave (you) white sambā (rice); (you) ate, (you) drank. Do not think any wrong (of us); we also eat (and) drink.

[1] *Kaṭṭarwā* for *heṭṭāsya*, a part, section.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Dambani.

782
539

II. *E lowa giya ape appā ne lowa wenā. Depaṭullan aenō hālāpiṇ. Hiṇḍa mangaccapawu kankunā boṭa dammanna, kabaraya boṭa dammanna. Mī paengiri hola aenō hālāpiṇ. Hani hamihaṭa mangaccapawu. Ammalaye aette hiṇḍaṭa mangaccapawu. Depaṭullan aenō hālāpiṇ, gal mīcak aenō hālāpiṇ, paengiri hola aenō hālāpiṇ. Kankunā boṭa dammanna, kabaraya boṭa dammanna nani hamiyaṭa mangaccapaw.*

Our father who went to that world come to this world. Take the rice. Come quickly to place (for us) the sambar deer, to place the spotted deer. Take this betel leaf. Come very quickly. Come quickly my mother's people. Take the rice, take the rock honey, take the betel leaf. To place the sambar deer, to place the spotted deer, come very quickly.

"*Depaṭullan* from *depaṭa*, 'double' and *ula*, 'point.' Rice is the grain with two points, not rounded like millet.

"*Mangacca* from *men*, 'path,' and *gassanawā*, 'to strike (with the feet),' hence to proceed in either direction, that is, to come or to go.

"*Kankunā boṭa*, 'the dirty-eared beast,' the sambar. The long ears of some animals are liable to become dirty inside with the wax, etc. and ticks often collect in them. Hence the application of the term 'the dirty-eared beast' to the sambar.

"*Kabaraya boṭa*, 'the spotted beast,' the axis.

"*Paengiri hola*, 'sour leaf,' may include any leaf of acid taste for chewing, but the expression is especially applied to betel, as in the *kaele basa*. The commonest word for 'sour' is *aembul* but *paengiri* is also often used.

"*Aenō hālāpiṇ* for *anna* (*aran*) *karāpan*, 'take.' In another invocation (No. IV) we have *aenō hālāṭṭa*, 'I will make another's,' that is, 'I will present.'"

Godatalawa.

III. *Ayu bōwā! Mal paennai wannā. Ada rakshōwak nai. Bis baṭawwa ada denṭa ēnaṭyi. Hatarak pā aettanṭa gayun allā denṭa ēnaṭyi. Eyin paeyin pussā anguru mas yahapak oppu-hara drunayi. Ada rashum rakshōwa balā baendala denṭa ēnaṭyi.*

Salutation[1]! Driver away of Vaeddas[2]. Today (there is) no livelihood.

[1] Lit. may life be long.

[2] *Mal paennai wannā.* "The word *mal* in another invocation of the *Nai Yaki* is evidently applied to the Vaeddas, and therefore there cannot be much doubt regarding the meaning, here and elsewhere, of the expression *mal paennai wannā*, when

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
534

Today you must give wild brinjal; you must allow the four-footed persons[1] to catch iguanas. Having roasted (part) of them in an hour[2], I will make and give (you an offering of) an altar (furnished with) meat (fried on) charcoal[3]. Today (you) must furnish (and) give protection (and) livelihood by (your) power.

Wellampelle.

IV. *Depaṭullan aeno hālāṅña, paengiri kola aenē hālāṅña, gal uicciyak aenē hālāṅña appalaye aṭṭiamma mori yānak aeno hālāṅña. Kankunā mayē ehaṭa aenē hālāpa adana iti boṭa damā.*

I will present rice, I will present betel leaf, I will present rock honey, I will present an altar for the dead to (my) father's people. Make over as mine the sambar, having placed (for me) the wearing-spikes beast (i.e. the porcupine).

"*Aeno hālāṅña* for *Anya karaṅña*, I will make another's, that is, I will present or make over.

"*Mori*, from root *mri* (Skt) to die.

"*Yānak* for *Yahanak*."

Godatalawa.

It was stated that the following invocation was said to determine whether the deceased had attained power as a *yaka*.

V. *Hāmaduruwō, Alut mal paennae wannā, haskam tiyenawā hasbae nam eka wal mandiyak wal marāgaṇa ena wilāṭa maṭa gawara māgallek hambawenda ōnae. Mē unkiri daluwaṭa, mal paennae Wannā, eli bānawā.*

Lord, New Driver away of Vaeddas, if it be true that there are miracles[4], killing one wild iguana in the jungle at the time while coming I must meet with a sambar deer. (Be pleased) to drink[5], Driver away of Vaeddas, this young coconut[6].

applied to the spirit of the recent dead. Dr Seligmann learnt that the cave in which a Vaedda has died is avoided by his relatives as a residence for several years afterwards; and this appears to afford a satisfactory explanation of the expression."

[1] Dogs, a *hali bisa* term.

[2] The Sinhalese unit of time here translated "hour" has a duration of twenty minutes.

[3] Lit. charcoal meat altar.

[4] "The words *hasbam tiyenawā hasbae nam* 'if it be true that there are miracles' were explained to Dr Seligmann as signifying 'if it is true that you have attained power (or become powerful) as a *yaka*.'"

[5] "*eli bānawā* means 'having thrown down (the throat), to swallow.' In the *hali bāsa*, *hoṭa bānawā*, which means 'to eat,' is literally 'having chopped, to swallow.'"

[6] "*Unkiri daluwa* is 'the bud deficient in milk,' that is, the young coconut before the 'milk' is formed in it."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Kalukalaeba.

782
539

VI. *Ayiyō tamunnānuṭ rachina rakshāwa lasheṇa ūnat yana taeṇaṭa ena taeṇaṭa ahen kiri dahu itireṇa wāgē maha maadī[1] wārahan enuā wāgē rachina rakshāwa diyunu diyunu harala denna ūnat.*

Hail. You must (cause us) to receive protection and means of support while going and returning. As the young shoot springs up from the eye (of the seed), as the south-west wind comes (causing) great delight, you must bestow two-fold two-fold protection and maintenance.

Bandaraduwa.

VII. *Willin mārāl nangī siṭō, gangin marāl nangīi siṭō, ṗeliyen ṗeliyaṭa williṭo no bin no bin kiyanuō. Ayiyō Deyyā.*

From the pool the Brahmany kite has risen, from the river the Brahmany kite has also risen, from line to line at the pool (i.e. flying round it in circles) saying "no place, no place." Alas! O God.

"*Māralu* is a *kaelī bāsa* word for the Brahmany kite. Its cry is said by villagers to be *no bin, no bin*, one meaning of which is 'improper,' which does not appear to be suitable in this invocation. 'There is no place for me now' seems to be the meaning. The spirit of the deceased is compared to the kite which is accustomed to circle round high above the water, uttering this cry."

Uniche.

VIII. *Pelaha nagā marāṇa gat, ṗelaha gangī marāṇa gat wiliṭa siṭuguna no bin kiyālō.*

Wanni allapu dunu haṇu ttal simin simiṭat no bin kiyālō.

Me gaḍanwala goḍa taraṇa mal haḍanna haḍanna mal aḍu wēlu. Ayiyō, Deyiyā.

The part (? of the dead) whom the cobra killed, (and) the part whom the river killed, having said "(There is) no place (for us)," are stopping at the pool[2].

The bow-sticks (and) arrows[3] seized in the Wanni (the forest), having said "(There is) no place (for them," go) from boundary to boundary (? in other people's possession).

(Through) continuing to break, in these lands, the Vaeddas[4] that pass over the land, the Vaeddas[4] have diminished. Alas, God!

1 *Maadī* is the genitive case of *maada*, "pleasure," "delight," "rejoicing."

2 "The context may possibly imply that the spirits of those who die of snake-bite or drowning are left to fly about like the kites, as homeless shades, that is as *prēta*."

3 "This doubtless refers to the bows and arrows of the deceased."

4 "The word here translated Vaeddas usually means 'flowers.' It is however quite clear that it is also used to mean 'Vaeddas,' cf. invocation No. III."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bulugahaladena.

IX. *Demaṭamali Demaṭamalā Koṭakaecci uccumbaye mahammā, uccumbaye mahappā depaṭullan pojja mālā weda māl puccal topanṭa aenō hālae wē topaenni kapallawu.* 782 539

Demaṭamali and Demaṭamalā, excellent Great Mother (and) excellent Great Father of Koṭakacciya, (we) having washed rice in a pot (and) having roasted meat shot with the arrow, may they be made over to you. Eat ye also.

" *Uccumbaye* for *usaba*, excellent.

" Kotakaecci appears to be the name of a place.

" *Pojja* for *pocca*, pot.

" *Weda* for *vaidya* or *vidha*.

" *Māl* for *mālu*, meat.

" *Puccal* for *pulussalā*, roasted."

" Demaṭamali and Demaṭamalā are two flower names, which like numerous others in Sinhalese are used as personal names. Demaṭamalā means flower of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) the last vowel being lengthened by the addition of *a*, as is usual in personal names. Demaṭamali is simply the feminine form."

X. *Demaṭamali uccumbaye mā ammā, Demaṭamalā Koṭakaecci uccumbaye maha appa kankunāwa, habareya, hocca dikkā, mundi, perumā, gayi boikha mā maeda aenō kalapa aena baccapa.*

Demaṭamali, excellent Great Mother, Demaṭamalā excellent Great Father of Koṭakacciya, make over (and) take (and) send down (to us) the sambar, the axis deer, the pig, the iguana (fem.), the large buffalo (?), (and beehives) inside trees hollow (and) large.

" *Hocca dikkā*, 'the long-snouted one.'

" *Mundi* is the fem. of *mundā*, the noosed one.

" *Perumā*. This word is doubtful. It has the form of a *kaelē bāsa* word like the others, and thus must be descriptive of the animal; it may mean 'the large Great one.'

" *Gayi*, pl. of *gā*, tree.

" The word for beehives, *maehikaeli gam*, has been omitted."

Sitala Wanniya.

XI. *Arō rajō Kappun selliya peṇena, nillin anduru deyiyā Aluta Wanniyā, tamāgē haṇaṭa taṇapi hanā haṭukkan hāmamaediran sē dilennow kalamma duwana wawu, Aluta Wanniyā.*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
531

Kapunselliya (Monkeys' Hill) appears (like) the king of health (?), the god dark with verdure, O New Wanniyā. The ear-rings made for his ears shine[1] like fire-flies. Come running to look (at it), O New Wanniyā.

Mr Parker writes: "This invocation is a poetical description of Monkeys' Hill, on which the fire-flies remind the reciter of shining ear-rings. The speaker of the invocation hopes by his glowing description to attract the 'new spirit.'" Our informants at Sitala Wanniya stated that Kapunselliya was a hill on the far side of Walimbagala (Friar's Hood) where their ancestors gathered honey. They said that the invocation first stated that Kapunselliya was dark, and they informed us that this was due to mist or fog. The invocation then appealed to the spirit invoked as "new Wanniya," asking that he should come running to see the ear-rings which had been prepared for his ears and which shone like fire-flies. In spite of the more practical appeal made to the *Nae Yaku* according to the Vedda version, this account coincides in essentials with Mr Parker's translation, since both agree that the object of the invocation is to attract the spirit of the deceased.

Dambani.

XII. *Urōgamai gama Aembulōgamai gama wē aeṭa kehelan watti, ṭaela kehelan watti waettin de waettu kola wihudewana ṭarukkewayi. Mē ṭarukkewa mēlame nīlā ī Kamburā galaṭa waeḷalā ṭilunuwan ṭālā idinnā wēda.*

On some occasions (lit. from occasion to two occasions) in the wild plantain garden and the house (i.e. cultivated) plantain garden at both Urōgama village and Aembulōgama there is delay in the unfolding of the leaves. On account of this delay will the chief Nīlā having proceeded to that Kamburā-gala, by the great amount of (his) skill cause the trees to fruit and the fruit to ripen?

We give this invocation with all reserve. As stated elsewhere in this volume the Dambani folk are village Veddas accustomed to parade their "wildness," and it was difficult to work with them, so that it is not improbable that this formula has really nothing to do with the *Nae Yaku*. These remarks apply equally to the following invocation (No. XIII). Mr Parker suggests the possibility that it implied "that as the chief Nīlā could twice preserve the plantain trees he might have preserved the Vaeddas if he wished."

[1] "Wrongly put in the Imperative mood."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

XIII. *Acī vidāna guṇna nedunuṭ Ākāsakāla Devī visin tamā, polowī mihi kaṭa guṇna nedunuṭ polowī Mihikāt Devī visin tamā, kiri boṇa wassaṭa bonna nedunuṭ Kande Ahut Devī visin tama.*

Sat mudī e diṭī siṭa nu diṭṭa ennāda nalalī palāgaṭa be lalī ena wellunā, uḍu wiyan kaendagaṭa waṭa wiyan kaendagaṭa ennamo no wayī. Kaṭ anḍuwa ellu torag ati elannā warā deva rodā allāgaṭa ennama. Ehuwan allanna gawurag allan hossa dikkā allanno enno neweī.

To take the hidden treasure of the sky is not permitted by the Goddess (of the sky) Ākāsakālā herself; on the earth to take the gems of the earth is not permitted by the Goddess of the earth, Mahikāntāwa herself; the milk drinking calf is not permitted to drink, by the new Goddess of the hill herself.

Are you coming from that country of the Seven Seas to this country, having split the forehead (i.e. made your appearance out of the forehead), and shaking violently at the very time when you come? You will not come (? unless we) have tied clothes overhead and have tied side cloths (at the shed or *maḍuwa*). Come and hold in your hand ornamental arches (*torag*) in which is suspended a golden chain. You will come holding a divine wheel (?). Goat catchers, sambar deer catchers, pig catchers will not come (i.e. to ask your assistance on this occasion).

"*Acī* for *ākāsī*, in the sky.

"*Kaṭa* appears to equal *Kāntah*, a gem; or it is derived from the root *khan*, dig, excavate.

"*Wacca* for *wassā*, calf.

"*Anḍuwa* for *andu*, chain.

"*Rode* may be *rōdaya*, a wheel, but it does not occur elsewhere, and the meaning is doubtful.

"*Hossa dikkā*, 'long snout,' a *kaelī bāsa* word for pig."

With the possible exception of the reference to the "New Goddess of the Hill," which may refer to one of the Maha Yakini (Kiriammā), there is nothing in this invocation belonging to the Vedda form of belief, and we do not doubt that the whole formula has been taken over from foreign sources. Mr Parker writes that he has "no knowledge of Ākāsakālā, the Sky Goddess," but that "Mahi-kāntāwa is well known as the personification of the earth, literally 'Earth' (*mahi*), 'woman' (*kāntāwa*)."

The appearance of divine children by other means than birth *per vias naturales* is a common Hindu belief of which Mr Parker cites the following instances: "Ayiyanār, the son of Möhinī,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

an incarnation of Vishnu, is said in Ceylon and India to have appeared from Vishnu's hand.....there is the well known story of the production of the four castes from the body of Brahma[1]."

Henebedda.

The heading of this invocation *Peṭṭimalaṭa Panikki Yaka malaṭa kiyana kavi* signifies "Song sung for the cattle herds to Panikki Yaka the Chief." The *yaka* invoked is the spirit of the sixteenth century chief Panikki Vedda, whose history is given in Chapter I. To some extent this invocation bridges the gap between the nameless *Nae Yaku* and the Vedda heroes, though it is obvious that the worship of Panikkia Yaka is allied to the *Baṇḍaru* cult to which we have alluded elsewhere. Our informants, however, did not regard Panikkia Yaka as a Baṇḍāra.

XIV. *Ana guru haṭayi, Bola tiṭṭā yāluwā.*
Paṭā guru haṭayi, Bola tiṭṭā yāluwā.
Gasanuṭṭ sulanmayi, Bola tiṭṭā yāluwā.
Igulanuṭṭ ṭa(n)daralmayi, Bola tiṭṭā yāluwā.

Kaṭā iraṭa piṭu iru hindi ādinawu ādinawu,
Muna mana ṭāraḷhuda, Nilamt Nilā?

Kuṭā naṭṭhi raṭā naruwatuṭ, hālaṭṭhada, hālamada?
Kuṭā naṭṭhi raṭat hadimayi, Bola tiṭṭā yāluwā.
Mahā naṭṭhi raṭā naruwatuṭ hālaṭṭhada Bola tiṭṭā yāluwā?
Madā naṭṭhi raṭāṭṭ hadā Bola tiṭṭā yāluwā.

Dunna gatat sanda wādamen, Panikkiyā.
Peḷḷa gatat sanda naruwatuṭ, Panikkiyā.
Manda gatat sanda handamen, Panikkiyā.
Ada matanata ayi, Gambaru Panikkiya.

[1] This is given in the Purana as follows (Wilson's translation, p. 44): "Formerly, oh best of Brahmans, when the truth-meditating Brahma was desirous of creating the world, there sprang from his mouth beings specially endowed with the quality of goodness; others from his breast....others from his thighs,...and others from his feet...."

The Vishnu Purana records (p. 50) that when Brahma found that his mind-born progeny were unsuitable for peopling the world, "he was filled with wrath capable of consuming the three worlds, the flame of which invested, like a garland, heaven, earth, and hell. Then from his forehead, darkened with angry frowns, sprang Rudra, radiant as the noon-tide sun, fierce, of vast bulk, and of a figure which was half male, half female."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

The sky is becoming purple, O thou Friend!
The earth is becoming purple, O thou Friend!
Blows even the wind also, O thou Friend!
Even the small birds are flying also, O thou Friend!

From behind the yellow sun, draw, draw the sun's rays.
What is the (reason of the) delay, Chief Nilā?

Shall I look, shall I look if a small heifer has stopped in the herd? (that is, is in the herd).
Even a small heifer is not in the herd, O thou Friend!
Shall I look if a large heifer has stopped in the herd, O thou Friend?
A large heifer is also not in the herd, O thou Friend!

Should he take the bow, he is able to shoot well, the Panikkiya.
Should he take the cudgel, he is good at stopping (the buffaloes), the Panikkiya.
Should he take the noose, he is able to tie well, the Panikkiya.
Today he will come here, the speckled Panikkiya.

Invocations to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka.

With a single exception (No. XXIII) all these invocations are recited in order to procure game. No. XV was sung whilst dancing round an arrow struck in the ground as is described in Chapter IX.

The remainder (with the exception of No. XXIII already noted) are sung at the *kirikoraha* ceremony. Although the invocations used at the *kirikoraha* ceremony present almost every stage of development, and some invocations such as Nos. XVIII and XXII are obviously composed of fragments belonging to different strata of belief, in every case the *yaku* called upon are the spirits of Kande Wanniya and his brother Bilindi.

No. XXIII is especially interesting, as it shows that such powerful foreign spirits as Riri Yaka and Indigollae Yaka when adopted into the Vedda system assumed Vedda characteristics, and so became subject to Kande Yaka.

Bandaraduwa.

XV. *Kandē sifa Kandahapē nā hola andan*
Bē hola andan-Itala tanā
Sonda sonda gal gawarungē piyen piyana
Ōṇ yannē maya kandē mul pola Wanniyā.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Having made arrow-heads of the shape of Na leaves,
Of the shape of Bô leaves, from hill to hill,
From foot-(print) to foot-(print) of excellent number deer,
There (he) goes, my Wanniyâ of the Chief Place of the hill.

Mr Parker explains that the "chief place of the hill" is its crest or summit, but in every case in which the expression *Kandê mul pala Wannijâ* occurred in an invocation our informants explained that the expression was one of the names of Kande Yaka, and they clearly regarded these words as constituting a proper name. *Wannijâ* is a common constituent of Vedda names, and has something of the significance of chief or leader. Mr Parker points out that it means "he of the Wanni" or "he of the forest track," and that it is a title given to Vedda chiefs in former times. Mr Parker considers this invocation important, "since it shows that the arrow heads were of two shapes, a narrow one with nearly parallel sides (resembling the leaf of the *nê* tree or ironwood) like some Sinhalese arrows, and a broader one (resembling the *bô* leaf"). At the present day the heads of Vedda arrows are long and relatively narrow, that is, roughly of the shape of a leaf of the *nê* tree. We have not seen any arrow heads whose shape recalled the leaf of the *bô* tree.

[Hil]

Invocation to Kande Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniye.

XVI. *Kandaha ulu handaha yanna yanna handa nirindu wasi tuttuwa. Rawanê dammê ulu handa dammaya sanda sanda gal-gawa-ragat pêya pêya kuriyâ ehyanna handa mul pala Wannijâ.*

King of the Hills, who continues to go from hill to hill, causes rain[1]. (He is) the Wanniyâ of the Chief place of the hill, who causes to fall the heads of excellent number deer, from foot (print) to foot (print), from Rāvanā Damanê (the green plain of rain) to Kandê Damanê (the green plain of the hill)[2].

"*Nirindu* from *nara* and *indra*, a poetical expression meaning 'chief of men.' It is never used colloquially by Sinhalese.

"*Kuriyâ* = *kuriyya* (Tamil) 'mark,' 'traces.'"

[1] "Lit. rain rain."

[2] "These names signify respectively 'the green plain of the rain' and 'the green plain of the hill.' Dr Seligmann was told that these hills teemed with game though on inquiry it appeared that no man had visited them or knew their situation."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Invocation to Kande Yaka at the Kirikorahá Ceremony.

Uniche.

XVII. *Mí kande pitu yanna yanna mt kandi mui pata Wanniyá. Mí guru pada nili pada wasat wahinna wahinna kanda kanda mágullanat pitu ápi hiri yanat kandul mui pata Wanniyá.*

It is the Wanniyá of the chief place (crest) of this hill who continues to go onto this hill. The Wanniyá of the chief place of the hill, who continues to cause (lit. to rain) this rain of great drops, drops from a dense (cloud), makes out foot-print by foot-(print) of excellent sambar deer.

Invocation to Bilindi Yaka at Kirikorahá Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniyá.

XVIII. *An ati dut nan nati gnú atin alla dona mati Bilindi Rajá. Tandna tinina tina tandna tinini. Mast mayá mudu mandit e ran hatiyahi nawanini.*

Like (one) catching with (his) hand and giving the nameless sambar deer in the country where there are horns, (is) King Bilindi. Tandna tinina tina tandna tinine. There is a golden flag in the midst of the sea full of fish, O Lord!

We consider that this invocation is certainly corrupt; further there can be no doubt that it should refer to an unnamed country and a horned sambar, as in invocation No. XXII, where, as pointed out by Mr Parker, the "unnamed country" is the applicant's own country which it was unnecessary for him to name.

Dedication of flesh and rice to Kandé Yaka and Bilindi Yaka[1].

Henebedda.

XIX. *Ayithabwa, ayithabwa. Kandi kaeta hat hattwwahata náyahawa Kandi wadiyata ahat dayiyannáshtta Kandi Wanniyata; Kan Mirun Wanniyata, Mirun ahat dayiyannáshtta; Dalumura Wanniyata, Dalumura*

[1] This was recited at Henebedda over the food the dedication of which we have described on p. 200. Plate XXVIII, fig. 2 is a reproduction of a photograph taken while the shaman dedicated the food.

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

ahat dayiyannanahiya; Ru aḍukku Wannyāta, Ru aḍukku ahat dayiyannanahiya; Daḍayan Wannyāta, Daḍayan ahat dayiyannanahiya; Bilindi Wannyāta, Bilindi ahat dayiyannanahiya. Adat man mi eyya haradema ru aḍukkuwaṭa tunnannanatiti therun weṭiharen kahiharen piyāharen diwas harunā haraguma mi daḍa wanahiya asil gawarug gal gawarug atu alla di tunnaṭiya weṭimunj anu harunā daḍa yahapati. Ayibōwā, ayibōwā.

Long life, long life to Kandē Wanniyā, to the new god of the chief place of the hill who has become the chief of the Group of the Sixty-Seven of the Hill; to Kan Miran Wanniyā, to the new god Miran; to Dalumura Wanniyā, to the new god Dalumura; to Ru aḍukku Wanniyā, to the new god Ru aḍukku; to Daḍayan Wanniyā, to the new god Daḍayan; to Bilindi Wanniyā, to the new god Bilindi.

Today, also, granting your divine favour to the beautiful cooked food of this offering which I give, as quickly as an arrow, as quickly as a gunshot, as quickly as an egret, as quickly as flying, having caught with the hand and given to this hunting Vaedda axis deer and sambar, may it seem good (to you) to arrange them at the point of the arrow, at the point of the gun-shot, and give (them there). Long life, long life!

"The 'Group of the Sixty-seven,' the *Hasṭa-hat Kaṭṭuwa*, is well-known in the North-western Province. These are nearly all Baṇḍāra or deified chiefs. Though still called 'the Sixty-seven,' their number is now well over a hundred.

"Kan Miran Wanniyā and his three associates are the subordinates or the attendants on Kandē Yaka. I cannot explain the duties of Kan Miran Wanniyā; Dalumura Wanniyā is the one who presents Kande Yaka with betel; Ru Aḍukku Wanniyā presents him with cooked food, and Dadayan Wanniyā kills game for him.

"*Waḍi* is the word always used for a gun-shot by Sinhalese and Tamils; also for the explosion of the charge when blasting."

Gedatalawa.

XX. *Hat Bilindrwatbut anguru mas yahana baligalla.*
Kandē Wanniyā anguru mas yahana baligalla.
Dalumuru Wanniyā anguru mas yahana baligalla.
Puluṭṭā anguru mas yahana baligalla.
Riddē Wanniyā anguru mas yahana baligalla.

Seven Bilindi godlings, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Kandē Wanniyā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Dalumura Wanniyā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Puluṭṭā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Riddē Wanniyā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

This formula was given us by an old man Handuna of Godatalawa, both as a dedication of food to Kande Yaka, and an invocation asking for game. We cannot explain the expression *Hāt Bilindīvatāwā*; to Handuna it was a synonym for Bilindi, and he assured us that the first line was addressed to Bilindi Yaka. Mr Parker points out that Puluṭṭā may mean "fried meat Wanniyā" and Riddā Wanniyā, "the Wanniyā who caused pain." If this be so Puluṭṭā must be regarded as the Wanniya who fried meat for Kande Yaka[1]. We can offer no suggestion as to the significance of the expression "the Wanniyā who caused pain."

782
539

Invocation to Bilindi Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Menebedda.

Sung while the shaman dances with a coconut and *aude* as shown in Plate XXIX, figs. 1 and 2.

XXI. *Tundana, tāuina, tāna tundana; tandana tāuina tāuina.*
Appuge wayasai hat 'wat(ri)dā wasi, ati awurudāyi pasu vāt.
Sat awurudāpu ādāt wela gat e rua Rangāra, Sāmiā.
Tandana tāuina tāna tundana; tandana tāuina tāuina.

Appustuāpu wāyapu hacāpu pāyan dāsayā, Sāmiā.
Appustuāpu wāyapu pupurat pāyan dāsayā, Sāmiā.
Ehamai hīru mā aendapu hattāpu atma gangā rasā vāhāmi.
Tandana tāuina tāna tundana; tandana tāuina tāuina.

Kawi kīyanāt kayā hari mapu, udakanā tai wāda? Ayiyā!
Nan wasi hadāā ax asi gāna ātan allā dena Sāmiā.
Kande upin dorau sulan ullāpu nawaā kandulan tune mātā.
Kust upan nakāna malayā maarwat mana tanthamapada, Nayāā
Kyat upan nuka malayat aragena ullan karapan, Nayāā
Ax asi gawara allā dena kabi Maesih-tāiwā Bilindi devayā.

Tandana etc.
The age of the Chief's Son was not many years; seven years had gone by,
A time equal to seven years having gone (he became) the Forest Chief,
O Lord.
Tandana etc.

[1] There is another possibility; on the analogy of the *anana* ceremony described at the end of this chapter it may be suggested that Puluṭṭā was held to be the first Vedda to offer fried meat at this ceremony. We do not consider this probable however.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
639

There were a thousand flowers on the cloth woven for the Chief's Son, O Lord!
There were a thousand flowers on the mat plaited for the Chief's Son, O Lord!
The cloth he wore, worked with *elamal* flowers and the parrot (?), like the waves of the river is spread out.
Tandana etc.
Though fear I cannot sing songs (properly). Will there be any anger (on account of it)? Alas!
The (rain) wind which he sent down from above the hill to the verdure is wetting with tears the face
(Of) the Lord who in the nameless jungle catches with his hands and gives the number deer possessing horns.
For what (fear of) solitude did (you) kill your own younger brother born of the same mother, O Nayidē?
Taking your younger brother born of the same mother play games (with him), O Nayidē.
(Addressing Bilindē) You are able to catch and give number deer possessing horns, O God Bilindē of Maeulk-tuāwa.

The words *ran Baṇḍāra* which are here translated Forest Chief might also mean Golden Chief. As already stated it appears to us that in the majority of these invocations the adjective "golden" is used to signify "excellent" or "admirable," but concerning this Mr Parker writes:

"*Ran* as an adjective almost always means 'golden,' but in such a case ought to be spelt with ṟ. I inserted preferentially 'Forest' in this case, as there is no reason given why he should suddenly become golden. I should generally understand 'golden' to mean 'of a golden nature or colour'; I do not think it would ever be applied to a person or deity who is dark coloured, however excellent he might be. I have heard a path termed 'like gold' by way of emphasising its excellence, but it is very unusual to employ it with this meaning."

In spite of the weight that must be attached to Mr Parker's opinion we do not agree with him in this matter, and in support of our opinion adduce the expression "golden jewelled cord" in invocation No. XXVI. We may also mention that in the invocation to Kosgama Baṇḍāra, the hero's corpse is described as "golden[1]."

[1] Cf. *Man*, 1909, where is given the translation of the invocation used in calling upon Kosgama for assistance.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mr Parker points out that in line 7 *mā* may stand for *mahā* or *masā*, sewn. Line 12 may be understood in two ways according to whether we read "For what (fear of) solitude," etc., or "For what need of solitude," etc. According to one account Kande Yaka killed his younger brother Bilindi because he felt lonely as a *yaku* and yearned for his company. This was the legend we heard at Henebedda, but another version makes Kande Wanniya kill his infant brother in a fit of temper because Bilindi being hungry annoyed him by constant whining. The thirteenth line, in which Kande Yaka is addressed as Nayidē, suggests that the Henebedda version of the legend is here referred to in the preceding line. We were told that Nayidē was here used as a name for Kande Yaka but could not discover the reason for this. Mr Parker points out that in Sinhalese *nayidē* simply means artificer.

782
539

Invocation to Bilindi Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Uniche.

XXII. *Kapā mangiā gal ohā, hāpatu lalu-dādī tamā, ala hirulā aendapu haciya atma ruelipapu vikī-dunā. Appugē*[1] *wayasat bohō halak atti tun amurudāyi pasu wunī. Nan nattī dānī, an atti gānā allā dunawada Bilindī Rajā.*

Having cut the Gem-rock thereby himself removing the command (regarding it), like the folds of the waves are spread out is the bleached cloth he wore. It will be a long time since three years of the Chief's son's age passed. In the unnamed country will you catch and give a sambar deer with horns, King Bilindi?

This invocation obviously consists of two parts, embodying ideas belonging to very different strata of thought. The last sentence requires no more than a reference to invocation No. XVIII, to explain "the unnamed country." The sentence before this refers to the belief that Bilindi was three years old when Kande Yaka killed him. Probably these two sentences belong to the same stratum of belief, and certainly the Veddas understood what they meant. It was otherwise with regard to the first part of this invocation, our informants could not tell

[1] Appu for Appuhāmi, the former title of the son of a chief.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

us what this meant or even translate it, though our interpreter stated that he thought it had something to do with the dress of the *yaka*. Clearly this part of the invocation is foreign, and Mr Parker suggests that since Bilindi means "the child" there is "a possibility that he is Ayiyanār, the guardian Forest Deity of Ceylon, who is represented at Tanjore as a youth. Bilindi is said by Nevill to be the son of the (Indigollaewa) Kiri Amma, who is identified by the Sinhalese as Mohini, a female personification of Vishnu; and Ayiyanār is the son of Mohini." This is supported by the reference to the Gem-rock, for as Mr Parker writes "the Kiri Amma split the sapphire gem at the sapphire mountain." Thus in the later part of the invocation, Ayiyanār may have been assimilated to Bilindi Yaka.

INVOCATION WITH BOW TO DETERMINE WHAT YAKA HAS CAUSED ILLNESS.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXIII. *Ayibōwā, āyibōwā. Tummaṇkaḍa suwāmin wahansa gal pīnata, dunu pīnaṭa, suba pīnaṭa ahu harala deṇḍa ōnae. Mayā pīnaṭa eṇḍa ōnae. Kandē Wanniyā boru pīna at-kaera leḍa hala yahā naṭa ada ahu harawaṇḍa ōnae. Riri Yakā Indilegolle Yahā, Rāhu Yahun, Paṭṭa Yahun, mē suba pīnaṭā ahu harala deṇḍa ōnae.*

Long life! Long life! Lord of Tamankaduwa, through (my) stones' soothsaying, through bows' soothsaying, through auspicious soothsaying, (you) must catch and give (him). Through my soothsaying, (he) must come. Kande Wanniya, having laid aside false soothsaying, (you) must cause me to seize today the Yaka who caused the sickness. (Whether) Riri Yaka, Indilegolle Yaka[1], Rahu Yaku, or Patta Yaku, through this auspicious soothsaying (you) must seize and give (him).

Riri Yakā or Siri Yakā is the blood demon of the Sinhalese. The Rahu Yaku appear to correspond to the Sinhalese demon Rahu Yaka[2]. We consider this invocation important as it definitely expresses what we found to be the general opinion among the

[1] Clearly a slip for Indigollae Yaka.

[2] He was originally an Asura who surreptitiously drank some of the *amrita* produced by the Gods and Demons. Mohini cut off his head, but it had become immortal and was transformed into the planetary sign (personified) which causes eclipses by trying to swallow the sun and moon because they drew the attention of Mohini to him. For the substance of this note we are indebted to Mr Parker.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
411
516
142
787

Plate LV

Nila holding bow while reciting invocation No. XXIII. When the name of the yaka causing the illness is spoken the bow swings to and fro

[facing p. 290]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

wilder Veddas. Kande Yaka is called upon to help, he is the spirit of a dead Vedda, one of themselves, and would never be suspected of sending sickness. It is only the stranger who brings evil things. But Kande Yaka is more powerful than the foreign *yaku* and by his help it is discovered which of them has caused sickness. In the field we found reason to believe that Indigollae Yaka and Riri Yaka and the Rahu Yaku were foreign in origin, we did not however suspect Patta Yaka, but Mr Parker says, "The Patta Yaku are diseases personified, and are male and female. The Sinhalese enumerate twelve or eighteen called Garā (m.) or Girī (f.); of these two are Paṭṭa Garā and Paṭṭa Girī. They especially afflict women and children."

782
539

Invocations used while collecting Honey.

Godatalawa.

XXIV. *Alut divi hāmuduruwā, mochibeli gamak pennanja ināt ada. Kapala hengati yaṭṭhan.*

Lady New Goddess, (you) must show (me) a bee-hive today. Having chopped (it out) I will hide (it) and go.

Mr Parker suggests that the honey gatherer "hints to the Goddess that he and she will divide the honey between them, unknown to the other Vaeddas and that thus she will obtain a larger share than usual." This would be quite contrary to Vedda ethics, and it seems to us more probable that the honey is hidden in order to prevent the bees carrying it away. The gatherer might well be fatigued after his exertions and would certainly not attempt to rest in the immediate neighbourhood of the bees he had robbed, nor would he leave the honey exposed where it would attract the bees.

Unuwatura Bubula.

XXIV A. *Raja Omungalliyā*
Mā guruwen Ammā.
Guru bali rahipā
Mā wurwal bapāla bassala
Dum paliyen pennala
Kapuwen bapāla

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Paliyaṭa damāli
Mīrau mīriya paṭuṭ gapaṭin
Gapen gapen baḍagiṭi
Aeremu hamu.

O Omangalla Sovereign!
Mother—by this respect (paid to you)—
Who protects (us) by (your) great authority!
Having cut and lowered the (ladder of) great cane,
Having driven off (the bees) by the shield of smoke,
Having cut (the comb) with the sword,
Having put (it) down into the vessel,
Having fetched the sweetest honey[1]. Bring (it),
Bring (it) (for us) to eat, to lay aside (our) hunger.

Nevill has recorded a very similar invocation which he obtained from a Vedda of Walimbagala (Friar's Hood)[2]. He also records the following invocation which was given him by a Vedda of Omuni.

Mashi-keli Waniyā
Gal naewili Waniyā
Mashi kelanne mashi urāl
Hinā-maten keli kippayen
Oppu gunawā tobā deyiyen.

Bee Wanniya,
Wanniya of rock worship!
(Of) the honey-comb of the bees,
Laughing at the anger of the bees,
Be pleased to take the offering,
O thou from the Gods!

The above translation has been prepared by Mr Parker and is rather more literal than either of Nevill's translations, for he gives two. That printed below shows "the sense that the construction and words of this invocation convey" to a Vedda.

"Oh Lord of the Bees!
Oh Lord of the Rock!
Honeycombs of honey bee,
With laughter and with merriness,
I offer them to Thee."

[1] Or "sweet honey like toddy."
[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 187.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nevill records that "after each line" his informant "threw a little honey, the first cut from the cliff, to the Spirit of the Rock, and then proceeded to take the rest of the comba. He told me it was an ancient custom his ancestors followed, called 'paeni adina yadinda,' or to 'charm the drawing of honey.'" 782 539

Henebedda.

XXV. *Bori, Bori, Wanniyā.*

Nilwan pāliya neden kiyā, ī kimaṭa kāṭā ipal wīlen gāsā widinnāyi kiyā daelen daelaṭa. Aendun waeṭī enni māyā kumala Wanniyā.

Ehī mēhat hēdeyi kiyā, daelen daelaṭa hatu ṭpal gāsā widinnī widinnī.

Diya aendun waeṭigena yandōmā yanni nan yanni.

Mal aendun waeṭigena yanni nan yanni.

Guru aendun waeṭigena yandōmā yanni nam yanni.

Ela aendun waeṭigena yandōmā yanni nam yanni.

Aenga wāṭī basnāigena yandōmā yanni nam yanni.

The translation of the heading of this invocation is "Stanza said by Veddas when cutting *bambara* on a hill or tree."

(Their sound is) *bori, bori,* O Wanniya[1]!

When (I) said[2], "(I) will not give (you) the dark-coloured vessel[3]" (containing the honey), at that remark company by company (of bees) said, "From (this) time, having beaten (you as if with) thorny rods, (we) will pierce" (you with our stings). (My) clothes are falling off (on account of the stinging), O my dear Wanniya!

When (I) said "There is nothing in it" (the vessel), company by company (of bees) having beaten (me as if with) thorny rods are piercing, are piercing (me with their stings).

(My) watered clothes (i.e. cloth with waved pattern) falling off, (I) am indeed setting off to go, (I) am going.

(My) flowered clothes falling off, I am indeed going, I am going.

(My) dark clothes falling off, I am indeed setting off to go, I am going.

(My) white clothes falling off, I am indeed setting off to go, I am going.

Tying (the clothes) round (my) body I am indeed setting off to go, I am going.

"*Maligi* is presumably *mālinī*, a form of stanza.

[1] *Bori, bori* is onomatopoeic of the humming of bees.

[2] Lit. "having said."

[3] Mr Parker considers that *nilwan pāliya* should be translated "blue-coloured" but that it may also mean "black" or "dark-coloured." As the result of our examination of the colour sense and colour names of the Veddas detailed in Chapter XIV we are convinced that in the present instance "dark-coloured" is the correct reading.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

"*Pattya*, a vessel. The word occurs with this meaning in another invocation.

"*Kuwala*, that is *kumala*, tender.

"*Yandinne yanni* for *yanapanne yanni*, a common expression in Sinhalese.

"*Aendun* (properly *aendum*), 'clothes,' is in the plural, and means much more than a loin cloth. A European's dress—the various articles collectively—is called *aendum*.

"*Garu* often applied to a purple sky may also mean 'excellent'; perhaps it might here mean dark."

This is one of the invocations of which we obtained no satisfactory translation in the field. Mr Parker holds that "the whole invocation is devoted to explaining to the Wanniya the suppliant's urgent need of his assistance, without which he will be compelled to abandon the work."

We consider it far more probable that the honey collector is essentially talking at the bees while apparently talking to the Wanniya and his companions at the top of the crag[1]. While helping himself to the honey he explains—for the benefit of the bees—that having heard their determination to sting him, he was hurrying away in such haste that his clothes are falling from him, notwithstanding that he has told the bees that there is nothing, i.e. no honey, in his collecting pot.

Invocation before taking Bambara honey, sung by a man as he is lowered over the cliff.

Bandaraduwa.

XXVI. *Tobá dyiyani, tobá dyiyani, alut mala uhan narwini atuwa hitu, hemadiyan, machibellanni mashi urul ettu arugana, issara ashi machiti alut mala uhan narwini atuwa, passi ashi machiti mala uhan narwini atuwa, machibellan ammá eppá wágé hella, mi ran mini hendaga diva diwas pala, tobá dyyani, tobá dyyani, tobá dyyani.*

Aru maya, aru maya, ähata Wanni Hurun, dasien dastaga hätu ipal gata yanni, ähata Wanni Huruniyi.

[1] There is nothing to show who is the Wanniya addressed. If—as appears certain—the honey gatherer speaks to another Vedda on the cliff above him, this formula scarcely comes under the heading of this chapter (Invocations), but it is undoubtedly convenient to keep this with the other invocations sung while collecting honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Ara maya, ara maya, tellun bāḍe nangi pādunu hewadat aḍun paḍun kādayi kīyalā, tuḍa haraṭa pipen diwā yanni, ālula Wanni Hurunḍi.

You Gods, You Gods! By the good will and superiority (?) of the newly dead and reborn new host (of spirits), taking (these) offerings of honey-comb of the bees, you who may be the first destroyed of the newly dead and reborn new host (of spirits, and) you who may be the subsequently destroyed of the newly dead and reborn new host (of spirits),—having caused the bees to sport (round me) like a mother or father, protect this golden jewelled cord (i.e. the ladder of creepers) by (your) divine eyes, you Gods, you Gods.

That (honey) is mine, that is mine, New Wanni Lords. Company by company, (as if with) thorny rods, (you) keep beating (me), O New Wanni Lords (i.e. the bees).

That (honey) is mine, that is mine. (Regarding your) hard (or excessive) blows on the very feet that ascended (the ladder of creepers), no one having said there are deficiencies, (yet) you are going running from my back to my head and neck, O New Wanni Lords (i.e. to give still more blows or stings).

"This invocation contains several expressions not met with previously, and I can only give doubtful translations of part of it.

"*Narwini* probably *nawīna*, 'fresh' or 'new.' I think it has nothing to do with *nāī wenawā*, to become a relative, the first word of which is always pronounced with a long vowel by both Vaeddas and Sinhalese.

"*Hamādiya*, from *sama* 'all' and *ādiya* 'first,' or *ādika* 'great.'

"*Oipu* for *oppu*, proofs, evidence; but used by Vaeddas and Wanniyas for offering.

"*Mahicca*, from v. *mahanawā*, 'to obliterate,' 'to destroy.'

"*Kella*, from v. *helinawā*, 'to sport.'

"*Aehi* for *hechi*, possible.

"*Ara maya* is unlikely to be *aruma*, verbal noun of *arinawā*, 'to leave,' or 'to let go.'

'*Tellun*, pl. of *tellunu*, v. noun of *talanawā*, 'to beat.'

"*Bādā* may be *bāḍa*, 'hard,' 'solid' or *bāḍhā*, 'promise' or 'much,' 'excessive.'

"*Aḍun paḍun*, pl. of *aḍupāḍuma*, 'deficiency.'

"*Kādayi* means 'it is not,' or 'there is not,' from *haḍama*, 'not.' In the last paragraph of this invocation the negative is expressed thus: 'some having said there are not deficiencies.'"

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

1782
539

This is one of the invocations of which we could only obtain an explanation in part, but luckily our informants were perfectly clear as to the meaning they attached to the first part of the invocation, and we feel confident that the following lines give the significance attached by them to this part of this invocation.

You spirits, you spirits of the recently dead and of the old dead, you *nas* (relative) spirits, take this offering of honey comb and protect me as a father and mother. Protect this rope.

Concerning the word *upan* which in this invocation Mr Parker translates "reborn," this authority writes, "*Upan* which I have translated reborn, literally means 'born'; but the other word more correctly expresses the meaning....The view I should take of the matter is that the person died and was buried. Then when the Vaeddas find him or his spirit in existence again they term it a re-birth in the world of spirits. This kind of expression is common in Buddhism; compare *kelawara devlowa upannīya*, 'he was (re)born in the final god-world' (Dhātuvansa)."

Although the Veddas of Bandaraduwa have come very much under foreign influence we feel convinced that they have no such carefully formulated ideas of re-birth as Mr Parker suggests, and we believe that the words of the invocation and the significance that the Veddas attach to it, can be harmonized without doing violence to Vedda modes of religious thought, by considering the translation as being from the comparatively unimportant *preta* to the full powered *yaka*, though as pointed out by Mr Parker, this would not be re-birth in the usual Sinhalese (Buddhist) sense.

With regard to the expression *nāī* (relative) spirits in the Vedda version, Mr Parker writes: "If *naewini* were a mistake for *nāī wena*, the translation of the first part after 'Gods' would be, 'By the goodwill and superiority of the newly dead and *reborn host who are becoming* (*our*) *relatives*.'" The words in italics indicate only the meaning of the words *alut mala upan naewini sīnāwa*.

Nāe wena sīnāwa is *nāī*, "kinsfolk," *wena*, "becoming," and *sīnāwa*, "host," "multitude."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Invocations to Bambura Yaka.

The invocations to Bambura Yaka are the most puzzling of all those we collected. None of our informants understood them and the translations given were fragmentary, or else we were told that although the words of the sentences could be translated so as to make some sort of sense, the significance of the invocation was unknown, or if appreciated did not necessarily agree with the meaning of the literal translation. Further, although it is certain that Bambura Yaka especially gives success in searching for yams and hunting pig, Mr Parker's translations make it quite certain that these invocations really apply to honey collecting. The reference to the "golden creeper," i.e. the ladder made of jungle creepers and used in taking honey, lowered across the face of the Inginiya rock makes this certain. Nevertheless both at Sitala Wanniya and Uniche, invocations with these expressions in them were recited as invocations to Bambura Yaka to send pig, and none of our informants regarded Bambura Yaka as having anything to do with honey. It may be suggested tentatively that the resemblance in sound of Bambura the home of the *yaka* and *bambara*, the word for the rock bee, may have brought about this confusion.

782
539
[222
417]

Sitala Wanniya.

XXVII. *Mē magē Bamburaṇi, Bamburaṇi. Magē Bamburō bat hadēt nāḍew nāḍew gala gala suniyanīyē.*

Mē masā muratata gaḍu maḍānē maḍubat bāpu hatata sindu dendē hapa no biyandē. Mē hudā Inginiyā galata bāpu rap wasla galat gala gala nē wara wasē gelē.

This is my Bamburā, Bamburā. While my Bamburā is eating rice make a sound, make a sound, "gala, gala"—save, save (him)—by magic.

At this very instant destroying the mounds (on the face of the rock) be pleased to give to the mouth that has eaten honey (the power to sing) songs (correctly and) not to speak nonsense. Save, save (both) the golden creeper that has been lowered down this little Inginiya rock and the rock, (or otherwise) this time the rock will fall.

"Bamburō (pl.) and Bamburani are honorific forms of Bamburā. Compare *Maharajani*, used in addressing a king.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

"*Nādaw* for *nāda karapan*, or perhaps *nāda wayan*, 'may there be a sound.'

"*Gala gala.* Compare *galamanawā*, 'to save,' 'deliver.'

"*Masā*, probably *mṛiha*, from root *mṛiś*, Skt. 'to touch.'

"*Murata* for *muhūrta*, a moment.

"*Goḍu*, pl. of *goḍa*, a mound.

"*Maḍānā* for *madaya*, from root *mṛid*, Skt. to crush, destroy.

"*Bāpu* from v. *bānawā*, to lower.

"*Bana kiyanda*, 'to repeat the Buddhist Scriptures,' is used colloquially with the meaning here given.

"*Golā* for *gala*, 'rock,' as in another invocation addressed to this *yaka*."

Mr Parker writes: "This is a prayer for the protection of the ladder of creepers down which the honey gatherer descends, and also to prevent the fall of loose pieces of projecting rock on his head. First the suppliant asks for magical words to arouse the attention of the *yaka*. The rest of the invocation is evidently addressed to the *yaka* himself."

Uniche.

XXVIII. *Mā Inginiya galaṭa bāpu rayi wasla waelat wael mā wara waeṭiyā. Mā apa Bamburā bat haṭa rayi manḍā. Mārtu mal andan saedi galā. Mā apa Bamburā bat hadāli nādaw, nādaw gal gala suniyand.*

The golden creeper and the jungle creepers lowered down this Inginiya rock will fall this time (unless protected by the Yaka). This (rock) is the golden plate off which our Bambura eats rice. It is a rock made in the form of the Marut flower. While this our Bambura is eating rice make a sound, make a sound, "gal, gala"—save save (him)—by magic.

"*Waelat* is probably *wala* plus *t*, forest or jungle.

"*Mārtu* for *marut*, a plant.

"*Andan* for *andama*, manner, state.

"*Galā* for *gala*, rock.

"Apparently it is the rock which is expected to emit a noise that will arouse the attention of the *yaka*. The suppliant praises it in order to propitiate it."

This invocation was not understood by our informants, nor could we ascertain that it was sung to any *yaka* other than one who was called Mulpola Hitiye Yaka, "the *yaka* who stopped at

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the summit of the hill[1]." Unfortunately we omitted to ask whether this was a synonym for Kande Yaka who, in other invocations, is addressed as Kande Mulpola Wanniya, but the tone of the whole invocation with its reference to the "sword called Golden" is as unlike any other invocation to Kande as it well can be. This invocation is thoroughly foreign in form and sentiment.

782
S39

Sitala Wanniya.

Invocation addressed to Mulpola Hitiye Yaka, "the yaka who stopped at the Chief Place," i.e. the summit of the hill, at the Bambura ceremony.

XXIX.

Raṇ nan kaḍuwē nawa danitot
Apalā Wanniga nawa no kiyā.
Apalā Wanniga nawa danitot
Raṇ nan kaḍuwē nawa no kiyā.

Angara naṭun naṭaṇa Wanniṭa
Sonda sonda bera pada gasāpaw.
Sellan naṭun naṭaṇa Wanniṭa
Sonda sonda bera pada gasāpaw.

If you know the eulogy of the sword called Golden
Do not say the praise of our Wanniya.
If you know the eulogy of our Wanniya
Do not say the praise of the sword called Golden.

To the Wanniya who dances gesture-dances
Beat excellent tunes (lit. verses) on the tom-tom.
To the Wanniya who dances sportive-dances
Beat excellent tunes on the tom-tom.

Our informants, though providing a translation of the words of this invocation which approximates to the translation given by Mr Parker, could not tell us the significance thereof. Indeed they were only clear on one matter, that in spite of what the invocation said they had no drums and never had had drums. Handuna stated that the translation of the second verse should be:—

Sing loudly to him who dances the *angeru* dance.
Sing loudly to him who dances playful dances.

None could say what the *angeru* dance might be.

[1] Or perhaps the *yaka* to whom the Mulpola Hitiye belonged. Hitiye whatever else it may signify is also the ancient name for a particular form of pointed weapon.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Mr Parker suggests that the meaning of the first verse "may be that the Wanniya is too important a personage for anything else to be praised in the same breath (even his golden sword), and that 'at the same time' is to be understood at the end of the second and fourth lines of the translation."

Mr Parker also suggests that Mulpola Hitiye Yaka may be a synonym of "Gale Yaka (Yaka of the Rock) who danced on hills, and whose worshippers dance on many hills or crags of the Vaedi-rata as well as the North-western Province. *Hitiye* is a participial adjective derived from *hitinawa* to stay or stop; the literal translation of *mulpola hitiye Yaka* is 'Chief-place-stopped-Yaka!'"

Invocation at Pregnancy Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

Us Mukkāliya[1] Song, at pregnancy dance.

XXX. *Us mukkāliya wafa, maada mukkāliya wafi, bāla kaqurwa wafi paema darwafi ennau, dēvatāwayi.*

Having jumped round the high tripod, round the middle tripod, round the small post, come, wrapped up. (He) is a Dēvatāwa (godling).

This invocation was recited by the dancers at the pregnancy ceremony described on pp. 247 to 251. We do not understand to whom the last sentence "(He) is a Devatawa (godling)" applies. On receiving Mr Parker's translation we suggested that this might refer to the unborn child, but Mr Parker pointed out that he would not expect a child to be called a *devatawa*, and that "it is of the worst augury to speak in terms of praise of any child." Mr Parker therefore understands "the word *devatawa* to refer in a complimentary manner to the spirit which is asked to come." This idea agrees with the information we obtained in the field, where a somewhat doubtful translation of this invocation was given as follows: those who jump between the *us mukkāliya*, the *meda mukkāliya*, and the *balakanuwa* are *devatawa* (pl.). It was explained that the invocation referred to the performers, and that the expression "are *devatawa*" was the

[1] *Mukkāliya* is formed from two Tamil words, *mūndu* "three," and *kāl* "legs."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

equivalent to saying "are possessed of *yaku*," since to Veddas of Sitala Wanniya *devatawa* was a synonym for *yaka*.

1782
539

Dola Yaka Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

Invocation to Dola Yaka.

XXXI. *Kaḍat kaḍa Doliyā. Mal bandinā taṇa anḍagōlā saddamayi. Bindōli damanna damaṇna bindōliyā, mal bandinā ṗamawayi.*

Our informants could not translate this invocation or even state its meaning. Mr Parker supplies the following "doubtful translation":

Bit by bit, O Doliyā. At the place where the flowers (or necklaces) are tied there is a noise of calling (for us). The fixing of the demon offerings (*dola*) on the ground, the fixing of the demon offerings on the ground causes delay in tying the flowers (or necklaces).

"*Doli* is usually a swing, but apparently this cannot be the meaning here. *Dola* is especially an offering to evil spirits who are demons, such as Riri Yaka.

"It is uncertain if the first *doliyā* should be translated 'O Offering!'

"In Clough's Dictionary one meaning of *kaḍa* is 'arrow,' but it is very doubtful if the Vaeddas ever use it with this signification, indeed, I have never known *kaḍa* used for arrow. Everywhere the Vaeddas and Sinhalese say *ī, īya, īgaha, ītala.* The translation—'arrow by arrow'—would, however, suit the ceremony."

Invocation to Indigollae Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXII. *Itiriya-kanda Madaraṣ gala wāḍiyā. Ī dahasak gena sarasāṗu dunu ḍiyā, Indigollā devi waeḍiyoṭ subā wiyā. Mini riri oruwakaṭa tibamiṇ bemiṇ lamā.*

Madara-gala at Itiriya-kanda (is your) lodging. Having brought a thousand arrows (and) decorated bowstrings, God of Indigolla, should you

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539
[177]

come may (you) be fortunate. While putting (your mouth) to a boat (shaped vessel) of human blood (and) while drinking (may you be) delighted[1].

At Sitala Wanniya Indigollae Yaka was regarded as an attendant upon Kande Yaka. It is therefore obvious that this invocation did not arise at Sitala Wanniya or among any Veddas retaining their original *yaka* beliefs, and it is in fact an excellent example of the foreign element in the Vedda religion, and is especially interesting because it is possible in this case to indicate how an invocation of horrific nature has been introduced.

This matter has been discussed in the addendum to Chapter VIII; we may, however, suggest that the boat-shaped vessel of blood may refer to the murder of the 60 priests.

What we have written on p. 165 concerning the attributes of Indigollae Yaka among the village Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula shows that he has entered their beliefs as a powerful but beneficent spirit, though revengeful of neglect or insult. At Sitala Wanniya he is a *yaka* attendant on Kande Yaka. He may have attained this position immediately on his adoption, in which case his terrifying invocation must have been subsequently introduced and carelessly attached to the friendly *yaka*. Or the invocation, which is clearly only a fragment of a long formula, may portray something of his character when first adopted, and though his attributes have been softened to the usual friendly quality of Vedda *yaku*, a portion of the invocation appropriate to him may have lingered. We consider the first of these hypotheses the more likely, but in any case the existence among the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya of the foreign Indigollae Yaka as a beneficent attendant on Kande Yaka, who is nevertheless invoked with a formula typical of a bloodthirsty Sinhalese demon, is a most interesting example of the foreign elements that we now find in the Vedda religion.

Invocation to the Maha Kiriamma.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXIII. *Serambara warui sonda sonda nehun asti. Ewā nehunnaḷa sonda sonda liyō yati, aha muṇu hadu*[2] *hendana yati senaga pam hari Serambara pam haraṇa yati Pangara-gammana.*

[1] Deriving *hand* from *ran*.

[2] *aha muṇu hadu* for *ab-muṇu hadu*, things strung together.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

In Horabora tank there will be excellent lotus. To gather them excellent women go; tying on strings of beads they go. The multitude who cherish affection, leaving Horabora behind, go to Pangara gammana. 782 539

The Veddas of Sitala Wanniya told us that they did not invoke the Kiriamma with offerings for the cure of sickness though they had heard that the Veddas of the Bintenne did so and Handuna gave us these lines as part of the Bintenne invocation, which he said he had learnt from his father. He only understood the first few words which he translated "There are fine lotus in Horaboraweva and fine women go to pluck them." A variant of this invocation—if such it be—has been published by Mr Louis De Zoysa[1] as a song of the Veddas of Horaboraweva.

Sorabora wewé yanda ofu nofum ¢
Mfuwé wilannafu yanda liyé ¢
Kalu haralé hudu haralé uyé de
Ofu ahé bat hannafu nofu ep.

Fine, fine water-lilies and lotuses grow in Sorabora tank!
These to gather come fine, fine women.
They make them into black and white curries;
To eat the water-lily-seed rice there are no curries.

Obviously both versions are corrupt and have been derived from an invocation (No. XXXIX) sung at the [illegible] ceremony.

Invocation to the Kiriamma of Indigollawa asking for success in hunting.

Bandaraduwa.

XXXIV. *Irt handu Menara galada watdiyé*
? dahasak wida tara haruku dunu diyé
Yanda enda diya pé man halépiyé
Indigollé Devi wasdiyat rubé wiyé
Aeli gigiran pifa inda walu hafina lamé
Diya gigiran pifa inda diya damana lamé
Naddunné dunu diya ata hudé lamé
Riri oruwa pifa sahanan haruna lamé

[1] Note on the Origin of the Veddas, with a few specimens of their songs and charms. *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1881, Vol. VII, Part II, p. 100.

[113]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Oba tula rajuṭa oba tula wāṭi asraṭu ia
Meba tula rajuṭa meba tula wāṭi asraṭu ia
De piti rajuṭa de piti wāṭi asraṭu ia
Tawa mama nidida? Daw tula raju marāṭuhu ia.

Iri-kanda (Sow-hill) and Monara-gala (Peacock-rock) are (her) resting-places.
(She has) a thousand arrows, and bow-strings made with strength to pierce.
Look at the path on which her watery feet come and go.
Should the Goddess of Indigolla proceed (along it) there will be good luck.

(She is) the Lady who spins the clouds (in order) to sit behind the thunders of the waterfalls,
The Lady who subdues the water (in order) to sit behind the thunders of the water.
The Lady whose hand is small for the bow-string of the sounding bow (?),
The Lady who walks behind the boat (shaped vessel) of blood.

To the great king on that side that great resting-place was given up, it is said;
To the great king on this side this great resting-place was given up, it is said;
To the kings on both sides the resting places on both sides were given up, it is said.
What (opportunity was there) still for sleep? The wealthy great kings were killed, it is said.

"*Oba* and *meba* are Sinhalese or Elu words for 'there' and 'here' according to Clough; but are never used colloquially by Sinhalese, whereas they are in common use by the Vaeddas, and I was told by them they meant 'on that side' and 'on this side,' *oppa* (Sin. *obapa*) and *meppa* (Sin. *mehapa*) being used for 'there' and 'here.'

"The penultimate *ia* of the last line appears to be pleonastic.

"The translation of the third line of the second verse is doubtful. It may mean 'the little lady whose hand (guides) the bow-string of the sounding bow,' and this would agree with her title *Lamā*, but as she is not elsewhere referred to as being young or small I have not inserted this translation in the verse."

This invocation was written down for us by Tissahami the Vedda Arachi. It is therefore not surprising to find that it contains little that belongs to the Vedda stratum of thought. The invocation is headed *Indigollas Kiri Amma daṭiyamaṭi*

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

natana kavi "Song danced for hunting to Kiriamma of Indigollae." We did not have the opportunity of discussing the meaning of this invocation in the field, and indeed knew nothing of its contents until Mr. Parker translated it. With regard to the significance of this invocation Mr Parker writes: "Indigollae Kiriamma is here treated as the Huntress Goddess of the waters, who sends the rain which enables the hunters to track the deer. The boat of blood is referred to in an invocation of her husband, the Indigollaewa Yaka.

"Apparently two other Yakas endeavoured to take from her the two hills which she haunted, but in the end she killed the intruders and regained these resting-places[1]."

Invocations to the Rahu Yaku.

These are invocations to a Sinhalese demon who has been taken over by the Veddas and assumed Vedda attributes. The most striking alteration that the demon has undergone is that instead of the single Rahu Yaka of the Sinhalese the Veddas speak of three Rahu Yaku (Sitala Wanniya) or of male and female spirits Raku Yaka and Yakini (Bandaraduwa). The Sitala Wanniya story of the Vedda brothers who became the Rahu Yaku has been given in Chapter VII, but we do not know anything concerning the origin of the Yaka and Yakini who are completely foreign in character.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXV. *Ran adikku ataruna, ran kadu ataruna, gas mada ataruna, kada kanda ataru kara dinnai. Yaw antarwat wanda epa. Oppu gatta.*

Together with golden cooked food, with golden swords, with toddy (lit. tree spirit) we gave white samba rice. We do not want any danger to occur to us. Take the offering.

With Handuna's help a translation of this invocation was prepared which is practically identical with that provided by Mr Parker. Handuna explained that in this invocation *gas mada*, lit. "core of a tree," stood for "coconut."

[1] "Her origin has not been mentioned in any of these invocations; the Sinhalese say that she is Mohini, the beautiful incarnation of Vishnu, and mother of Ayiyanar, the great Paraya God of Ceylon."

782
539

XXXVI. *Nanisayi sadhana, hirusayi sadhana. Gini Rahu Bandara ana vetate hada Arachamak sadi ga.*

The Nā tree is made, and the Bō tree is made. At the time when the chief, Gini Rāhu, comes, a fight with swords will be made.

The Veddas could neither explain the meaning of the words of this invocation, nor state the significance of the whole.

Unuwatura Bubula.

XXXVII. *Gini wahalak sadala, ray hala pandamak sadala, ray i iti sadala, Gini Rahu Bandara ray i iti sadala mi magui mapuwaja wagiana ray mehat halanna.*

As we have constructed a Fire Palace, as we have made a light (resting) on a golden support (?), as we have made with wax golden arrows, O Chief, Gini Rāhu, as we have made with wax golden arrows, be pleased to proceed to this festival shed and to look at the golden mortar also.

The Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula understood this invocation in a somewhat different sense.

Gini Rāhu Bandar come to this shelter, look upon the golden mortar. The shelter has a roof of fire, within it is a golden torch and golden bees'-wax.

Invocations sung at the Kolamaduwa Ceremony.

782
648

We were told that the *kolamaduwa* ceremony was performed until recently with considerable pomp and circumstance by the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, gave us the following invocations as some of those that he learnt to sing when as a youth he lived among the Veddas. Tissahami wrote down these invocations after the partial rehearsal of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which was arranged for our benefit at Henebedda, a description of which is given in Chapter IX.

When discussing the *kolamaduwa* we were told that Veddas were sometimes sent for by the peasant Sinhalese because of the superior protection afforded to the cattle fold by their invocations and dances. The tradition as to this practice was quite definite

C. Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and we do not doubt that it occurred formerly, but we could hear of no recent instance in which Veddas alone officiated. 782 648

This did not surprise us for we met with no Veddas who knew these long invocations, and we believe that this practice must have ceased throughout the Vedirata at least two or three generations ago. The necessary conditions existed in those days when, as we were assured, there were communities of village Veddas with shaman of repute such as no longer exist, and we may instance the history of Lindegala given on pp. 171 and 172 as a case in point. Nevertheless the custom survives in a modified form, for Tissahami with three Veddas performed a *kolamadurus* ceremony at Damenegama in 1903 with the object of stopping an epidemic, alleged to be dysentery, which was then raging in the neighbouring villages. [731] [755]

A very large number of spirits are invoked, but as has been indicated in Chapter IX Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, and the *yaku* of the recent dead were not of the number. This demonstrates that the ceremony as it at present exists is essentially foreign, and therefore the length and nature of the three invocations given are not surprising. The invocation to Unapane Kiriamma which recites her deeds agrees well with all we could find out about her independently, and suggests that these invocations arose among such settled village Veddas as those mentioned in the Sinhalese chronicles referred to in the first chapter. 782

The four invocations written down by Tissahami were discussed at length with him, the shaman of the Henebedda Veddas sitting with us, though as this man—a half bred—knew only parts of these invocations and greatly admired Tissahami, the translations obtained in this way only represent the opinion of Tissahami, and presumably that of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from whom he learnt them in his youth. In these circumstances it is not surprising that two of these translations differ considerably from those furnished by Mr Parker, and this difference is so great in the invocation (No. XXXIX) which should be sung while the leaves are being slashed from the *kolamadurus* (cf. p. 269) that we have thought it best to give our field version as well as Mr Parker's translation. Some of the allusions, for instance, the reference to the shark contained in the first portion 782 539

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

of No. XXXIX, were equally unintelligible to our field informants and to Mr Parker.

Invocation of Unapane Kiriamma at the Kolamaduwa Ceremony.

XXXVIII.

1. *Udu-aṅwaru hāṭāgena*
Yaṭi-aṅwaru hāṭāgena
Sal ēyan ādāgena
Pol ēyan ādāgena

2. *Aeli āeti ādāgena*
Ru mīwā ādāgena
Uḍu wīyan ādāgena
Waḍa wīyan ādāgena

3. *Raṇ piyāwili ādāgena*
Neiti mālī ādāgena
Raṇ hara gal ādāgena
Moḍaekhili ādāgena.

4. *Siṭinā ātaraḍa*
Mālāwak waeṭi siṭa
Miya gudin sat dewāsaḍa
Raṇ diwas waeṭi siṭa.

5. *Sat Pattini Deviyanneni*
Teda wāran labāgena
Moḍaekhili labāgena
Katarugan wathālen

6. *Kaḍa hāngal labāgena*
Teda wāraṇ ladāgena
Sidda Māngru Deviyanneni
Kiri dāluwā labāgena

7. *Valli nam Ammā gē*
Kalu ambara paṭṭiyeḍa
Hudu ambara paṭṭiyeḍa
Rā wakun muṭṭāweḍa

8. *Deva diwas ilāpā*
Unāpāne Kiri Ammā
Sat pōratu Kumārī
Uḍu wīyan Kumārī

9. *Waḍa wīyan Kumārī*
Moḍaekhili Kumārī
Raṇ piyāwili Kumārī
Raṇ hara gal Kumārī
Vādāgana Kumārī!—

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

10. *Ayi pāmā mamu pāmāla*
Hun kirī ādipāmu
Kaṭa hāṅgal ādipāmu?
Raṅ dīmat elāpan
Raṅ maṭa hiṭapan.

1. Cutting Udu-nuwara (jungle),
Cutting Yati-nuwara (jungle),
Planting Sal gardens,
Planting Coconut gardens,

2. Training elephants (f.) and the tusk elephant,
Training the riding buffalo,
Making ceiling cloths,
Making side (wall) cloths,

3. Making golden coverings,
Making forehead ornaments,
Making golden necklaces (?),
Making head cloths,

4. While (you were) living;
Having fallen into adversity,
Seven days after (your) fatal sickness,
After (their) golden divine eyes had fallen (on you),

5. From the seven Pattini Goddesses
Receiving their gifts of power;
Receiving head coverings
From the Kataragam palace,

6. Receiving a pair of robes;
Receiving the gift of power,
From the deity the God Mangala
Receiving coconuts[1].

7. (Receiving from) the mother called Valli, cattle
For the black cattle (lit. horn-bearer) fold
(And) for the white cattle fold,
(And) beautiful chatties for cooking-pots;

8. (You) who cast down (on us your) divine eyes,
Kiri Ammā of Unāpāna,
The Princess foremost of seven (Kiri Ammas),
Princess of ceiling cloths,

9. Princess of wall cloths,
Princess of head coverings,
Princess of golden coverings,
Princess of golden necklaces,
Princess of Vidāgama!—

[1] Cf. note [5] p. 273.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
531

10. Why (are you) late, what is (the cause of) the delay
When we have made ready young coconuts,
When we have made ready a pair of robes?
Cast (on us your) golden divine eyes;
Declare (your) golden decision.

"*Moṭṭaebili* is formed of two Tamil words, *moṭṭai* (pronounced *mottai*), a bald head, and *kili* a strip of cloth. The word does not occur in Winslow's dictionary.

"*Piyawili* is a verbal noun derived from *piyanawa* to cover or shut.

"*Kara gal* may here mean 'stones for the neck,' i.e. beads; the usual meaning is whet-stones.

"*Ambara*, horn-bearer, is a *kaelē bāsa* word which usually means buffalo.

"*Peretu* for *peratu*, foremost.

"*Sadapunu* is a peculiar form, the past participial adjective with the termination of the first person plural."

The first three verses enumerate the works that Unapane Kiriamma is traditionally supposed to have performed during her life on earth. The fourth and fifth verses indicate that she died after a prolonged illness and on the seventh day after her death received power, i.e. became a *yaka*. Verses four to seven mention her and the gifts presented to her by various superior gods who, as Mr Parker writes, are all Tamil deities, "by Pattini the Goddess of chastity and controller of epidemics, who has seven manifestations or forms; Skanda the god of the Kataragam temple; Mangala, who may be Ayiyanar; and Walliamma the wife of Skanda, who according to the traditions of Ceylon married her at Kataragama." Mr Parker suggests that in the third line of the eighth verse "The Princess foremost of Seven" refers to the position of Unapane Kiriamma as "the most important personage among the seven minor Kiriammas to whom worship is paid by the Southern Vaeddas. Four others among them are local princesses or chieftainesses, and two are the *sakti* or female manifestations of minor deities. In another district Miriyabaedda Kiriamma is considered to be the most important one of this group, and the Unapane Kiriamma is there held to occupy only the third place."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

INVOCATION SUNG AT THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

XXXIX.

1. *Mazāmasa mūda maedde masa mōrā kapāgena lī keliyaṭada mas keliyaṭada giyē ara Wālimba gala dun wēḍi panikkiyā.*

2. *Nā kaḍuwen koṭa Bō kaḍuwen dinun dakinñayi.*
Bō kaḍuwen koṭā Bo kaḍuwen dinun danñayi
Dinun dakinñayi, tōpā yāluwā.

3. *Kadu hēwākan karaganō*
Hat hēwākan karanñada karanña(da)?
Hat hēwākan karaganō
Kadu hēwākan karañada karanñadae?

4. *Obama obama oba Horabara waewā nō;*
Mobama mobama moba Māwilingangā nō,
Anḍā diya duwana Māwilingangā nō,
Enawā kiyannan Nilmal gangā nō.

5. *Horabara waewē hānuwa piṭa inñada?*
Aela welē wel eliyen enñada?
Daena walalu nada dīlā enñada?
Kāriya kiyannaṭa Nilmal enñada?

Pālu raṭayi, Wanniya, otanin ōhaṭa;
Gōlu gena panini wael hinnō aengaṭa,
Reru arwit diya kelinā sonda ruwaṭa.
Yālu topit giyoda Sorabora waewaṭa?

Sorabora waewē egoḍat innan Vaeddō;
Sorabora waewē me goḍat innan Vaeddō;
Sorabora waewē de goḍama innan Vaeddō,
Apaṭat nelun mal awulanḍa deddō?

Sorabora waewē sonda sonda olu nelun aetī;
Ewuwā nelannaṭa sonda sonda liyō etī;
Kalu karalā hudu karalā uyā deti.
Olu sālē bat kannaṭa mālu naetī.

6. *Mī kahumal aella wicārē*
Atat damā yana murā gamanayi hālannē
Mī Kaḍagat gāla wicārē
Īnṭa dāmā yānō is moṭṭuekhili hālannē
Mī Niyandwarā gala wicārē
Ātaṭa payaṭa dāmā yanō gīgiri mānda atsemē.

Kalumal Nangiṭa hāndaṭa paeni mula hālen raṭa waeṭī gō.
Kalumal Nangiṭa hendaṭa amā mula hendan rāṭā waeṭī gō
Āngara naeṭun naṭana Wanniṭa honda honda bera ṭada gacāṭā.
Keri hat heri hat āpaṭa ōṭā tōba paengiri hola hindāṭā

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Kaha hirilan tilawa nati pivati Hannahalagi nari gunan pinimu
Ätuju wäduu piyuju wäduu dasta gigiri ähanni,
Nati pivati Hannahali mulpilajayi dawa enni.
Mini lähi tilawa nati pivati Hannahali nari gunan hawanni.
Dästu dämä dästu gigiri ähanni.

1. Cutting the shark fish in the midst of the Maahaana Sea, did that skilful elephant catcher to whom Wälimba-gala is given go for the sport with blood or for the sport with fish?

2. Having cut with the Nä sword I shall see victories (i.e. I shall be victorious) with the Bö sword.
Having cut with the Bö sword I shall gain victories with the Bö sword;
I shall see victories, You Friend.

3. (When) fighting with swords shall I fight shall I fight with (my) hands (also)?
(When) fighting with (my) hands shall I fight shall I fight with swords?

4. There, there, there is Horabora waewa;
Here, here, here is the Mahawaeli-ganga
The Mahawaeli-ganga in which the water laments as it flows.
"I am coming, Nilmal-ganga," I shall say.

5. (He longs to return to distant Horabora, and his thoughts now dwell on it.)
Shall I stop on the sluice of Horabora?
Shall I come from the open ground of the field on the channel?

Shall I come now, making my bangles resound?
Shall I come to Nilmal (ganga) to declare the matter? (i.e. to tell the truth about the district. He means that he need not go there to tell it).

It is a deserted district, Wanniyä, from end to end (lit. from there to there);
Bringing their pupils (young ones, with them) the small creeping ants spring on to my body.
Teal come (to the tank) and sport very beautifully in the water.
Friends, have you also been to Sorabora waewa?

There will be Vaeddas on this side of Sorabora waewa;
There will be Vaeddas on that side of Sorabora waewa;
There will be Vaeddas on even both sides of Sorabora waewa.
Will they permit us also to collect lotus flowers?

There will be very lovely white lotus in Sorabora waewa;
Very handsome women will have been sent to pluck them;

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

After preparing and cleaning and cooking them they will give them (to be eaten). 782

For eating (with) rice made from seeds of the white lotus there is no meat (the game having been driven away). 539

6. (When I examine) this Kalumal waterfall
It looks (as though) I am joining in a love (making) journey.
In the examination of this Kadagat-gala what is fixed on the head (? of the rock) looks like a head-cloth.
In the examination of this Niyandawarā-gala the sound of the jingling bangles placed on the hands and feet is heard.
From the end of the bundle of honey tied up for Kalumal Nangi it is falling (? on the ground).
From the mouth of the bundle of rice (?) tied up for Kalumal Nangi it is falling (? on the ground).
For the Wanniyā who dances the *angara* dances best excellent tunes on the tom-toma.
We do not want lame women's pingo loads, or sham (or refuse) loads; tie up desirable betel leaves.
The reed pipes of Kaha Kirillantalawa (Orioles' plain) being in front, it seems to be the love (making) journey of Hannachelā (hill).
Having garlands for the hands and garlands for the feet (she) shakes the jingling bangles of both hands.
The reed pipes being in front Hannachelā comes running to the Chief place (summit)—(or, they come running to the chief place of Hannachelā).

7. The reed pipes of Mini Kōbōtalāwa (turtle doves' plain) being in front, Hannachelā makes (her) love journey;
Having placed them on both hands (she) shakes the jingling bangles of both hands.

"In this song the Masāmasa Sea is again mentioned; there is probably some legend regarding the shark that was killed in the olden time. In *Ancient Ceylon* I have given reasons for believing that the early Vaeddas were in part a race of fishers.

"The 'blood-game,' *li keliya*, of the first section may have some connection with blood offerings to demons. The other expression, *mas keliya*, would commonly mean 'meat-game,' but as meat is termed *mālu* at the end of the fifth section it appears to mean here 'fish-game,' the sport of fishing.

"In the fourth section, the singer, living near the Mahawaeli-ganga, thinks he will hear the Nilmal-ganga, apparently a river near Horabora, calling him back to that district. The last

L:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
537

words of the fifth section give the reason why the Vaeddas have left it,—the want of game. The expression *halu karalā*, 'having made black,' must refer to some part of the process in preparing the lotus seeds.

"I do not understand the sixth section, in which I have adhered as closely as possible to what appears to be the literal meaning. It would be much more intelligible if pronouns had been inserted; there is only one, *apata epā*, 'we do not want,' which explains nothing.

"Apparently the hill Hannachelā, with reeds growing in pools on the plains near it (from which the reed pipe, *nalāwa*, is made), reminds the singer of a girl decked with garlands, who is going to be married (or possibly only visiting her younger sister), preceded by men playing these pipes. As I understood it, she takes with her pingo loads of betel, honey and cooked rice, to present to her younger sister, the Kalumal waterfall.

"The meaning of *rapā* in the second verse of this section is uncertain. The word *amā* may be *hambā* or *sambā*, a kind of rice. *Angara* is defined in Clough's Dictionary as 'anointing the body after bathing with perfumes made from sandal wood.'

"*Paingiri kola* is a *kaṭibāsa* expression for betel. *Mini hobo* should be *mini hobeyiyā* (jewelled) turtle doves; some other pigeons are called *bōwā* in Sinhalese, an onomatopoietic word imitating their cooing.

"*Kori kat bori kat* is an expression I have not heard, and the meaning is doubtful."

On account of the great difference between Mr Parker's translation and the meaning of this invocation as it was explained in the field, we now give the translation we wrote down while discussing the matter with our informants. It does not pretend to do more than explain the significance which our informants attributed to the invocation, and at the time we noted it we realised that it was far from being a literal translation. Explanatory remarks are enclosed between square brackets.

(1) Did the Panikkia of mist covered Walimbagala go to the great sea to kill the great shark and bring his flesh and blood?

[The Panikkia is a spirit whose home is Walimbagala

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

(Friar's Hood). He is doubtless the Walimbagala Yaka of other groups of Veddas.] 782 539

(2) Friends I will cut with my sword of Na and Bo and I will be victorious. [The Panikkia speaks to a host of spirits known as the Maha Yakino.]

(3) Did he go to fight with the sword, or to charm with his tongue?

(4) Horaborawewa is far away, the Mahawelliganga the waters of which are blue, is far away. [It was explained that this verse referred to the Veddas of Horabora being far away.]

(5) Are you on the sluice of Horaborawewa? [The *yaku* of dead Veddas are thus addressed.]

They [the *yaku*] will be coming by the fields of Elavella [well-known rice fields].

Are you coming shaking your bangles in your hands?

Nilmal (Kiriamma) are you coming to favour us?

The country of the Wanniyas is abandoned in that direction.

Bears growl and roam (in the abandoned country).

Friend have you been to Horaborawewa where teal swim?

There are Veddas on the far side of Horaborawewa.

There are Veddas on this side of Horaborawewa.

There are Veddas on both sides of Horaborawewa.

Will they allow us to pick lotus flowers?

There are fine *olo* [a plant] and lotus in Horaborawewa.

Beautiful women come to pick them.

(They) cook and give white and black (seeds) [i.e. cleaned and uncleaned seeds].

(There is) no curry to eat the *olo* rice [i.e. the seeds].

(6) See how (they) go along Kalumalella [the stream below the sluice] swinging their hands;

See how (they) go along Kadagangala [a hill] with their heads covered.

Hear the jingling of bangles on the hands and feet of those going to Niyandawaragala [a hill].

The parcel of honey [tied up in leaves] for Nilmal Nangi is slanting.

The parcel of rice for Kalumal Nangi is erect.

Beat the tom-tom for the Wanniya to dance well.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782 Do not give small and torn betel leaves to us.
See how Pereti Hannasheia going and coming from Kaha
539 Kirilian *talawa* jingling the bangles on her hands....
Pereti Hannasheia is coming running to the Kolamaduwa.
(7) Pereti Hannasheia of Minikobo *talawa* comes jingling bangles on her hands.

INVOCATION OF THE MAHA YAKINO CEREMONY.

XL. *Kolamaduwo bat mul ba(n)dina-kuta kiyana kaviya.*

Kāyē rajē rajē gamē yandada mē ran āmā mul bādinnē badinnē. Kāya wai rajē gamē yanda ūwāyi. Tōpē rajē gamē yandayi mē ran āmā mul badinnē badinnē. Muna muna wel gan hōtala dā mē ran āmā mul badinnē bādinnē. Kāyē rajē gamē yandada mē nā hola wiyan badinnē badinnē. Tōpē rajē gamē yanda mē nā hola wi bādin dinnē, bādinnē.

Song which is sung while tying up the bundles of rice for the *kolamaduwa.*

To go to a village in whose countries are (we) tying, are (we) tying these bundles of golden Ambrosia? Not to go to a village in the country of anyone (else) whatever, (but) to go to a village in thy country (we) are tying, (we) are tying these bundles of golden ambrosia. Having cut which fields are (we) tying, are (we) tying these bundles of golden ambrosia? To go to a village in whose country are (we) tying, are (we) tying these *nā* leaf canopies? To go to a village in thy country (we) are tying, (we) are tying these *Nā* leaf canopies.

Our field translation of this invocation substantially agrees with Mr Parker's, though as might be expected our informants gave "rice" in place of "Ambrosia."

INVOCATION OF AMBARAPOTI KIRIAMMA AT THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

XLI. *Gawara wil mandit elawala helē yudda*
Bumbara mala pīpa indigenu karayi nanda wenama sadda
Ambarala puzimā sundan palandinawā ilā sudda
Ambarapoti Ammā mina mē nadawapa kawuru dadda,
Mondarinju kara nila tamba pata simayi
Bilindugu dāmā ruwa yodunā
Baden koson mal mahhin simayi
Bella wapaja gōmbara ilunā
Sagga puskola e ran ludu gena
Nāsihāwa malalaja ebinā

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Kumala pahul deka dorana tabāgena
Waeliyayi Ambarāpoti Ammā.
Salā diñ rasā matuplā pelīyā perelena andan
Wala yaeṭin pāyu sandā dreiyā waeḍuwena andan
Ran teranaka ramba teranaka dreiyā santāpena andan
Ūva tuleli mal sānā maḍuwaṭa sarasuna andan.

While the sambar deer trusted to the pool, being driven away it was attacked in the jungle.
The Bambarā bee sitting on the flower will make quite another cry (i.e. objects) about bathing.
It is very cleanly to put on frequent sandal-wood after grinding it (to powder).
Except Ambarāpoti Ammā who is there (to undertake) this business?
The sapphire of the peacock's neck (shines) like a plate of copper.
The throne of Bilindi is made beautifully.
From his body (hang) margosa flowers like a garland,
Round his neck are scattered freckles (light patches),
He has ear-rings of gold joined to talipat leaf,
His nose is worthy of his forehead.
The child placing his two feet on the earth
Is greater than Ambarāpoti Ammā.
As a *pelīyā* (fish) is rolled over on the top of the eddying wave,
Like the moon risen from under the cloud, the *dreiyā* advances.
Like an arch of gold, an arch of ramba grass, the *dreiyā* reclines,
Like the Lord of Vaeddas, who has renown throughout Uva, adorned for the (wedding) hall.

The first four lines of our field version of this invocation agree tolerably well with Mr Parker's translation except that nothing is said about bathing, the second line running "The bees seated on the flowers make humming noises." The next eight lines were given to us as follows:

"The child should be like the colour of the peacock's neck.

"The body (of the child) should be like the flowers of the kohomba tree (margosa tree), like the flowers of the damba tree are the *gonera*[1] round the neck (of the child).

"The earrings made of talipot leaves look beautiful (when worn) in the face.

"Ambarāpoti Ammā came striding across the firmament."

Of the remaining four lines only the last is substantially different from Mr Parker's. It runs "See how the Maisāmi who has authority over Uva comes to the *maḍuwa*."

[1] *Gonera* are light flecks on the skin which are much admired.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XI

ARTS AND CRAFTS

517 It is not our purpose in this short chapter to attempt to describe systematically the crafts of the Veddas, this has already been done by the Sarasins and we shall, therefore, limit ourselves to touching on matters which especially interested us, or concerning which we have unrecorded information.

The arts and crafts of the Veddas are of the simplest nature, their belongings are few, and there is no certain attempt at ornamentation on any of these. Even personal adornment is so lacking that it may be disregarded. The highest artistic attainments of the Veddas seem to be their songs and invocations, and these, with their ceremonial dances, in which they may be said to have specialised, seem to have absorbed all that part of their mental energy which remains after providing for their daily necessities. There is no reason to believe that their artistic development was ever any higher than it is at the present day, when the only form of decorative art in which they indulge for its own sake, is rude drawing on rocks which we shall now describe[1].

ROCK DRAWINGS.

532 Figs. 1 and 2 of Plate LVI show rock drawings made by the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya at Pihilegodagalge and another cave near it. Since our return we have ascertained that other Veddas

[1] It is possible that a few individuals are pleased by simple geometrical patterns. There are traces of ornamentation on two of the pots shown in Plate LXII although this had avowedly been copied from foreign pots.

[177]

[p. 318]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

make drawings[1], but unfortunately we did not pay attention to this matter until we had seen Pihilegodagalge. 532.

This was due to the frequent occurrence of rough drawings and scribblings made by Tamil gall-nut collectors in some of the rock-shelters sometimes used by the Henebedda Veddas. The Veddas obviously had nothing to do with these, and they denied that they were responsible for the only other drawings that we saw, namely those of an elephant and two men in Punchikiri-ammagalge.

Probably drawings are made in many of the sloping rock-shelters and are habitually washed away by the monsoon. Indeed this view was put forward by the men of the Sitala Wanniya group who stated that all Veddas could make pictures.

Pihilegodagalge was, however, specially well situated for the preservation of the drawings, and the pictures on the back wall of the cave were never touched by rain. The drawings were usually made by women, who said they did them when they were waiting for the men to return from hunting, apparently merely to amuse themselves. We feel confident that no magical import attaches to these pictures, the usual subjects of which are men and women, various animals and the hide vessel *maludema* (Sin. *hangotu*) in which honey is collected. Ashes were mixed with a little saliva in the palm of the hand and [386] streaked on to the rock with the forefinger of the right hand, the spots of the leopard being put in with a charcoal paste prepared in the same manner.

Plate LVI, fig. 1 shows on the right a *maludema*, a vessel made of deer's hide in which rock-honey is collected. The radiating lines which make this drawing appear like the sun's disc, represent handles made of loops of creeper, while the spots inside indicate the honey. The *maludema* (a photograph of which is given in Plate LXV) is a favourite subject and occurs in a number of rock paintings. Below the *maludema* on the right is a dog and below this a leopard is represented. On the

[1] Mr H. C. P. Bell has written to us that he has seen drawings in the rock-shelters used a few years ago by the Veddas of Tamankaduwa, and Mr Alfred Clark formerly of the Woods and Forests Department has also observed them.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

532 left the two long figures which might be taken for centipedes really portray the big monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*), the vertical lines representing ribs.

Plate LVI, fig. 2 shows on the right a leopard and dogs while on the left men and women are seen. This illustration does not show very clearly the difference between men and women which was pointed out to us. Lines pointing upwards were drawn from the heads of women to show that their hair was tied in a knot. This distinction is very difficult to understand. The hair of both men and women is equally unkempt, the women certainly tie theirs into a knot behind, but this is quite frequently done by men also as a matter of convenience; and to the uninitiated these lines radiating from the head rather give the appearance of loose hair than the reverse.

The drawings in Plate LVII, fig. 1 are the work of a man, the grandfather of Handuna, the leader of the group. He is considered to have been an exceptionally good draughtsman. He was once obliged to go to Batticaloa the official headquarters of the province, the reason was difficult to follow, but it appeared to have been connected with a murder which had taken place. On his return to the cave he made a picture of what had impressed him most, namely, "the white man on horseback." Two representations of this are seen on the left, on the right there is a group of men and women surrounding a man who holds a bow above his head. The lower horizontal line represents the bow while the upper is the string and the vertical line the arrow. The dots scattered around the arrow represent its feathers.

Plate LVII, fig. 2 represents a number of drawings of *maladema* in a cave near Sitala Wanniya.

Plates LVIII to LXI are photographs of pictures made for us on brown paper by several members of the Sitala Wanniya community. The upper part of Plate LVIII shows a leopard attacking a dog, this was made by Vela, below it is a row of men drawn by the wife of Handuna. On Plate LIX a *maladema* is depicted on the left, next on the right are three women, two drawn horizontally and the third vertically, but upside down; in all of them the body has been carried down too far,

532

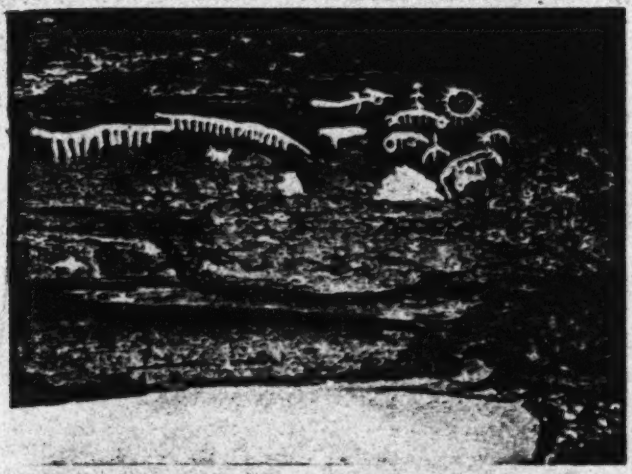


Fig. 1. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave

415

Fig. 2. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave

[facing p. 321]

532

Fig. 1. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave

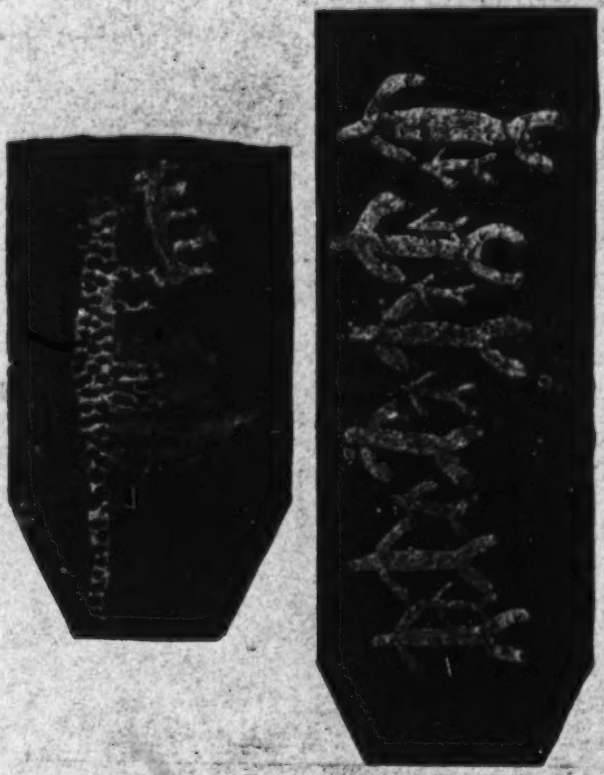
Fig. 2. Rock drawings of *hanguts* in Gamakandagalge cave

[facing p. 320 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

532

Plate LVIII



Vedda drawings

[facing p. 320 c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

532

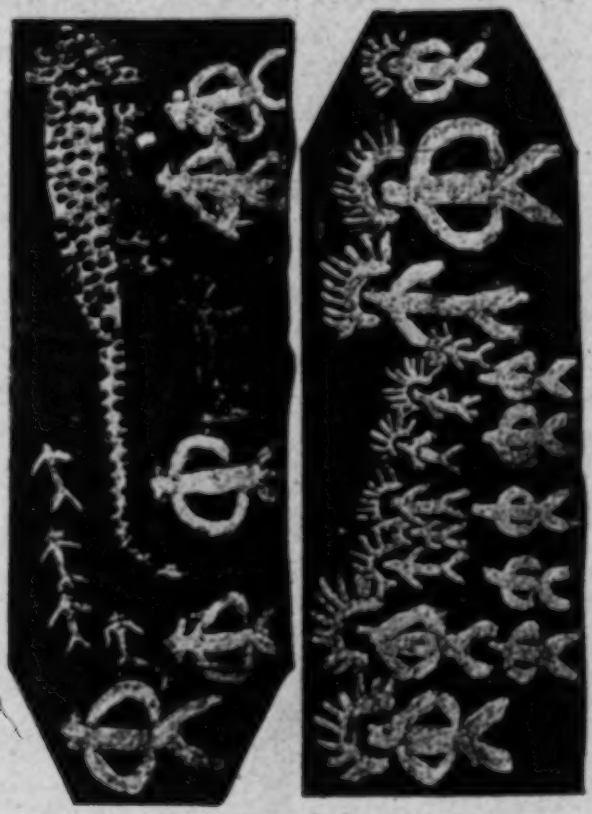
Plate LIX

Vedda drawings

[facing p. 320 d]

532

Plate LX



Vedda drawings

[-facing p 320 e]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

532

Plate LXI

Vedda drawings

[facing p. 320 f]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so as to project downwards between the legs: the radiating lines above the head were said to represent hair. In the lower part of the photograph in the centre is a dog. The next three figures represent a bow and arrow, a woman and a man, looking at them from above to below. On the right is a group of men. The lower figure in this plate shows a sambar deer in the centre and four dogs, two men and a woman. Plate LX shows a leopard, a dog and several men and women. 532

The figures of elephants and a man with a bow and arrow on Plate LXI were drawn on grey millboard and were so faint that it was necessary to blacken them before reproduction. The carelessness with which the trunk is put in is noteworthy.

The only other occasions on which we saw pigments used were at the Bambura Yaka and Rahu Yaka ceremonies described in Chapter IX, black and yellowish-brown marks being made on the properties prepared. The black marks were made with charcoal paste, the brownish marks with turmeric. [386]

PANTOMIME.

The only other art practised by the Veddas is that of pantomime from which they undoubtedly derive real pleasure. Within the limits of their daily experience they are good actors, and will most faithfully portray their own method of doing things. The zest with which a number of Henebedda Veddas spontaneously prepared the properties for a pantomimic exhibition of honey-gathering, and then enacted the scene at Bendiyagalge caves, was very striking and has been referred to in Chapter IV. 536

Another piece of pantomime which we never saw enacted spontaneously but which was performed at our request, was the stalking of game. Directly the object to be "stalked" had been indicated, the stalker fixed his eyes on it, and then approached noiselessly and warily, with body bent and head forward, every muscle ready for instant action, till within a few paces of the object when he would straighten his body and return to the rest of the party at his usual easy pace.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

LEGENDS.

773
538

There is an extraordinary absence of legend among all groups of Veddas who have not been greatly influenced by Sinhalese. Concerning the origin of men, natural features, and things the Veddas seem absolutely incurious, nor do their songs refer to any of these subjects. There are no stories of talking animals or of how their rock-shelters were formed; they have not even a tale of their own origin. Apart from a few accounts of the origin of particular *yaku* and the deeds they performed (e.g. the pig-hunting of Bambura Yaka) the following two legends were all that we could hear though the most diligent inquiry was made.

The Origin of Fire.

773

There was a man who had fire; he distributed this to animals, trees and stones, but a little remained to him at the end and this he swallowed. His name was Wasawatiya. "We cannot say whether he was a Vedda. Because he swallowed this fire we all get hungry, for we all have fire within us. There were men before Wasawatiya but they could not talk; otherwise they were as ourselves. Wasawatiya made and sent the first dog to those people, and the dog barked at them; so that those people feared greatly and stammering and stuttering began to talk, and the first words were *ballakai, ballakai*—'dog will bite.'" Handuna of Sitala Wanniya was our informant and he also gave the following account of the rainbow.

The Rainbow.

[824]

When there is rain there is a "kind of yellow bow" (rainbow) in the sky. One of our women made a bow of wood like it and that is all.

How the hill Yakagala came by its name.

The following story was told by Wannaku of Uniche a variant occurs as a song at Sitala Wanniya and is given i Chapter XV. Once upon a time two families of Veddas live

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

at Aralu Talawa about two miles east of Peria Pillumalai in the Eastern Province on the Badulla-Batticaloa road. Now these Veddas possessed elephants and cattle, so that when two Moormen pedlars came and saw the Veddas living well and in comfort, they thought how good it would be to kill them and take their goods. The Moormen asked the Veddas to barter honey with them, and Moormen and Veddas went to the hill now called Yakagala, for there were *bambara* colonies among its rocks. The Veddas went down ladders of creepers to the combs, but before they could take the honey the ladders were cut by the Moormen and the Veddas were dashed to pieces. The Moormen came back to the settlement and when the Veddas' wives questioned them as to the whereabouts of their husbands the Moormen said they were bathing in a stream close by. The women did not believe this and, suspecting foul play, went to look for their husbands and found the bodies at the foot of the precipice. They went back to their houses, let loose the cattle and fired their houses, for they determined to kill themselves. The elder sister saw the Moormen running towards them, so standing on the edge of a precipice she called her young sister to her saying that her bangle was broken. As her younger sister stood near her she suddenly grasped her round the body and jumped over the cliff. The *yaku* of these women and of their husbands still remain in the neighbourhood of their old dwelling-place which because of them looks clean, as if folk still lived there. The rock bee still lives on this hill to which the Veddas resort to take honey.

POTTERY.

The Veddas make very rough pots. A lump of dark coloured clay is taken, patted into the desired shape, left to dry in the air, and then baked. The Henebedda Veddas who made the pots shown in Plate LXII said that these pots were placed on the fire and covered with pieces of dried wood so as to be submitted to heat on every side. The less sophisticated Veddas of Sitala Wanniya stated that they simply placed the air dried pots on the fire, when they were soon baked hard.

323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a [531] rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was [171] attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made [172] pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

Tools and Weapons.

411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by [437] barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes 411 or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *kobbewa* 322 (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of [283] a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind 314] that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the tinbiral tree (Diospyros embryopteris).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

323
415
531
Plate EXII

Vedda pots

[facing p. 324]

resin obtained from the *timbiri* tree (*Dipterocarpus zeylanicus*). 411
The shaft of the arrow is commonly made of the wood of the 322
mulan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*). The arrow is still the almost universal cutting tool, as we had good opportunity of ascertaining at Henebedda. There was no knife in the community, and we noticed the skill with which a deer was skinned 412 252
and cut up with an arrow. The Veddas certainly desired no better tool, and when we pressed a butcher's knife on one of them in order to see how he would handle the unaccustomed tool, it was interesting to note how slowly he worked and how poor the result was compared with that he obtained with an arrow, which he held just above the blade somewhat as a European holds a penholder. No less astonishing was the skill employed in removing the skull cap with a few strokes of the axe, not only was the brain lifted out and cooked entire, but it was removed so neatly and cleanly that the result was more suggestive of an anatomical preparation than a piece of butcher's work.

The Veddas we met were all bad or indifferent shots, and 411
we have no doubt that game is seldom shot at a distance much beyond fifteen or twenty yards, the marvellous stalking of the Veddas enabling them to approach within this distance. The bow, to which the string is securely fastened at one end, is carefully unstrung when not in use. To string it, this end is placed upon the ground, the upper end of the shaft and the string being held in the hands, the sole of one foot is then placed against the middle of the shaft which is steadied, we might almost say gripped, between the great toe and the second toe. Much of the weight of the body is thrown against the middle of the shaft while the hands pull down the upper end to which the string is quickly secured, as is shown in Plate LXIII. Plate LXIV shows the position of the hands and arms immediately before the arrow is released. The bowman is Handuna of Henebedda, who is left-handed and who in spite of being the [145]
father of a large family remains the only left-handed individual in the community. The length of a bow collected at Henebedda was 172 cm., while four arrows also obtained at Henebedda varied from 88 to 105 cm. in length.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411 648 It appears that painted and lacquered arrows were sometimes presented to the Veddas by the Sinhalese kings as signs of gratitude or favour, just as ceremonial forms of other objects were presented to particular Sinhalese[1]. Dr Willey told me of a lacquered bow and arrow which he heard of among a community of sophisticated Veddas, and which he was told ultimately found their way to the Kandy Museum. Among the peasant Sinhalese of Nilgala we heard of a lacquered arrow—said to have been lost recently—which, according to tradition, had been presented many generations ago to the Vedda ancestors of its last owner by one of the kings of Ceylon. With regard to the specimen in the Kandy Museum, the arrow is feathered in the usual Vedda style, the condition of the lacquer on it shows that it is of considerable age. The iron which is said to belong to it is loose, and it is entirely unlike any arrow head we have seen. Instead of having a tang it has a socket into which the end of the shaft must have fitted, and there is a shoulder or "stop" upon the iron. The bow shown us as having been acquired with the arrow was in much better condition and had a small band of silver or some metal resembling silver round it. According to the account given at the museum both specimens were procured from a priest who gave a history of the specimens which does not connect them with any Veddas[2].

224 177 Traps and snares are unknown among the least sophisticated Veddas, but at Danigala we saw a small deadfall trap avowedly introduced.

HONEY.

222 The importance of honey in the Vedda diet has been mentioned in Chapter IV as well as the large part it plays in barter. The honey of the *bambara* (*Apis indica*) is taken in June and July, though at other times of the year small combs are taken

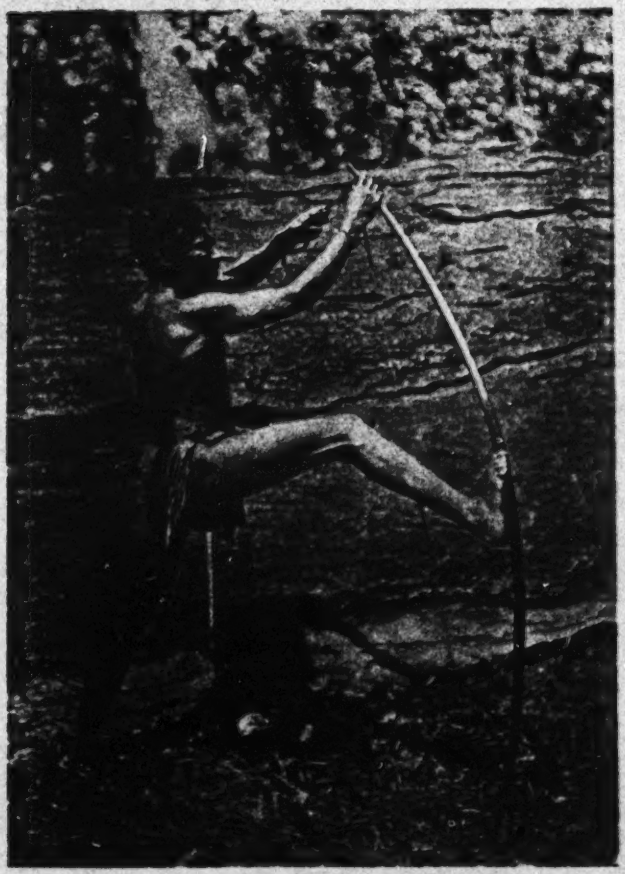
[1] There is in the Colombo Museum a beautifully lacquered weaver's shuttle, presented to certain cloth makers by one of the Sinhalese kings.

[2] It was stated that the bow and arrow had been found in the verandah of a disused house with some broken articles said to have been thrown there, having been taken from the *walawwa* (house) of Melligoda Adigar. The house was in the Kegalle district. The villagers gave the bow and arrow to a priest who brought them to the museum.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXIII

411
142
291
516



Handuna of Henebedda stringing his bow

[facing p. 326a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411
516

Plate LXIV

Handuna shooting

[facing p. 326 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from trees. Besides the *bambara* other species including the 222
small stingless bee supply a considerable quantity. The first two months of our sojourn in the Vedda country (January and February) was at a time when honey was particularly scarce, and even at the end of March and in April it was not abundant, yet such was the courtesy of the Veddas that each community managed to make us a small present of honey, though this often entailed a long search and the combs were frequently full of grubs. In two communities only, which were better off than the others, namely Danigala and Kulukalaeba, were we given large pots of strained honey, the remains of the previous year's store.

The manner in which *bambara* colonies are regarded as 262
property has been discussed in Chapter V. Writing in 1886 251
Nevill says, "Honey forms a great part of their diet. It is eaten fresh in large quantities, wax and all; combs with young bees in them being considered especially wholesome. It was also the practice formerly to store strips of dried meat in honey, filling in a cavity of some tree with it, the cavity being first lined with clay. At present they barter away their surplus [437]
meat and honey, during the hunting season, and keep no store for the rainy season. This often brings privation and is one cause of the rapid decrease in their numbers.

"They tell me their health is never so good as when their 262
food largely consists of yams and honey.

"To procure honey they rapidly cut open hollow trees, even 222
of the hardest wood; and to take the hives of the large black bambara bee, they make long ladders of cane, called 'rang [417]
kendiya,' by which they descend precipices, and cut off the combs adhering to their sides.

"They do this at night, generally, as the bees are not so savage then; and smoke them with a sort of resin. The hives are often cut off with a sort of wooden sword, made for the [413]
occasion. These frail ladders swing fearfully, and the task is so dangerous, only the boldest and most athletic attempt it. While engaged on the task they sing lustily, songs specially 222
made, which appease the spirit of the rock, and prevent him 533
from dashing the hunter off the ladder. They also go about

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the work with songs, so as to get up a certain degree of excitement, necessary to carry them through the task. A song is chanted, and a little honey sprinkled for the spirits, before the combs are cut off the rock[1]."

Before honey collecting as many pots as possible are made and old pots and gourds are overhauled. The wooden sword which Nevill mentions is probably the *mastiya* (fig. 12). This is a stout stick about 2¼ metres long with four prongs at one end, which the Vedda carries hanging by a loop from his forearm and which he uses to detach the comb and convey it into the vessel called a *maludema* in which the honey is collected. This is also carried hanging from the forearm and should be made of deer's hide so that it may not be broken against the rocks as the honey collector swings to and fro. Plate LXV shows a *maludema* collected at Sitala Wanniya. An arrow is also carried and is largely used in detaching the combs from the rock.

Before taking the honey a bundle of green leaves is set alight and lowered in order to stupefy the bees. The smoker is called *odiya* (Sin. *hula*) and the creeper attached to it *yotwella*[2]. Several men of the community join together to collect rock-honey, the whole spoil being equally divided without any special consideration for the owner of the land, though it seemed that the owner would decide when the honey should be collected. The women accompany their men to crags and gulleys where the *bambara* build their combs. They hold torches and sing while the honey is being collected.

Plate LXVI shows a gourd, used as a hive for a colony of the stingless bee, hanging outside one

Fig. 12.
Mastiya × $\frac{1}{10}$.

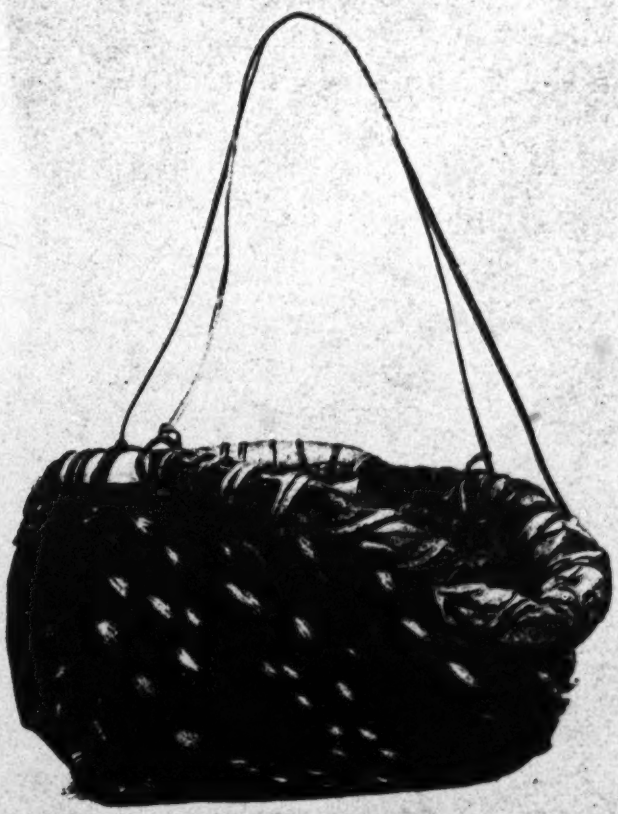
[1] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

[2] For the use of these see Chapter IV where the pantomime of honey getting is described.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

415
281

Plate LXV



Deerskin vessel (*muludema*) used for collecting honey

[facing p. 328a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXVI

231

Gourd used as bee hive (Hennebedda)

[facing p. 328b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the huts in the Morane chena settlement at Henebedda. It was shown us with pride by Handuna who said he was keeping it for his twelve year old son. He told us that in the old days the hollow branches, the homes of colonies of these bees, were frequently kept in the rock-shelters. 231

The ladder with the help of which *hambara* honey is collected consists of a greatly elongated loop of cane, apparently derived from a species of *Calamus*, across which rungs of creeper are stretched. In Plate LV (p. 290) there can be seen the bottom of the ladder some fifty feet long, used for training the young, hung from the top of the cliff across the face of the rock mass at Sitala Wanniya. In spite of the fact that honey is usually gathered at night the Veddas do not travel or hunt at night and know only two stars by name. One of these is a star or more probably a planet which often appears close to the moon and is called *pantaru* which, we were told, is the name by which the Sinhalese know it. The other named star appears soon after sunset, always in the same place and before the other stars, and is almost certainly Venus; this is called *irubada turua*, i.e. "side of sun star." Although the Veddas hunt in the dusk of the dawn the idea that anyone would roam about at night seemed absolutely ludicrous to them (Sitala Wanniya), they roared with laughter at it, "why should one go into the jungle? it would be too dark to see to shoot, besides bears are about, absurd idea," they laughed again, in fact it was quite ten minutes before Kaira had forgotten the joke. 222 417 821 [484] 621 522

MASTICATORIES.

All Veddas chew eagerly, but as they can rarely obtain a supply of areca nuts they commonly use instead of these the bark of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) and the *demata* tree (*Carallia integerrima*). Concerning the other plants that they use as masticatories Nevill says, "They occasionally chew the leaves of several aromatic herbs, particularly *Anisochilus suffruticosus*, a sort of sage that grows on rocks. The areca does not grow wild in the Eastern Province, but Veddas are very fond of the seeds of the lakada bush, *Gardenia carinata*, a 261 276

1:Seligmann & Seligmann S-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vodda AX5

Plate LXVII

415
281
276

Betel pouch made of monkey skin (Hambukkha)

[facing p. 330]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

261 beautiful species of Gardenia with fragant flowers and crimped
276 laurel-like leaves. These seeds or nuts are astringent and to me resemble exactly in taste those of the areca palm. They are only an occasional luxury however. The bark which he chews is almost a necessity to a Vedda, the leaves or seeds a mere luxury[1]."

[105] It is not always that the Veddas can obtain lime, which they
276 make by burning the shells of a land snail *mantaiko* (*Cyclophorus involvulus*). The shells are laid on red hot pieces of charcoal, more glowing embers are heaped around and upon them, and the whole is fanned with a tuft of green leaves for a few minutes, when the embers surrounding the shells are raked away and the shells allowed to cool before being crushed and dropped into the vessel in which the lime is carried. This is
[415] often a tin match box or it may be a brass covered cartridge case. Specially made lime spatulae do not exist, but one Vedda of Henebedda had a long broad nail with which he removed the lime from his tin match box.

The betel pouch is usually a roughly sewn bag of trade
276 cloth, but the Henebedda Veddas also make pouches of monkey
415 skin, one of which is shown in Plate LXVII. We omitted to inquire how the hair was removed, but probably it was singed off, the whole skin being subsequently scraped.

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. I. p. 191.

CHAPTER XII

COAST VEDDAS

THE Coast Veddas or Verdas occupy a number of settlements in the Tamil zone on the east coast. They exceed in number both the Village Veddas of Bintenne and their wilder neighbours of the borders of Uva and the Eastern Province; this is no doubt due to the fact that in the majority of Coast Veddas there is a large admixture of Tamil blood, and the comparatively thriving condition of their settlements must be attributed to the same cause. The date of their first arrival on the coast and of their subsequent intermarriage with the Tamils is quite uncertain; the latter state that there have always been Veddas in the neighbourhood of the sites they now occupy, but the Veddas themselves have a tradition that they come from inland. Knox does not mention them, but Nevill considers that they come from Sabaragamuwa (Sufferagam), being driven thence in the 17th century.

"The Vaeddas say that they never were related to these Coast Vaeddas, and do not know when they came to the Coast, or where they came from, nor did they ever hear that they belonged to any waruge of the race.

"The Coast Vaeddas do not know when they came or how they came, but they say that long ago their ancestors came from the Gala, far beyond the hills to the west. They also sometimes say they came from Kukulu-gammaeda and spread out along the Coast. Some say this is Kukulugam near the Verukal; others suppose it to be somewhere far away[1]."

1 Op. cit. Vol. 1. p. 184.

We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland. They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda savage, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours. One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellanchenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenai some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaddda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaddda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaddda."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann S-3 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXVIII

142
291

Fig. 1. Count Vedda.

[534
482
516]

Fig. 2. Count Vedda of Vakarai

[facing p. 332a]

Plate LXIX

342
415

Fig. 1. Settlement of Coast Veddas

[417]

Fig. 2. Settlement of Coast Veddas

[facing p. 332b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

There are a few Verdas at Panichchenkeni, while near Vakarai still further to the north there is a Verda settlement of considerable size. Some eight miles beyond this are two Verda settlements Parchenai and Nargantonai situated close together. We heard of other smaller settlements of Coast Veddas in the neighbourhood of Batticaloa, but these were not visited as time was short and it appeared that those Verdas we did not see differed in no respect from those we met. We were told that formerly there were Coast Veddas south of Batticaloa and we later discovered that there were, and still are, certain shrines or temples within a few miles of the coast (e.g. at Mandur), which were generally recognised as Vedda shrines at which Veddas especially worshipped. This matter has been alluded to in Chapter VIII, and here it is only necessary to point out that the religion of the Coast Veddas is strongly tinged with Tamil customs and beliefs; indeed, many Verdas had Hindu sect marks upon their foreheads. 361 [778]

Some, but not all, of the Coast Veddas know the names of the *waruge* to which they belong, and a few also know the names of some of the more important *waruge* of the Veddas inland. Uru *waruge* appears to be the *waruge* to which most of the Coast Veddas who remembered their ancestral *waruge* belonged, but a few men stated that they belonged to Ogatam, Kavatam, Umata or Umatam, Aembalaneduwe and Aembale *waruge*; the last named and the one before it probably being the same as the Aembela *waruge* found inland. Some of the Coast Veddas whom we questioned said they had heard of, and still knew of certain of the old Vedda *waruge*, and such men were generally able to mention Morane *waruge* while fewer also knew of Unapane *waruge*. 614

The Coast Veddas have become expert fishermen and make and use various forms of nets including a cast net. They also spear and shoot fish, using a bifid iron spear-head which they have adopted from the Tamils. For shooting fish they use the usual Vedda bow, but the arrow has become a harpoon with a shaft as long as the bow into which the iron with its running line fits loosely. One of the nets used by the Coast Veddas is seen drying behind the house in the background of Plate LXIX, 226 227 411 227

1; Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Fig. 13. Veddas bow and harpoon × 1/10.
Iron harpoon head × 1/3.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *warige* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *warige*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *warige* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 18[illegible].

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clear what opportunities existed for obtaining it. Deer and pig would be killed and eaten, and snakes were said to be killed without a scruple though one informant denied that he would kill a cobra. 262

Time did not allow of any systematic study of the religion of the Verdas, but it was clear that this had been much affected by Tamil influence while yet retaining some of the more obvious outward features of the Vedda cult of the dead. Unfortunately we had no opportunity of ascertaining definitely whether the Verdas have also retained the essence of the Vedda cult, i.e. the belief in the loving-kindness and the guiding influence of the spirits of their dead, though since the leader of the dance seen at Vakarai showed the classical signs of "possession," there seems to be every reason to hold this belief at least provisionally. The dance we saw rehearsed at Vakarai was said to be performed for sickness and in thanksgiving when a good harvest had been gathered. The dance took place at night, the men dancing in relays till daylight, the women squatting on the ground, but taking no part. No food is taken during the dance, but some is placed upon the "altar" *kudaram* (lit. cage or small shed, *T*) which is eaten by all in the morning. 771 177 575 796

The temple seen at Pellanchenai, of which a rough plan is given in fig. 14, was a building some 12 feet long by about 10 broad; it faced east and the roof was carried forward for a few feet beyond the front wall in which was a door. A stout pole (marked *P*), thought to be some 30 feet long and consisting of a young tree with the bark removed, stood in front of the temple about 30 feet from the entrance. To the north of the pole and about 8 feet from it was a hole in the ground *F*, really a small well containing water, while to the south of the pole and at a distance of about 12 feet from it there was a young tree before which a small platform *T* (*kudaram*) was built, on which a rough stone rested. Some distance beyond the pole and somewhat to the south of it stood a tree *H*, apparently quite dead, with a fringe of dried leaves and small twigs round its trunk, before which were the remains of a *kudaram*; to the south-west of the pole and roughly in the position of *Y* in the plan, a limb of a tree was planted in the soil. The branches 346

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

346 springing from the upper end of this limb had been removed with the exception of three which were left to support between them a rough earthenware pot. The remains of a *kudaram* also existed somewhat to the south-east of the doorway about the spot marked *X* on the plan. The post supporting the weight of that portion of the roof extending beyond the door had tied round it a fringe of dried shredded coconut leaves. Within the temple stood a *kudaram* (marked *K*) behind which in one corner of the temple was a model of a sailing boat about two feet long partly square-rigged and clearly meant to imitate a European ship. The temple was for the worship of Kapalpei, Ammal and

778
776

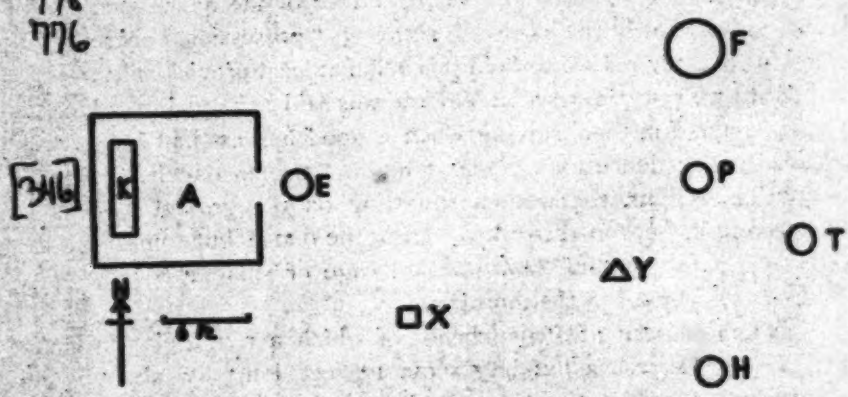


Fig. 14. Plan of Vanin temple and its surroundings.

Komara Devam. The name Kapalpei means ship-demon. We could only discover that he is regarded as the most powerful of the beings worshipped and that he is a foreigner who reached the country in a ship. Ammal is a Tamil Goddess who sends smallpox and skin disease[1].

776 We could at the time discover nothing concerning Komara Devam, though doubtless he is the same as Kumara Deva, an immigrant deity, whose characteristic weapon is a silver sword, who was one of the chief spirits invoked to remove sickness by

[1] Mr A. Barr Kumarakulasingha tells me that there are temples to this Goddess at Jaffna, but that there are none in Batticaloa though possibly there may be some in the neighbourhood.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1]. 776

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe. 535 755

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated. [292] [782]

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*. 777 778

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarala*. 793

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1 535 796

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 796 shows the site selected for the dance and the arrangements made. The dancing ground consisted of one of those sandy spaces surrounded by a growth of scrub and low trees which are so common on the east coast. A *kudarum*, the upper part of which was covered with leaves, had been prepared, the top of this was depressed so as to present a sort of tray upon which a white cloth was laid; within the tray were laid flowers, which in this case did duty for the food offered in the ceremony. No model of a ship was hoisted to the top of the pole, which was encircled by wreaths of small leafy bunches at heights of about 6 to 12 feet from the ground.

There were five dancers, each of whom held a bunch of leafy twigs in each hand, which when the dance began were held against the body just below the umbilicus.

535 796 787 The leader of the dance was an old man who held a piece of cloth instead of a bunch of leaves. Behind each dancer stood a man who supported him by clapping his hands round the dancer's body below the latter's hands, i.e. over the hypogastric and epipubic region. At first the dancers faced the *kudarum*, their hands being held low against their thighs, but soon they began to move round the altar in single file (Plate LXX, fig. 2). As they danced they began to quiver, the rippling motion of their muscles from the knees upwards becoming progressively more violent, until as the dancers moved round the altar the majority of their superficial muscles all over the body were twitching irregularly. As the dance became quicker the dancers feigned exhaustion, leaning or falling back into the arms of their supporters, but this did not last long and dancing was not interrupted; soon the men left the altar and danced round the pole, the irregular quivering of their muscles being very striking. At times they shouted and raised the bunches of leaves which they held in their hands above their heads. They continued to dance round the altar and round the pole alternately; as they danced round the pole their movements became more violent, the men supporting the dancers let go and the latter now danced and leapt round the pole and beat the leaves tied to it with the leaves they held in their hands. As the vigour of their movements lessened, their supporters, who had been following their

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXX

535
796
291

Fig. 1. Site of dance at Vakarai, showing *kudaram* and pole

Fig. 2. Dancing round the *kudaram*

[facing p. 338a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXXI

535
796
291

The end of the dance at Vakarai

[facing p. 338 b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

motions, once more put their arms round them, soon after which the dancers fell limply into their arms. The leader of the dance seemed especially excited at this stage and, trembling and quivering all over, stood back to the pole and wildly waved his scarf in the air. Soon his movements became less vigorous, his head nodded on his shoulders and hung down on his chest as he addressed the other dancers in a harsh and broken voice (Plate LXXI). In view of the Vedda ceremonies which we subsequently saw we have no doubt that he prophesied good fortune. It appeared to us that this old man really presented the ordinary characteristics of Vedda "possession," i.e. the dance, though only a rehearsal, had produced the customary effects associated with it, and certainly this old man's muscles continued to quiver irregularly for some time after the dance was over. As for the remaining dancers we have no doubt that the dance remained for them as it had begun, simply a rehearsal and an amusing piece of acting. 535 796 787

Such dances are held only to cure sickness or in return for good crops, and it was emphatically denied that anything similar took place after childbirth or death. 535 796

Very little was elicited concerning death and mourning ceremonies. The corpse is washed, and it seemed that although this is usually done by a barber or *dhobis* (professional washerman) it might be done by one or more of the relatives of the dead man. The grave must be at some distance from the habitations of the living and also from their cultivation patches. No fire is lit on the grave. A feast is held a few days after burial, which appears to be called *hati hanu*, and the food for this, especially rice, is provided by the near relatives of the dead man and distributed. A *kudaram* is built upon which the food is placed for "a short time" as an offering to Kapalpel, after which it is eaten by the assembled people. 764

This account agrees with that given by the Sarasins, who record that a coast Vedda, Pereman, when asked about his religion "laughed and said they had that of the Tamils, they honoured their dead by cooking rice in front of their house, folding their hands, saying a few words and then eating the rice. As they did this they spoke the name of the deceased and said: 'Help 769 177

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 us in danger, sickness etc.' When we enquired whether their
177 dead lived on as spirits he replied, they did not consider whether
[175] the departed were living or dead, they were just spirits, in Tamil *sami* or *dewi*, in Sinhalese *yako*; all spirits were alike, neither good nor bad. Another coast Vedda named Patiniya told us that their religion was that of the Tamils. In memory of their dead, whom they called *yako*, they cooked rice and ate it; they invoked the *yaks* in sickness, etc.[1]"

761 Just as Kapalpei sent sickness, so death was also attributed
753 to him, but perhaps not epidemics, for it appeared to be generally
776 considered that a single death would satisfy him for the time, so that it would be days or weeks before he would be expected to send sickness or death again.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 498.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XIII

MUSIC

By C. S. Myers.

Introductory.

The account of Vedda music given in this section is based upon an examination of thirty-four phonographic records of songs obtained from the Veddas by Dr and Mrs Seligmann[1]. 533 [126]

These songs are probably simpler in structure than any other native songs hitherto studied.

Nine of the tunes are composed of only two notes. In three others the tune consists also of two notes, but with the addition of one or more unimportant grace-notes. These twelve songs may be conveniently classed as belonging to Group A.

Twelve other songs consist of three notes only. These we shall class under Group B.

Nine songs contain four notes, and one consists of five notes. These we shall consider as Group C.

Of the songs in Group A, in no case is the range sensibly greater than our whole-tone interval. With the exception of two anomalous songs, no song in Group B has a range sensibly greater than our minor third. With one exception, no song in Group C has a range greater than a fourth.

There is evidence that the songs of Group A are more archaic than those of Groups B and C. For, unaware of the above system of classification, Dr Seligmann was asked to indicate those songs which appeared to him (on grounds of language, ceremonial, etc.) most probably archaic and those

[1 We received the manuscript of this chapter from Dr Myers in November 1909, but owing to our absence from England, publication was deferred for six months. Meanwhile, in the *Quarterly Magazine of the International Musical Society* (Year xi, Part 2, 1910) there appeared a short account of Vedda music by Herr Max Wertheimer, based on an examination of four phonographic records obtained by Frau M. Selenka. Dr Myers has thus had no opportunity of alluding to Herr Wertheimer's observations in this chapter.] [114 113]

[p. 341]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 which were likely to be modern or foreign. Of the ten songs which he considered to be probably archaic, four belong to Group A, four to Group B, and only two to Group C; while of those in which he suspected modern, or foreign influence, only one belongs to Group A, five to Group B, and five to Group C. None of the Sinhalese songs collected by Dr Seligmann belongs to Group A.

In this connection it is also noteworthy that the Sitala Wanniya Veddas are considered by Dr Seligmann to have been less exposed to outside influence than other Veddas, and that of the three songs sung by them belonging to Group C two are believed by him to be late or foreign. There are altogether eight songs of the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, in only two of which is an interval sung sensibly greater than a whole-tone.

While the Sitala Wanniya Veddas may be considered the most primitive, the Veddas of Dambani and Bulugahaladena are semi-civilised, having absorbed much Sinhalese culture, and the Bandaraduwa Veddas are also much affected by the Sinhalese, with whom they are now living. The Henebedda Veddas have only lately begun to be affected by the Sinhalese.

Not only is Vedda music primitive because the notes of each song are so few and the range so small, but also because the natives are ignorant of any other than vocal music. Dr Seligmann writes that the "uncontaminated Veddas," e.g. those of Sitala Wanniya, have no musical instruments whatever. Others, however, e.g. those of Henebedda, although they had no drums at the time of his visit, borrowed them, when opportunity offered, from the Sinhalese, especially for songs belonging to the *kolamaduwa* ceremony. The two oldest Vedda ceremonies, namely, the dancing round an arrow in order to get game (p. 213), and the *kirikoraha* ceremony in which the dance is round an offering of coconut milk (p. 218), were accompanied by the rhythmic slapping of the hands on the abdomen and thighs. At Bandaraduwa, the Veddas were found to possess drums of Sinhalese pattern and make.

The songs of the Veddas may be divided according to their purpose into two main classes, the one consisting of charms and invocations, the other of lullabies and songs sung for amusement. Dr Seligmann observes that among all Veddas the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

invocation songs are accompanied by dance movement, and that the purpose of such song and dance is to produce possession by the *yaku* or spirits. 533

METHODS OF ANALYSIS.

The speed of the phonograph used for studying the records of these songs was so regulated that every record reproduced a tone $c' = 256$ vibrations per second, a tone of this pitch, emitted by a pitch-pipe, having been always sounded into the recording phonograph just before each record was taken by Dr Seligmann in the field. Consequently when the reproducing phonograph emitted the note, one was sure that the speed of this instrument agreed with that of the instrument into which the song had been sung. That is to say, the reproducing phonograph reproduced the exact tempo and pitch of the recorded song. 126

A rough notation was then made of the song, a metronome being employed to determine its approximate tempo.

Finally a more accurate determination of the pitch of the various tones was made by means of an Appunn's Tonmesser, an instrument consisting of a box of carefully-attuned metal tongues, any one of which could be sounded at will by means of a bellows worked by the feet. The particular instrument employed contained 65 tongues, the pitch of each tongue differing by two vibrations per second from its neighbour and the extreme range being an octave, from c^0 to c', i.e. from 128 to 256 vibrations per second[1].

The songs are transcribed as accurately as our European notation allows. Bars are only inserted when the regularity of the rhythm clearly permitted their use. A + or − above a note indicates that it should be somewhat sharpened or flattened. Greater precision may be obtained by observing the numbers written beneath the notes. These give the mean vibration-frequency of the tone in question, obtained by comparison with the standard Tonmesser. The sign V indicates a "breath mark," i.e. a short rest during which the singer draws a breath.

[1] For further details in manipulation, the reader is referred to the writer's Essay on "The Ethnological Study of Music," in *Anthropological Essays presented to Edward Burnett Tylor*, Oxford, 1907, pp. 235—254.

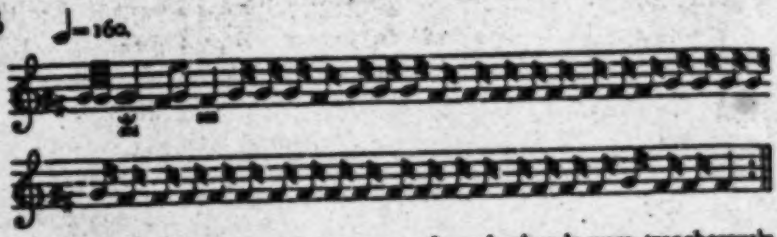
1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

NOTATION OF THE RECORDS.

GROUP A.

No. 40. Invocation to the *Nae Yaku* sung by Kuma of Dambani.

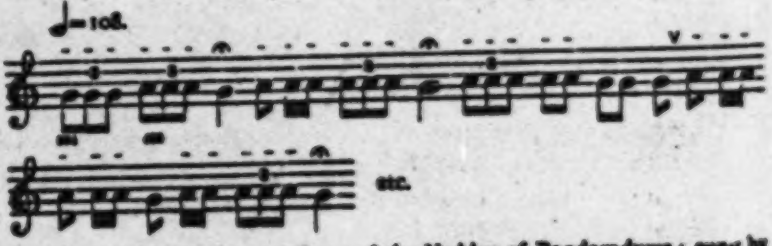
533



No. 22 A. Commemorating women whose husbands were treacherously killed while collecting honey; sung by Hudumenike of Bandaraduwa.

No. 21. Sung by women to men returning without honey; song of Sitala Wanniya Veddas.

No. 38. Sung while taking honey; song of the Sitala Wanniya Veddas.



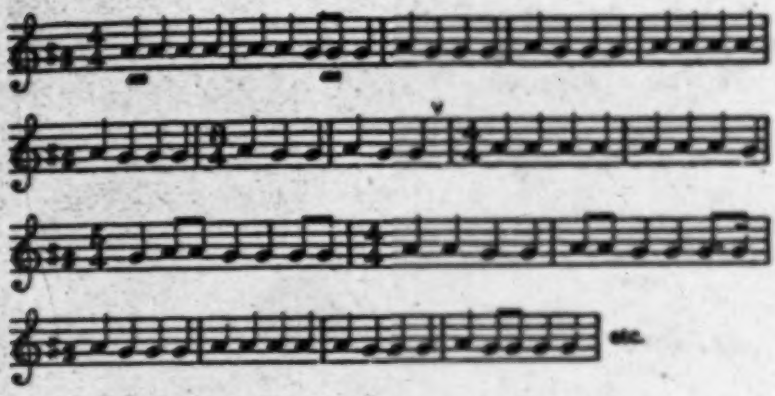
No. 11 (2). Amusement Song of the Veddas of Bandaraduwa; sung by Tissahami, the "Vedda Arachi."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

No. 18 (2). Song of the Bandaradwa Veddas when driving monkeys.

♩=104.

533



No. 1 (1). Invocation at the *hirikuda* ceremony of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas; sung by the "Vedda Arachi."

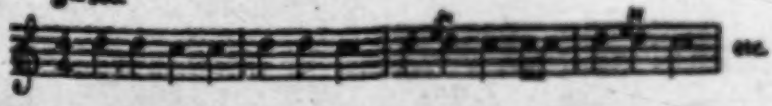
♩=80. *See lower.*

No. 1 (2). Invocation at the *hirikuda* ceremony of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas; sung by the "Vedda Arachi."

♩=176.

No. 19. Lullaby; sung by Hudumanike of Bandaradwa.

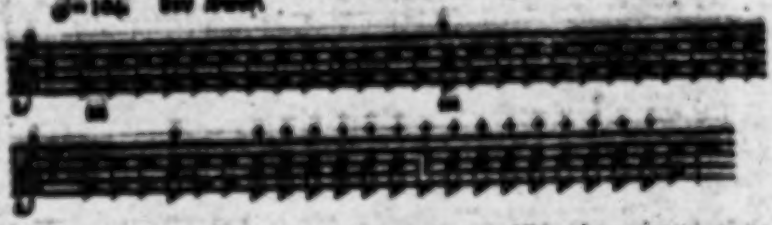
♩=208.



533

No. 39. Invocation sung during ceremony to exorcise Yaka from the sick.

♩= 164. See lower.



No. 40. Song (Tandina etc.), sung by the Vihané (headman) of the Dambani Veddas.

♩= 108. See lower.

No. 41. Song (Tulgitte Sindu), sung by Kaina of Dambani. The tune is that of No. 40, but the times are *c* and *f*, corresponding to 180 and 171 vibrations per sec.

GROUP B.

No. 30 (1). Invocation at the *Kuruvila* ceremony of the Yaka and Yakini of Walimbagala.

♩= 100. See lower.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

533

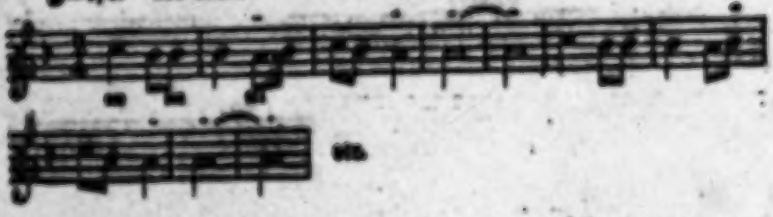
No. 30. Song; the first part sung by Tandi, wife of Handuna of Sitala Wanniya.

♩=120.

The second part sung by the husband in the same tune but in different pitch ♪=♪♪♪.

No. 31. Amusement Song; sung by Sita Wanniya of Henebedda.

♩=176. See *Answer*.

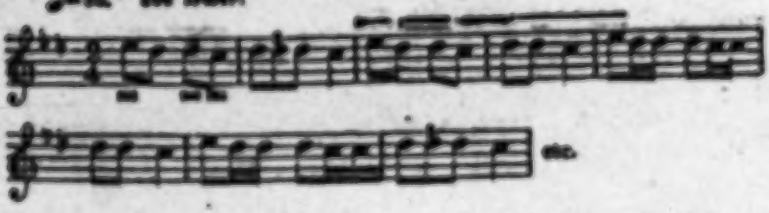


No. 32. Song asking for gifts; sung by a woman of Bandaradewa.

♩=176.

No. 31 A. Dance Song; sung by Sita Wanniya of Henebedda.

♩=88. See *Answer*.



No. 34 (2). Lullaby; sung by Tandi, wife of Handuna of Sitala Wanniya.

♩=120.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

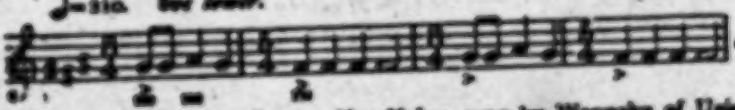
No. 27. Invocation of the Mahayakino at the *Aulumadewa* ceremony; sung by Handuna of Henbedda.

533

♩=132. See *lower*.

No. 36 (2). Amusement Song; sung by Handuna of Sitala Wanniya.

♩=210. See *lower*.



No. 29. Invocation to the *Nae Yaka*; sung by Wannaha of Unichi.

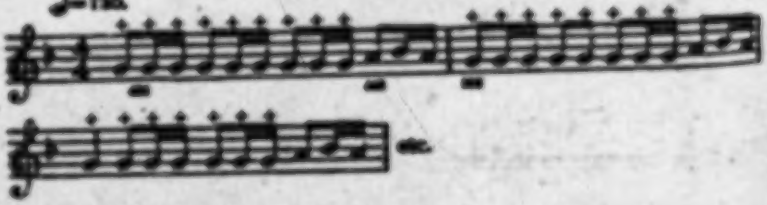
♩=92. See *lower*.

No. 2. *Maligi*, a honey-collecting song of the Henebedda Veddas; sung by Tissahami, the "Vedda Arachi."

♩=156. See *lower*.

No. 39. Amusement Song; sung by Kuma of Bulugahalandua.

♩=120.



1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

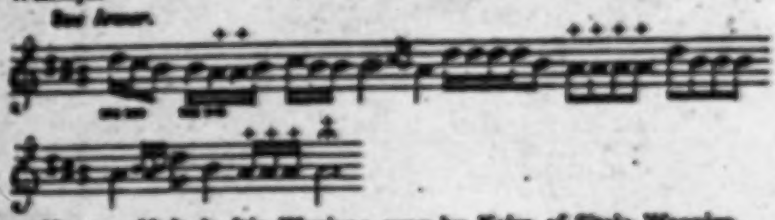
No. 14 (2). Invocation used by the Bandarahewa Veddas; sung by a Sinhalese[1].

♩=104. See *Jewer*.

GROUP C.

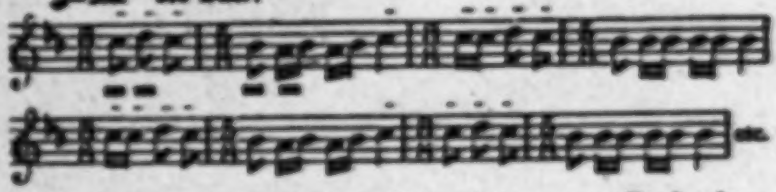
No. 32. Invocation of Bambura Yaka; sung by Handuna of Sinala Wanniya.

See *Jewer*.



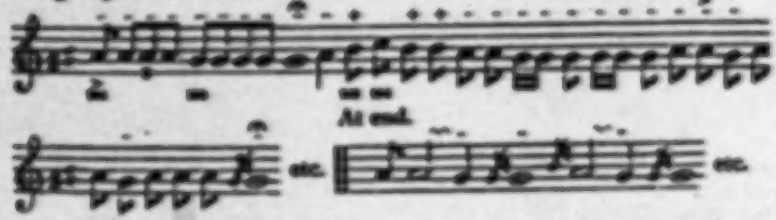
No. 33. Malpola Itin Wanniya; sung by Kaira of Sinala Wanniya.

♩=208. See *Jewer*.



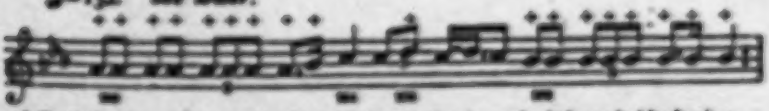
No. 36 (1). Invocation sung at the *Ahibarake* ceremony at Bandarahewa.

♩=138. See *Jewer*.



No. 53 (1). Sinhalese rice-harvesting song; sung at Hembowwa (see footnote, p. 356).

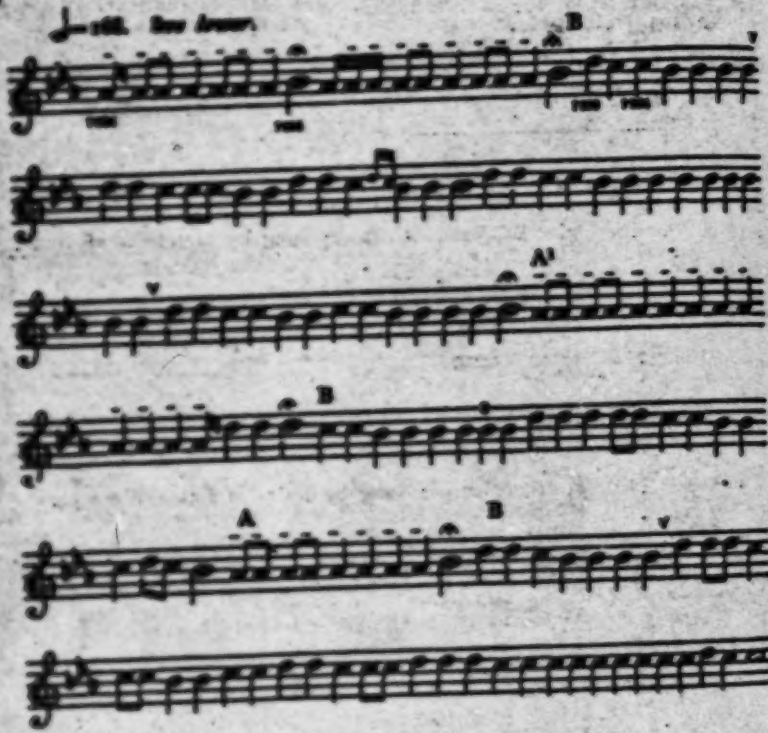
♩=132. See *Jewer*.



[1] Dr Seligmann is uncertain when this invocation is used; it is probably foreign.

533

No. 44. Song when taking honey; sung by Porumala of Henebedda.



No. 28 A. Song commemorating two women who committed suicide (cf. p. 313); sung by Wanniku of Bandarawela.

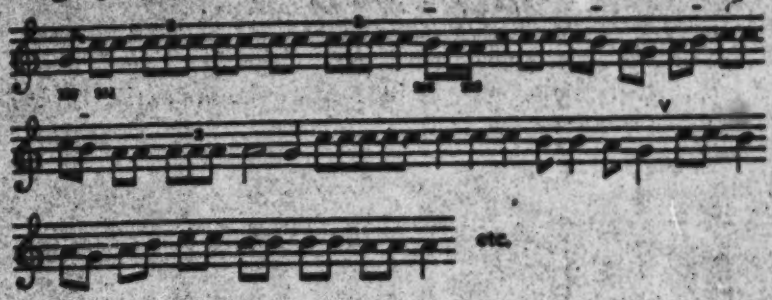
No. 34 (1). Lullaby; sung by Tundi, wife of Handuna of Sinh Wanniya.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

No. 51. Sinhalese song; sung at Alutnuwara at night while watching the crops (see footnote, p. 356).

♩=132. 8vo *lower*.

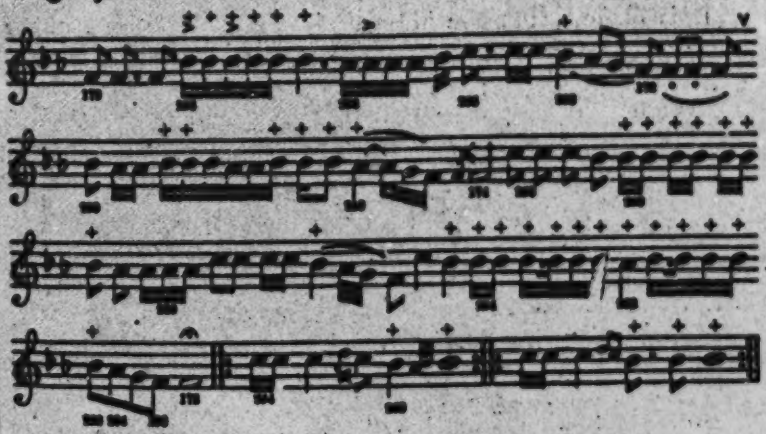


No. 5 (2). Invocation to Bilindi Yaka and Kande Yaka at the Kirihoruha ceremony.

♩=80. 8vo *lower*.

No. 41. Invocation by the Dambani Veddas of the *Nae Yaka*.

♪=152. 8vo *lower*.



Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Analysis of the Intervals.

The Songs of Group A.

533 The two columns headed "quotients" and "cents" in the accompanying table are obtained from the transcript by the following means:

Song No.	Quotients	Cents
42	1·075	125
43	1·075	125
38	1·099	164
32	1·110	168
21	1·124	171
11 (2)	1·124	171
1 (2)	1·121	198
40	1·121	200
22 A	1·125	205
18 (2)	1·128	208
1 (1)	1·133	216

The quotient is the result of dividing the larger by the smaller of the two numbers which express the vibration-frequencies of the two tones in each of the songs of this group. Thus in the case of Song No. 42, 230 divided by 214 (the figures given in the transcript) yields the quotient 1·075. The cents are hundredth parts of our own tempered semitone[1].

It is obvious that the intervals intended to be used in the songs of Group A are three in number. The averages are given in the following table:

Interval	Quotient	Cents
(α)	1·075	125
(β)	1·124	188
(γ)	1·126	205

Of these the largest (γ) is approximately our own whole-tone interval, the smallest (α) amounts to five-eighths of our whole-tone interval, while the intermediate interval (β) is almost

[1] Various methods for calculating cents from the vibration-numbers of an interval are given by Ellis in his annotated translation of Helmholtz's *Sensations of Tone* (3rd edition, London, 1895) pp. 456—461.

exactly half-way between the values of the two extremes[1]. The interval (2) occurs only in two songs sung by different individuals, who, however, were both Dambani Veddas. The Dambani singer of No. 45 is also responsible for No. 40, the interval of which falls in (7). 533

The Songs of Group B.

Song Number	Quotients		Cents		Range Quotients	Range Cents
29	1·043	1·137	73	223	[1·126]	[299]
36 (2)	1·050	1·124	84	202	[1·120]	[287]
2	1·057	1·129	96	210	[1·193]	[306]
27	1·067	1·132	112	215	[1·208]	[327]
39	1·055	1·111	94	181	[1·172]	[275]
32 A	1·061	1·114	102	187	1·182	289
34 (2)	1·084	1·094	140	157	1·186	297
30 (1)	1·087	1·104	144	172	[1·200]	[316]
31	1·084	1·121	140	197	1·215	337
37	1·072	1·095	121	157	[1·175]	[279]
20	1·132	1·122	199	219	1·270	414

The columns headed "quotients" and "cents" in the foregoing table measure the intervals—in this Group the pairs of

[1] For purposes of comparison, the following details may prove useful:

Interval.	*Quotient.*	*Cents.*
Our tempered semitone	1·059	100
" " tone	1·122	200
" " minor third	1·189	300
" " major third	1·260	400
" " fourth	1·333	500
" " tritone...	1·414	600
" " fifth...	1·498	700
Our just (or pure) semitone (15 : 16) ...	1·06	111·731
" " " minor tone (9 : 10) ...	1·111	182·404
" " " major tone (8 : 9) ...	1·125	203·910
" " " minor third (5 : 6) ...	1·200	315·641
" " " major third (4 : 5) ...	1·250	386·314
" " " fourth (3 : 4) ...	1·3	498·045
" " " tritone (32 : 45) ...	1·406	590·224
" " " fifth (2 : 3) ...	1·500	701·955

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 intervals—for the various songs as in the previous Group. The last column, headed "range," expresses (also in the form of quotients and cents) the interval between the highest and lowest notes of each song. When that interval is not actually sung but only calculated, the figures are enclosed in brackets. Song No. 14 (2) is omitted from this group as its range and structure are obviously different from the rest. Dr Seligmann independently characterises this song as "almost certainly foreign... I find it was sung by a Sinhalese. I should neglect it." Song 20 is again exceptional. Its range exceeds four semitones (400 cents), or a major third. Here again Dr Seligmann—having regard only to evidence of a non-musical character—observes that "the words of this song are very late." Song No. 37 is somewhat exceptional. The intonation, moreover, is not very reliable.

The remaining songs of this Group fall into three divisions, the averages for which are shown in the following table:

Interval	Quotients		Cents		Range	
					Quotients	Cents
(δ)	1·054	1·130	92	213	1·192	305
(ε)	1·059	1·112	98	184	1·177	282
(ζ)	1·085	1·106	142	175	1·200	317

It is evident that the range of notes in these three divisions is not sensibly different. It amounts approximately to our minor third.

This interval is divided in the case of divisions (δ) and (ε) into two intervals, one of which is somewhat smaller than our semitone, while the other is in (δ) larger, in (ε) smaller than our whole-tone.

In the case of division (ζ) the interval of a minor third is divided into two intervals which are much more nearly equal to one another. The same feature characterises Song No. 20, where the major third is almost equally bisected.

In only four of the eleven tunes of this group is an interval appreciably larger than a whole tone actually sung by the singer.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

This is shown by the unbracketed numbers in the columns headed "range." In No. 20 an interval of 414 cents (slightly exceeding a major third) is sung, but this song, as we have already observed, is exceptional. In Nos. 31 A and 34 (2), an interval somewhat less than a minor third is sung, in the former of 289, in the latter of 297 cents. In No. 31 the interval (337 cents) slightly exceeds a minor third.

The intervals sung in the anomalous song No. 14 (2) are of 467 and 269 cents.

The various average values of quotients and cents in the songs of groups A and B are set out in the following tables:

Quotients.

I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.
1·054	1·075	1·085	1·104	1·126	1·177
1·059			1·106	1·130	1·192
			1·112		1·200

Cents.

I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.
92	125	142	168	205	282
98			175	213	305
			184		317

It will be noticed that the difference between I and II, III and IV, IV and V is about thirty cents, and that the difference between V and VI is about thrice this value.

The Songs of Group C.

It will be remembered that the songs of this group contain four different notes. The intervals between the highest and lowest notes (maximal range), the intervals between alternate notes (an intervening tone omitted) and the intervals between

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 immediately successive notes are shown in the following table of quotients. Brackets indicate, as before, that the interval in question was not actually sung but only calculated.

Song Number	Maximal range	Interval between alternate notes		Interval between immediately successive notes		
32 (also 46)	1·23	[1·17]	1·13	1·10	1·06	1·06
33	[1·24]	[1·17]	[1·17]	1·10	1·06	1·06
53 (1)	[1·31]	[1·21]	[1·19]	1·10	1·09	1·09
26 (1)	[1·28]	[1·22]	[1·13]	1·13	1·09	1·05
34 (1)	1·32	[1·25]	[1·19]	1·12	1·11	1·06
[1] 51	1·34	[1·24]	1·20	1·12	1·11	1·08
28 A	1·35	[1·26]	[1·17]	1·15	1·09	1·07
44	? 1·37	[? 1·29]	? 1·19	? 1·16	? 1·12	? 1·06
5 (2)	1·43	1·30	? 1·27	? 1·18	1·11	1·10
41	1·46	1·37	1·21	1·13	1·10	1·05

The songs appear to fall into four divisions. In the first of these the maximal range is expressed by the quotient 1·235—equal to 365 cents—(nearly a neutral third), and the intervals between successive notes are expressed by the quotients 1·06, 1·10,—equivalent to 101 and 165 cents respectively. In the third division, the maximal range amounts to 1·33 or 496 cents (almost exactly equal to a just fourth) while the successive notes average 1·06, 1·10 and 1·14, i.e. 101, 165, and 227 cents. A very similar interval in song No. 53 is trisected into almost equal intervals, each approximately of 165 cents. In the case of the last division, the maximal range averages 1·445, equivalent to 637 cents (an acute diminished fifth), and the intervals comprise again an almost pure fourth, a slightly exaggerated major third, and other intervals common to other songs of the group. Of the two songs in this division Dr Seligmann writes that in "No. 5.....there are signs of foreign influence in the invocation as it stands, but it has a good old Vedda basis," and that "No. 41 is probably late."

Hence the most significant of the smaller intervals between

[1] These songs are said to be Sinhalese, but in most respects they closely resemble the Vedda songs of this group and are therefore included in it.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

successive notes occurring in the songs of Group C are equal to 101, 165, 227 cents, which are successively different by about 63 cents. But it will be remembered that the difference between certain intervals employed in Group B was found to be about 30 cents, half of the difference just observed. In Group C we have just found the neutral third of 365 cents divided into two intervals, one of 101 and the other of 165 cents, representing approximately three and five of these hypothetical units, each of 33 cents. The same intervals were found in the division of the fourth of 496 cents into 5, 3 and 7 of such units. Again in three songs of Group B, the average interval of 317 cents is divided into intervals of 142 and 175 cents, differing by 33 cents. In view, however, of the want of precision in intonation, it is difficult to believe that these differences are significant. 533

The value of the fourth, when actually sung in the songs 28, 34 (1), 51 of Group C, averages 1·337 or 503 cents. Consequently it is almost pure. A pure minor third is sung in No. 34 (1). A neutral third is sung in No. 32, the value of which is 1·235 or 365 cents. In No. 5 (2), the minor third which is sung is small, amounting to 1·176 or 281 cents. The diminished fifth and the fourth sung in No. 41 correspond respectively to 655 and 543 cents.

Of the smaller intervals, the interval of 165 cents is certainly one of the most important. It occurs frequently in Group C and also (as 168 cents) in Group A, where it is exactly midway between the other two intervals (125 and 205 cents) met with in this group.

Analysis of the Rhythms.

In the majority of the songs the *time* is fairly regular, but the *accents* often recur irregularly owing to the variable numbers of syllables. The following extracts from the writer's note-book will serve to illustrate this general lack of regular measure:

No. 22 A. Want of regular accent; number of notes *ad libitum* according to words.

No. 21. Irregular accent according to number of syllables (see notation).

No. 38. Time regular but without regular accent.

533 No. 1 (1). Frequent interpolation of extra beats owing to extra syllables. *Rate* of beats constant. Little or no grouping of beats into larger units (i.e. no measure, bar or tact).

No. 13. The words dictate the number of notes.

No. 20. Considerable variation in time and in number of notes, regulated by breathing and by number of syllables.

No. 26. With variations according to recitative.

No. 28. No regular accent.

In some songs, however, the measures were more obvious. Thus,

No. 51. Very rhythmical, but occasionally an odd syllable is inserted.

No. 5. Fairly regular, save for a few extra syllables.

In only a few was the rhythm very well marked, as the following extracts show:

No. 11 (2). Very regular rhythm and accent.
No. 18 (2). Very regular rhythm.
No. 34 (1). Regular save for breath-marks.
No. 14 (2). Strict tempo save for breath-marks.
No. 36. Strict time.

In five songs, the rhythm is particularly noteworthy owing to the occurrence of bars of five beats. Thus, in No. 18 (2), a bar of five beats is inserted three times in the course of the song. One of them is shown in the part transcribed. In No. 14 (2), a five-bar is introduced in strict time at the close of the tune. Again in Nos. 33, 34 (1), 36 (2) there are alternate groups of three and five beats. In other words a bar of eight beats is sub-divided into two bars containing three and five beats respectively.

With these exceptions and the striking exception of No. 20, no one of the songs is clearly in triple measure, although occasionally, e.g. in No. 22 A, a bar of three beats is introduced into a song.

Generally speaking, where the accent occurs sufficiently regularly for the measure to be apprehended, the accent is found to lie on the first of every two or four beats.

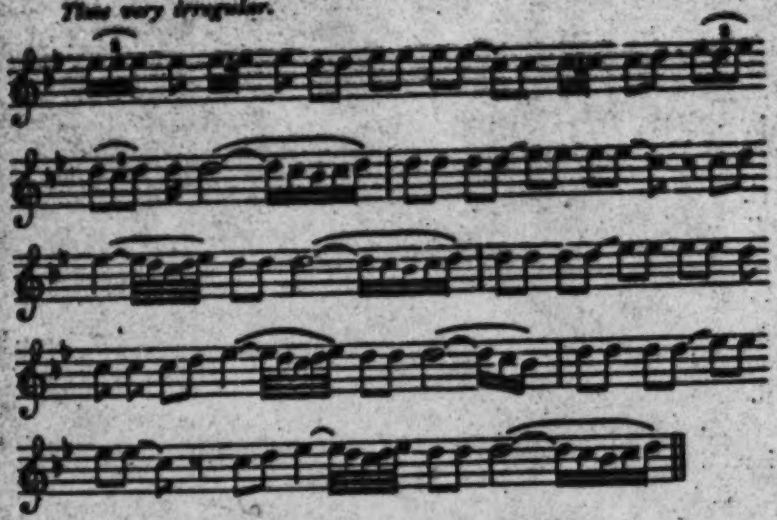
Lithographed & Delineated [illegible] (1887-1888) 1811
ARS VOLUM ARS

General Character of Songs.

The songs have an exceedingly plain character, and are devoid of the ornamentation with which we meet in many examples of primitive music. The few embellishments which occur in Nos. 1 (1), 1 (2), 2, 29, 32, are quite slight and simple. They present a contrast in this respect when compared with Nos. 50 and 53, which are records of other than Vedda music from Ceylon. I am indebted to Mr R. R. Broome, B.A., of Christ's College, Cambridge, for their notation.

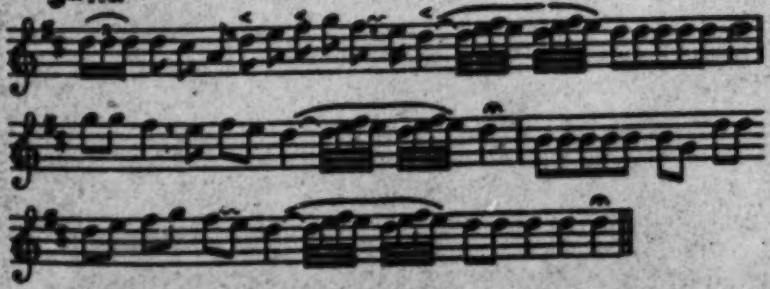
533
171

No. 50. Charm (reputed to be Arabic) sung by the Arachi of Giruadura.
Time very irregular.



No. 23. Sinhalese Love Song.

♩=112.



1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-4 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 Another feature is the precision with which the notes are hit. There is not a single example of that *glissando* from note to note, which is so frequently met with among certain primitive peoples.

In only one song does more than one singer take part, and in this, No. 37, the second singer merely repeats the melody of the first when the latter has finished. There is hence no instance of two or more simultaneously sung notes.

But perhaps the most striking characteristic of Vedda music is the apparent feeling for tonality. In every song a tonic note is clearly present, which is, so to speak, the centre of gravity of the melody, emphasised by accent, duration, or frequency—a note to which the melody seeks to return.

In the majority of songs of Groups A and B the melody starts from the highest tone and proceeds (directly or by an intermediate tone) to the tonic, which is consequently the lowest tone. This description essentially holds, (i) for all the songs in Group A, excepting the opening phrase of No. 38, which is distinct from the rest; (ii) for the twelve songs of Group B, excepting Nos. 36 (2) and 37, where the tune ascends from the tone below the highest before descending, and Nos. 14 (2) and 39 which ascend direct from the lowest (tonic) to the highest; and (iii)—but for the introduction of a leading note—for four of the songs in Group C.

The close similarity between the various songs of Group A is so obvious that no further comment is necessary to establish it.

It is not difficult to trace the development of many of the songs of Group B from those of Group A. For example:

No. 11 (2). No. 42.

No. 31 a.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

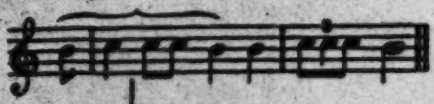
533

From the last song, No. 31 A, there is an easy transition to certain other songs of the same group, e.g. to

No. 31. No. 34 (2).

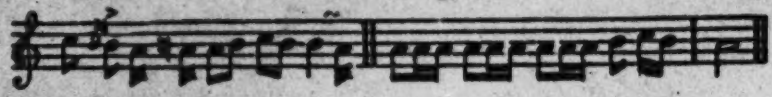
We can also indicate the relation between No. 42 of Group A and five other songs of Group B.

No. 42.

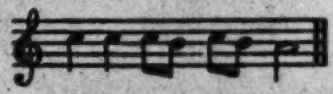


No. 36 (2). No. 37.

No. 2. No. 39.

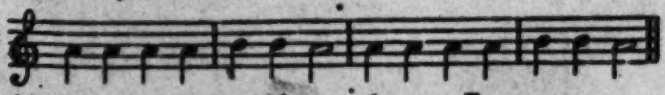


No. 27.

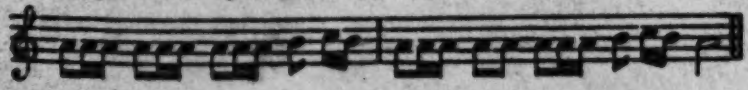


Again, No. 19 of Group A

by a change comparable to that occurring in the opening phrases of No. 38 easily becomes



and this passes easily into No. 39 of group B :—



1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 The introduction of a fourth note into the melody is seen in its most elementary form in the case of song No. 44[1]. Here, a division into two phrases, A (modified at A[1]) and B, is clearly possible. Of these B consists of three notes, and has the general characters of the songs of Group B, while A contains the tonic, the lowest tone of the phrase B, preceded by the tone below the tonic, that is to say, by the leading-note. The use of the leading-note is clearly foreshadowed in the opening phrase of Song No. 38 in Group A. Four other songs in Group C, Nos. 28, 34 (1), 51 and 5 (2), have a definite leading-note. In Nos. 28, 34 (1) and 51, the leading-note is followed immediately by the highest note, whence a descent is made to the tonic as in the songs of Group B. Hence four of the songs in Group C only differ in structure from those of Group B by the addition of a leading-note.

No. 53 (1) is exceptional in that it starts from the tonic and ascends by intermediate tones to the highest, whence a gradual descent is made to the tonic. It is a Sinhalese song.

No. 26 (1) should perhaps be classed in Group B,—of so little importance is the highest or fourth note introduced. Apart from its opening phrase, it may be compared with Nos. 36 (2) and 37 of that group, both of which ascend from the note below the highest, before descending to the tonic.

Only one other song of Group C remains unmentioned. And this, No. 33, is extremely like No. 36 (2) of Group B, not only in structure but in the curious rhythm. An unimportant semitone is introduced beneath the tonic.

No. 36 (2).

No. 33.

There are so few tones in these songs that we can hardly expect to meet with a strict division of the melody into phrases

[1] See transcript, p. 32[illegible]

1.Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX3 Vedda AX3

Yet in songs Nos. 26 (1), 38, and 44 there are opening phrases distinct from the body of the song. And in No. 44 this opening phrase (marked A in the transcript) is repeated in its original (or, as at A[1], in a modified) form during the song. The melody is thus very easily divisible into a series of alternating phrases, attaining a higher stage of development in this respect than any other of the melodies under investigation. Nos. 26 (1) and 41 (both of which Dr Seligmann suspects to be of modern date) have a short terminal phrase, clearly separable and differing in character from the remainder of the song. 533

Conclusions and Comparisons.

In the Vedda music we seem to meet with the very beginnings of melody-building. At the lowest stage (Group A) we have a two-note song descending from the higher to the lower tone. Then (in Group B) a third note is added higher in pitch than either of the preceding. Lastly (in Group C) a fourth note is introduced, generally a tone below the tonic, the influence of which throughout most of the songs is very clearly felt. 533
171

There is no other people in whose music the gradual construction of melody on these simple lines can be discerned. If we turn to Australian music[1], we usually meet, it is true, with small intervals between successive tones, but the range of tones throughout any one song is considerable. Among the American Indians it is also rare to find a song consisting only of two notes. Only four of the forty-three American Indian melodies collected by Abraham and v. Hornbostel[2] consist of two notes, and in three of these the interval is a neutral or minor third. Similar results are yielded by the older collections of Baker[3] and Stumpf[4]. The music of the natives of New Guinea, Borneo and Africa is decidedly more complex than that of the Veddas.

Turning to the music of Southern India, we find that only two or three of thirteen phonographic records, obtained from

[1] Karl Hagen, *Ueber d. Musik einiger Naturvölker*, Hamburg, 1892.
[2] Phonographirte Indianer Melodieen aus British Columbia, in the *Boas Memorial Volume*, New York, 1906, pp. 447—474.
[3] *Ueber d. Musik d. nordamerik. Wilden*, Leipzig, 1882.
[4] *Vierteljahrs. d. Musikwiss.*, 1886, S. 405—426.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
171

natives of Gujar, Malabar and Tanjore[1], at all resemble in simplicity the Vedda music. Five of them have a range of tones compassing an octave, while three others range over a sixth. Of the three most primitive songs one is a prayer, the other two being children's songs. It cannot be said that in general character they very closely resemble the Vedda songs.

The intervals among the Veddas appear to have been developed by the successive addition of small intervals to those previously used. There are only two or three exceptional cases [Nos. 20, 34 (2), 53 (1)] in which the added intervals are approximately equal to the original; and these instances are possibly accidental. In nearly all the remaining songs of Group B, the additional third tone consists of approximately a semitone added above the whole-tone interval which starts from the tonic. The two intervals thus comprise a minor third. This minor third tends to be smaller than our own tempered or untempered interval. A major third occurs only in a single song, and a neutral third is also only once sung. In Group C, the fourth, when sung, is in most cases approximately true, although in one song it is smaller, in another decidedly larger, than our own tempered or untempered interval. A fifth occurs but in one song and is distinctly smaller than ours.

We can only conclude from these data that in the absence of musical instruments, musical intervals are by no means fixed among the Veddas, and that this want of fixity becomes more striking, the greater the number of notes introduced into the song. In dealing with the songs of Group A, we were able to range without difficulty the intervals under three heads. But with the songs of Groups B and C such classification became increasingly difficult and more uncertain.

From what we know of primitive music elsewhere, it was not to be expected that the Veddas would sing pure minor or major thirds. For a long time, even in European music, thirds were regarded as dissonant. What does, however, seem unusual, is that the fifth, in the one Vedda song in which it occurs, bears so little resemblance to the consonant interval which has the ratio 2 : 3. It is almost a quarter-tone flat. On the other hand, the

[illegible]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
171

fourth is several times sung nearly in the consonant ratio of 3:4. Inasmuch as the fifth is so much more consonant than the fourth, we should have expected to have found its intonation purer than the fourth.

For the same reason we might have expected to have found the fifth preferred to the fourth, but the fifth only occurs in one song, while the fourth is sung in several. But the intervals of the Veddas appear to have been developed, as we have already said, not by taking a harmonious interval and dividing it into smaller intervals, but by starting with small (and uncertain) intervals and adding further intervals to them. It is only in the more advanced songs (and these are very few in number) that relatively large intervals are sung. And here we appear first to meet with the influence of harmony in fixing the size of such consonant intervals. Despite the fact that to our ears tonality is so well-marked throughout the Vedda songs, the approximate consonance of intervals is only reached when the two tones immediately succeed one another.

As regards the rhythm of the Vedda songs, it is noteworthy that in Indian music Abraham and von Hornbostel found frequent instances of the interpolation of a 3- or a 5-pulse measure in music otherwise of common time. They note that change of rhythm is "so frequent that we are often unable to detect any constant primary rhythm at all, but are compelled to imagine a continual modification of measure[1]." This remark is applicable, as we have seen, to much of Vedda music, while in other Indian and Vedda songs a definite rhythm can be readily apprehended. In many parts of the world primitive music is characterised by "a delight in change and opposition of rhythm, and a demand that relatively long periods filled with measures of diverse length be apprehended as an organic whole or 'phrase'[2]." This is a characteristic of several of the Vedda songs.

[1] *Op. cit.* S. 398.
[2] C. S. Myers, *Brit. Journ. of Psychol.* 1925, Vol. 1, p. 405.

CHAPTER XIV

SONGS

533 In this chapter we give a number of Vedda songs for the transliteration and translation of which we are indebted to Mr Gunasekara.

It will be noted that a number of the songs are variants on a common theme; with the exception of No. IV (song asking for presents), the lullabies and the song sung while plucking *jak* fruit, all were sung for the enjoyment they caused or the amusement they produced—that is to say we could not discover that there were occasions on which any of these songs were sung specially and exclusively. Even the sad little song (No. VII) commemorating the suicide of two women[1], though it did not cause amusement, was by no means avoided and seemed to give a good deal of quiet satisfaction. The song sung by women to their husbands who returned empty handed from seeking honey, though doubtless sung on appropriate occasions, was also sung at other times and was considered rather a joke.

533 539 A number of the best known songs begin or end with a variant of the untranslatable lines

Tam pappilinnam pappilinnam
Tinnam pappilam pappilinnam[2].

[1] The legend has been given on pp. 301 and 303.
[2] Mr Gunasekara by slightly altering these lines would obtain

Tay tay dinnam tay tay dinnam
Tinnam tay dinnam tay dinnam

which he would translate

May such be victorious! May such be victorious!
May he defeat those who are inimical to him! May he be victorious!

[p. 344]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AXS Vedda AXS

533
539

Other songs begin with a variant of

Mamipi mamipi mahayiya

which may be translated

Oh great man! Oh great man! Oh great god!

or perhaps as Bailey writes

My departed one, my departed one, my god!

The following lullaby was sung at Bandarawa by a woman called Hudumeniki to the air (No. 19) given on page 345.

1. *Rh-rh-rh*
Amma mahapada ahinna
Amma gaiya illapi
Ehai nindama dipawa denna
Amma mahapada ahinna
Amma gamada hakkapyi ahinna
Ehai nindama dewa denna
Amma mahapada ahinna
Amma wahdurage ihapyi
Ehai nindama dewa denna
Amma mahapada ahinna
Amma rataga ihapyi
Ehai nindama dewa denna
Rh-rh-rh
Amma halamulla parpai
Nindipyi ahinna
Nidigamma pipiai
Nindipyi ahinna
Rh-rh-rh
Amma rh-rh-rh
Amma mahaja ahinna
Amma ahi mayapyi ahinna
Amma mahapyi ahinna
Amma ahi mahapyi
Rh-rh-rh amma.

Rh-rh-rh Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the fat of the monitor lizard? Give the whole of it (i.e. the fat). Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the *gamada* yams you are crying? Give all of them (i.e. the yams). Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the head of the *mandara* monkey? Give the whole of it (i.e. the head). Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the head of the *rilawa* monkey? Give the whole of it (i.e. the head). *Rh-rh-rh*

533 Child, sleeping child; are you crying for sleep? Sleeping child, are you
534 crying for sleep? *Ko-ko-ri* Darling, *Ko-ko-ri*
Darling, for what are you crying? Darling, is it for nothing you are crying? Child, what are you crying for? Child, is it for sleep? Darling, *Ko-ko-ri*.

The next lullaby was sung by Tandi of Situla Wanniya; we do not know whether this is the lullaby the music of which is given on page 347 (No. 34 (1)) or on page 350 (No. 34 (1)).

II. *[illegible]*
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Lovely baby, what do you cry for, child? Child, is it for the milk you
will give the whole of it. Child, what do you cry for? Child, is it for
Aginnale gone. I will give the whole of it. Child, what do you cry for?
Child, is it for the fit of the monkey board. I will give the whole of it.

These lullabies though longer than those established by Nevill closely resemble the latter, although they do not appear to contain the jokes and intentional absurdities which Nevill considered to exist in those he recorded[1].

The next song though not a lullaby was said to have been sung by a mother to her young children who were frightened at the coming of a thunder storm. It was taken down at Nilgala.

III. *[illegible]*
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

[1] *[illegible]*, Vol. [illegible], p. [illegible]. We will by no means [illegible] that Nevill was right in [illegible] these lullabies. We himself notice [illegible] that the people themselves do not [illegible] [illegible] which is [illegible]

539
539

Mîyo ugo kandi kawungi
Bigowili gulgimuju wawuna dunuk nuwa
Kuda bulgi mawi ugi wawulla dunuk
Mîlu wawungi kuda wawungi bulgawa dunuk nuwa
Ban ugi ululili pulilla kululla ulunu
Ban ugi ululilunuwi wawungi wawungi
Ulu ululili wuliguwa ulu ululili wuliguwa
Kingula mulgula gula kiu wuguwa kiwuy wawugi
Bigowili gulgimuju wawunuwi dunuk.

Darling! Darling! There you see the wind and rain are coming down from outside the Seven Seas. See the rain. See lightning, thunder and lightning coming from the direction of the sea. Things are getting bad. My body is losing strength (through fear). Let us run go to the Bigowula cave (or cave giants). Ho! ho! my two princes, it is no possible to go down, stop. Oh lovely princes! in the forest are gulu and gula. Are we not staying in the palace at night! The sky is getting dark, the earth is getting dark. Are we too brave falling at Kingula and Milgula! Let us go to the Bigowula cave.

The following "song asking for presents" was sung by a woman of Bandarawela to the *ulu* (*Mus. sp.*) given on page 248. Although addressed to the *Hinda Mîlu* (white female, i.e. white woman) it was not an extemporary composition but was said to have been known to the singer's parents.

IV. *Hinda ulluwi kuddi kiri, ulu kuli, rati kuli, bigowuwi wulgawa jumuwa yunuwa.*
Kuduwi ulluwi ulgi kagi dunuwi, ulgi dunuwilla yunuwi
Kuduwi ulluwi dunuwa wulgula ulugiwi wulgiwi gunu wunuwa.
Ulgi dunuwunu yunuwi ulgi kagi dilluwa dilluwa.

White female (silver), (I am) running short of hand leaves[1] old cows fall. White female, give (us) presents so that we may run away. White female, the young (or white) youngest cows of *Mîrahu* is getting hungry. Give us, give us, presents that we may run away.

The next two songs, both collected at *Nilgala*, were particularly popular; the first reflects the very high estimate in which a Vedda holds his wife.

V. *Kuddu kawun yuyu ulgiyi*
Kuddu kawun yuyu ulgiyi
Nîlu kulugun yuyu ulgiyi
Nîlu kulugun yuyu ulgiyi

[1] In the original *kuddi kiri* and *ulli kiri* both mean hand leaves.

Leitgeneen & Seligmann I-4 (1907-1908) 1811
AXI Vedda AXI

539
559

Wanatu pituwa puppa ndiyyi
Wanawa pituwa puppa ndiyyi
Kuffi pata nattiha puppa yannbyi
Kuffi pata nattiha puppa yannbyi.

For (want) of grass or food, the life will not depart (i.e. man will not die); owing to cold or wind, the life will not depart; owing to rain or dew, the life will not depart. If there be no wife, the life will depart.

VI. *Tinnaw tapaha tinnaw*
Mun ubbala hapuwak dekka gattiw
Mun ubbala hapuwak dekka gattiw
Mahada mahada hala biri nilna
Mahada mahada hala biri nilna
Ekawa kiyana hapuwak nawayi mahaka gatti hala nilna
Aru pulli nilna ibbaw
Dunhapikkiya bila dek gattiw.

Tinnaw tapaha tinnaw.

I have seen a fine thing and taken it. What is it, what is it, oh good *nilna*? *Nilna*, the thing which I saw and picked up is not one that I will mention readily. You *nilna*, what I saw and picked up is the smoking pipe which was on that distant high ground (lit. back high-ground).

[276] The Sinhalese do not smoke pipes, and the Veddas do not smoke at all; on questioning our informants we were told that this song was only two or three generations old and referred to the finding of a pipe dropped by a white sportsman.

The next song recorded at Bandaraduwa alludes to the suicide of two Vedda women and has been referred to already on pages 322 and 323. Only the first part of the song, containing no direct reference to the final tragedy, was taken down.

VII. *Akkinaw akkinaw yanpi wetrinaw*
Api dennigi wanatti enjinna nilli
Bilanda yanpinna wetri nadigi
Nadigi nan nadigi api dennigi wanatti
Dennigena ennan bilanda wetri nadigi nan nadigi
Akki nan akki nan mapa kiyana kiri nan kiri nan
Nadigi nan nadigi nan wetri nan wetri nan
Api dennigi wanatti wellikandiyata dennigen ennan
Bilanda wetrin.

Elder sister, elder sister, come to go. Our husbands have not returned; come younger sister, let us go to look for them. Younger sister, younger sister, the husbands of us two are coming running. Younger sister, younger

Seligmann & Seligmann 1-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

sister, come to look. Elder sister, elder sister, I am afraid, I cannot, I cannot. Younger sister, younger sister, come, come. The husbands of us two are coming running from Wellikandiya. Come and see. 533 539

The next song, collected at Sitala Wanniya, records a fatal accident while honey-gathering; a woman speaks to her sister, so that "elder brother" in the third line should be "elder sister"; "younger brother" is a common periphrasis for husband. Tantirivelo is the name of a rock-face and the "golden jewelled cord" is the *liana* ladder by which the honey-seekers reach the comb (cf. Chapter X, invocation No. XXVI).

VIII. *Tantirivelle hallyaṭe hapu*
Ran waṭi hendi gullaw hinilā
Endi dunnaw mayā biriṇ ayiyā
Apilā dunnaṭe mellila dunnaṭa
Adiyā annirahamak atti mayā biri akki.

(At) Tantirivelo the skilfully (or forcibly) lowered
Golden jewelled cord which is sunk from the rock
Gives an unlucky sign, my dear elder brother.
For the younger brothers of us two
There will be a sudden difficulty, my dear elder sister[1].

The following song, also from Sitala Wanniya, was sung by women to their husbands when the latter returned from honey-seeking without honey. The air to which it was sung is given on page 344 (No. 21).

IX. *Diel mawili rawhenda ritta ittala*
Kala rutt nangala dunhewatta funnala
Ran hapwala hapala ela mawa nāgāyayi
Mawalliṇ thalā hadiyā hiyala
Dunagnna ituā wannila-gella
Ela mawa nāgāla ela giyā wadinaṭgiya ennā.

(They) let down, let down the great *mawila* creeper jungle rope, (they) drive away the bees with smoke; (the comb) was cut with the golden sword for the young sisters of Mawana. (Our) husbands came running and saying, "Above this corner there is nawa." The young sisters of Mawana are getting hungry.

[1] Mr Parker, to whom we are indebted for the translation of this song, notes that "*gulla* stands for *gulaw*; *hinilā* appears to be derived from *Hinduwanā* to be sunk, and to be the equivalent of *Hindilā*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 The next song, transliterated and translated by Mr Parker,
539 was collected at Sitala Wanniya where it was known only to the older men of the community. It was sung only when getting *jak* fruit, and though these Veddas knew the ordinary Sinhalese word for this fruit they told me it would not be used. They explained that there was only one place in their territory where there were two or three *jak* trees (doubtless the remains of old gardens made by Buddhist monks or recluses), that they valued their fruit very highly, and that they would not commonly speak of them by name and certainly would not do so when about to gather the fruit. In this song *bo* tree and *morun* flower are both honorific terms. This suggests that the song has magic power, so that its most appropriate position in this volume would be in Chapter VIII.

X. *Mī yāmaṇ yāmaṇa mī ādaṇa wandunī*
Mī Bōpāta rawala yan henduwaṇa hakur dinawanna
Mī morup malī mānak attiyen harī nan hekkiyen bindala
Masi palawaṇa hasuki dekkayi.

Here, from watch to watch, this (tree) touched the sky.
No one can cause this Bō-leaf sail to be overcome.
Having broken off with the hook this ripening flower only, if unable (to pluck it) by the hand,
Having lowered it to the earth, I will give it.

Morun appears to be *mōruna*.

Malī may be a poetical allusion to the fruit.

Masi palawaṇa for *mahi palawaṇa*, a pleonastic form, "to the earth's earth," that is, to the ground. Such pleonasms are not uncommon in colloquial village Sinhalese, as for instance, *edī dawasa*, "that day's day," for "that day."

The next two songs were collected at Nilgala; our informants attached no meaning to the first line.

XI. *Mē mipi mā mipi mā dayiyā*
Kāhurubaddī hōkyiyā
Kuduruu huduruu hiyanā
Kohkā gāṇaṇa wai wālā
Madī gāṇaṇa wai wālā
Madī gāṇaṇa wai wālā
Tula pāṇaṇa wai wālā
Kāṇan dawana hera wataraṇi

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Kāḍen paccela yak gamatā
Bīmen yannaṭa bol pini barimayi
Mīwāpiṭen yanu dennā
Ānē apē wannilā
Kobbā walē nagilā
Ēkat bīdagena wattilā
Kalina walē nagilā
Ēkat bīdagena waṭilā
Walkobbā wala dunna namāgena
Wewal icagē piṭaṭa damāgena
Bālat payiyat ina gannāgen
Pōrū paccāt ina gannāgena
Kunu gē taḍiyā karaṭa damāgena
Kaḍiyā ballat iccara karagena
Endalu potu ban dena nayidī
Endalu potu ban dena nayidī.

Mā mini mā mini mā deyiyā.

The dove of the Kakuru Mountain is singing *kuḍurun, kuḍurun.* There was rain at Kokkāgāla. There was rain at Mādēgāla. There was rain at Mādēgāla. There was rain on the high land. There is muddy water bringing down logs. (There has been) a *yaka* ceremony below the rock. (I) cannot go on the ground as there is dew. Let us ride on the back of the buffalo. Anē! our husbands having climbed up the *kobba* creeper, on its breaking having fallen; having climbed the *kalina* creeper, on its breaking, too, having fallen; bending the bow (made) of *wal-kobba*[1] creeper, putting the canes at the back of the head[2], taking the betel bag at the waist, taking the axe at the waist, putting the dirty monitor lizard on the shoulder, sending in front the dog Kaḍiyā, (You are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Potubanda Nayide, (you are) to come, they say (or he says, or we say) Potubanda Nayide.

XII. *Mā mini mā mini mā deyiyā*
Mā mini mā mini mā deyiyā
Ānē āpē wannilā
Kokkā gālī yanni dennā
Mādī gālī yanni dennā
Kokkā gālī bari baburu
Mādī gālī bari baburu
Kākuru Kandī Kōbeyiyā
Kākuru Kandī Kōbeyiyā
Kuṭuruṇ kuṭuruṇ kīyannā

[1] *Allophylus cobbe.*
[2] Or "carrying them hanging round the neck."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Kuduruwy kuduruwy kiyanna
Tiki pipuṇu wagi willa
Kiyan dunnna kera wataragi
Kiyan dunnna kera wataragi
Kaḍan ḍ aralagak gannata
Binnen yannaṇu kel pini kurukuyalagi
Madagak piyan yanna dennā
Kaliya wela nagili
Ehat bibdagana wattili
Kebber wali nagili
Ehat bibdagana wattili
Wal-kebber wala dunna dunagana
Wanni kagi piyaṇu dunagana
Kaḍiyā ballat kuruwaharagana
Kudala petabanna nayidi
Kudala petabanna nayidi
Mā mipi mā mipi mā diyiyā
Mā mipi mā mipi mā diyiyā.

Ah, our husbands! Let us go to Kokhagala. Let us go to Madagala. (I) cannot go to Kokhagala. I cannot go to Madagala. The dove of the Kuruwa-hunda is uttering *kuduruwa, kuduruwa*. There has been rain in the high land. There has been muddy water bringing down logs. There has been a *yaka* ceremony (lit. *yaka* house) below the hill. (I) cannot go on the ground as there is dew. Let us ride on the buffalo. Having climbed up the *kiliya* creeper, on its breaking having fallen; having climbed up the *kebber* creeper, on its breaking too, having fallen; putting down the bow (*unda*) of *wal-kebber* creeper, putting the canes at the back of the head[1]; sending in front the dog Kaḍiyā, (you are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Petabanda Nayidi. (You are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Petabanda Nayidi. *Mā mipi mā mipi mā diyiyā, Mā mipi mā mipi mā diyiyā.*

All the remaining songs except the last were collected from the village Veddas of the Uva Bintenne; all are of one type and with a single exception (No. XVII) all are related to each other and to the two songs immediately preceding them which we obtained at Nilgala. No. XVII, the exception just referred to, is extremely Sinhalese in tone and thought. The *gamare* spots referred to are the light patches on the body, due to the attacks of a parasitic fungus, which are much admired by the peasant Sinhalese of Uva and the Eastern Province.

164

[1] Or "carrying them hanging round the neck."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

XIII. *Kaliya wale magili*
Rafafa fakigema magili
Tunafiya fellat hiddili
Tō ya helle gonan mat
Nandage fandurafa mangaccale
Tāmanne hala ikmanat
Mundi hakdufifa wattirili
Ōhafa widafaw hiri nāmā
Iccafa widafi icca ari
Tambafa haffen mamāfi
E mudi widcyi marri
Dafifa mafen wilga
Perama marāfin nāmā
Paccā hālayi diya hanna
Eliya fāin wi cunaw nāmā
Cappi cili hili hiyanman
Yanmata nafiya nāmā
Walhaggāyi cappigi gāti
Cappige hittara dahama dahayi
Paccā hālā diya hanna nanā
Tan tadina tan tadinānā
Mānaiya mamiyi umaiya
Kottihafa hana mi hāti hālayi diya hanna.

Having climbed up the *kaliya* creeper,
Splitting it in two and having fallen,
Having broken (his?) hip and stick,
Having even brought thy girl,
Having gone to thy mother-in-law's mat (*i.e.* hut).
Tāmanne hala ikmanat.
The monitor lizard is sprawling on the log.
Shoot it dear cousin,
Shoot at the head. You will miss the head;
Incline (the arrow) towards the tail, by the ribs.
Shoot (it) in the middle; it will die.
Kill the buffalo, cousin,
Which has smeared (itself) at the pool with mud on both sides.
Having roasted and eaten (part of it) we drink water.
The light is coming, cousin,
The birds say *sillili.*
Must we not go, cousin?
In the bird's nest on the Wal-kon tree
There are two and two bird's eggs.
Having roasted and eaten (them) we drink water, cousin.
Tan tadina tan tadinānā.
To eat a part, having cut this and eaten (it), we drink water.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Dahama dahayi Sin. *daha dahayi*, two and two, or two by two.
533 The last line appears to refer to the buffalo that was killed.
534

XIV. *Hitten tuddint tun tuddiptat*
Hi hulipu wuk nagtit
Hitten binuqta wuytit
Hi Kokhigalqta man danin
Etten ipiqta man nodanin
Etten ipiqat man danin
Madi-galqta man nodanin
Etten ipiqat man danin
Uthirigalqta man danin
Etten ipiqta mā nodanin
Etten ipiqat man danin
Hi mandigalqta man danin
Etten ipiqat man nodanin
Waqlant mānat lawu hettdalit
Waqlant piqta yannat harinan
Crunqan crunqata yanna dennā
Trunqan trunqata yannat harinan
Sitten mulaigin yanna dennā.

Hitten tuddint tun tuddiptat.

Having climbed the *hulipuwela* creeper, and having fallen to the ground from it, I know the way to Kokhagala. I know the way beyond that also. I do not know the way to Madagala. I know the way beyond that also. I know the way to Uthirigala. I do not know the way beyond that. I know the way beyond that also. I know the way to that Madagala. I do not know the way beyond that also. Put the ropes on the hunting buffalo. If we cannot go on the back of the hunting buffalo let us go from shelter to shelter. If we cannot go from shelter to shelter, let us go (exposing ourselves) to cold and wind.

XV. *Tun puppinanan puppinān*
Tappan puppini puppinānat
Dīyaqta hukkan uqin nerennā
Dīyaqta hukkayi uqin nerennā
Cappi cili bili hiyannā
Cappi cili bili hiyannā
Ran huru mānpak pepennā
Ran huru mānpak pepennā
Hi man hewada hiyālit
Hi man hewada hiyālit
Etuhaqta uqin ere hiri mānat
Etuhaqta uqin ere hiri mānat.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Tuu pajjiniinee pajjiniine!
Tappiee pappiee pappiee!
Diyaje hallipee ape nenenee!
Diyaje hallipee! ape nenenee!
The birds are twittering[1]
The birds are twittering.
A golden bud face was visible
A golden bud face was visible.
I asked "Who is that?"
I asked "Who is that?"
Then (it was) that dear cousin of ours.
Then (it was) that dear cousin of ours.

XVI. *Tuu pajjiniee! pajjiniee!*
Tiinee pappiee pajjiniee!
Kapuru-handi hakyi
Kapuru-handi hakyi
Kajuruu hajuruu hiyanee!
Kajuruu hajuruu hiyanee!
Kuruilli pajje hadi hapa
Kuruilli pajje hadyi hapa
Aipa pajjiniee! hurulliee
Aipa pajjiniee! hurulliee.

Tuu pajjiniee! pajjiniee!
Tiinee pappiee pajjiniee!
A dove of the *Kapuru-handi* (lit. camphor mountain) is crying *hajuruu, hajuruu*. No one has cakes. Eat some grain.

The last three songs are evidently variants of a common theme, or perhaps of a number of common themes, for they suggest that they consist of a number of fragments strung together with little regard for their meaning. They were certainly sung for the pleasure they afforded, and perhaps the incongruity of the subjects alluded to and the abrupt way in which they are introduced amuses the audience. Nevill collected variants of fragments of these songs in the Binternne which he definitely regards as comic.

The following is the first of these fragments:

Kuluru gaja dunu wagilli
Ehat bindi gana wanilli

[1] Literally "the birds are winning *ellilli*," the last word being onomatopoetic. Mr Parker, to whom we are indebted for the translation of this song, is uncertain of the meaning of the third and fourth lines; perhaps they might be translated "There was a noise of water; we made obeisance."

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Dāmen mādan ḍrilā
Mānāmal mānāmal mā mā mālyi.

Having run and climbed up the *kuhuru* tree
That breaking having fallen,
Having stuck in the mud up to the knee,
Mānāmal mānāmal mā mā mālyi.

Nevill regards this as a "take off of the hymns sung by the celebrant when inspired in the worship of Kiri Amma, a Vedda form of Venus, Pattini, Parvati, or Amman," and he states that the "refrain is that actually used in her honour." Further "the *kuhuru* tree is a prickly bush, up which no one could think of climbing, and the utter nonsense is a ridiculous parody on the hymn."

The following is given as comic by the same authority, who draws attention to "both *pata pata* and *dunni punni*," being expressions coined from the sound of a heavy body falling whop, whop, or flop, flop, and pulling itself up slowly and with pain.

Kuhuru handa mangilā
Pata pata gā gana wattilā
Dunni punni gālā mangitala
Tān man tadi tadi tā mā mā.

XVII. *Ayyō nānage dāsi walalu gigiri dena nada dasāyi kiri nānā*
Nānage hallaṭa icuru gōmaru pativan gōmaru ilā
Nānage hallaṭa icuru gōmaru mayo handai ilyō
Nānaṭa hallaṭa pagiwala ayiyō pot pagi hapā watunā
Nanaṭa wiyaṭu pudura ayiyō hapin rapā wattiyu
Kadirawalli hāli wiyani mangiyai wiyan damanni
Ātai wiyan damanni bala atai wiyan ne dana nānā
Pipi wiyan damanni ela wina panan wina ennew nānā
Cappi ili bili biyanni yannaṭa nidilimidiya nānā
Oyā hapala wasā awidin nānage pudurata wirawalā.

Good wife! Oh what a noise the jingling bells of the bracelet on the two hands of yours (lit. of wife) are making! There are (lit. spread) *gomaru* spots (on my body) resembling the *gomaru* spots on (lit. spread on) my wife's waist. The *gomaru* spots which are (lit. spread) on (my) wife's waist (are) spread on my waist also. Oh! the thickened honey of the honey pocket made up (lit. tied up) for (my) wife is dripping. Oh! the coloured stripes of the mat woven for (my) wife are gone straight. A canopy is tied to Kadirawelli. The younger sister is also putting up canopies. She is

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

putting up inner canopies. Oh wife! do not put up inner canopies. She is putting up outer canopies. Wife, bring white canopies and leaf canopies. The birds are chirping[1]. Wife, rise up from sleep to go. The calves (or oxen) having come after playing in the river went to (my) mother-in-law's[2] hut. 533 534

The last song was collected at Unuwatura Bubula.

XVIII. (1) *Anġā dīya dhwana māwili gaḍgāwe*
Sorabora wili wilpatulen enawāda
Atat damā dāraha ena nurāwā
Sālā pitawala yak gammal
Sālā pitawala wahi wahalā hera waturayi

(2) *Bimin yanna heri nan*
Wadanā mtmaṭa lanu haḍāpan
Ten tediná
Ālgura maṭun maṭanná
Sellan hera ḍada gasāpan.

(1) Oh Māwili river! whose water is flowing, making a sound! Are you coming from the bottom of the lake Soraborawila? Oh lover! who comes in two directions, having put (your) hand also (round her neck). There has been *yaha* ceremony at Salapitawala. It having rained, there is muddy water at Salapitawala.

(2) If you cannot go walking (lit. on the ground) put the ropes on the hunting buffalo.
Ten tediná
They are dancing gesture dances[3].
Play a tune on the drum (used) for games.

This song very clearly shows the composite nature of some of the Vedda songs, especially those in use among the more sophisticated groups. The first two lines of the first verse and the last two lines of the second verse are obviously related to, if they are not derived from, the invocation sung at the *Kolamadama* ceremony (Chapter X, No. XXXIX), while the first two lines of the last verse refer to harnessing a buffalo as in the preceding songs.

[1] Lit. uttering *ithithi*.

[2] [*Nanda* presumably for *nanda* from *nandaraya* a paternal aunt or maternal uncle's wife, hence mother-in-law, cf. pp. 64 and 65.]

[3] We are indebted to Mr Parker for the following note. "*Angura mantun matanna* may be 'dancing gesture-dances' or 'dances of gesture-dances.' *Angaraya* is stated by Clough to be 'gesture,' the particular gesture of the Malabar dancing girls."

Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1966) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

CHAPTER XV

LANGUAGE

197 Mr Parker remarks of the Vedda language that it "is to a great extent the colloquial Sinhalese tongue, but it is slightly changed in form and accent. Yet closely as it resembles the latter, these differences and the manner in which it is pronounced render it quite an unknown language when it is spoken to one who has not a special acquaintance with it. Besides this, the Vaeddas use their own terms for the wild animals and some other things about which they often find it necessary to converse. Such words are usually a form of Sinhalese, or admit of Sinhalese or Tamil derivations; but a very few may possibly belong to, or be a modification of words in, their own original language, forming with perhaps a few forms of grammatical expression the only remains of it that have been preserved, with the exception of some doubtful terms found in Sinhalese[1]."

The view taken by Mr Parker concerning the Sinhalese language, though not quite generally accepted, is that held by Geiger, who considers Sinhalese "a pure Aryan dialect," although it contains some words for which he "can find no Aryan origin"; there are, however, "fewer non-Aryan loan words in Sinhalese than there are non-Germanic words in English[2]." In this and the following chapter Geiger's view will be assumed to be correct and we shall deal with the so-called Vedda language, which is but a dialect of

[1] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 113.

[2] The quotations from Geiger are taken from pp. 86, 87 and 88 of his *Literatur und Sprache der Singhalesen* published in 1900 in Bühler's *Grundriss der Indo-Arischen Philologie*.

[p. 360]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann B-S (1907-1968) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Sinhalese, as a foreign language which the Veddas long ago 197
adopted in the place of their own.

The obvious phonetic changes from the Sinhalese which we 194
noted in the Vedda dialect were the substitution for the sibilant "s" of the palatal "ch" which though generally retained might be thrown out, thus "head" Sin. *isa* becomes in the Vedda dialect *iya* or sometimes *icha*, and *gas* the Sinhalese word for "tree" becomes *gai* or *gayi* in Vedda. There may be other phonetic changes which an expert linguist would detect, but certainly the substitution of "ch" for "s" is the change which gives its characteristic harsh quality to the Vedda dialect.

A number of authors have published short lists of Vedda 114
words, that given by the Sarasins being of most importance, for although it consists of only 22 words care is taken to indicate the equivalent in use in each of the Vedda groups visited by the authors. More complete vocabularies have been collected by Bailey and Nevill, and vocabularies have also been published by two native scholars. One of these, who wrote under the *nom-de-plume* A. J. W., Batticaloa, has published his material in a somewhat [113] inaccessible periodical, the *Ceylon Literary Register* (Vol. v, 1891). His information, which includes a number of sentences and lullabies, has evidently been carefully collected and would probably be specially useful to Sinhalese and Sanskrit scholars. Its great defect is that no mention is made of the places where the information was obtained, or the conditions prevailing when it was collected[1].

Mr A. J. W. Marrambe's publication entitled *The Vedda* [113]
Language and apparently printed at Colombo in 1893 which contains some Vedda invocations is of less value, for while it suffers from the same defects it does not appear to have been prepared with the care which characterises the vocabulary in the *Literary Register*[1].

An important if indirect contribution to the study of the Vedda language has recently been made by Mr Parker, who, in *Ancient Ceylon*, gives in parallel columns Nevill's Vedda vocabulary and the equivalents of these words in the Kaelebasa

[1] The identity of initials suggests that the two accounts may be by one author.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 language, collected by himself during his long sojourn in Ceylon; and to this we shall return later.

192 The Vedda words for the most important animals with which they are brought in contact which are given in the vocabulary at the end of this volume indicate that nouns and verbs in the Vedda dialect are largely formed by periphrasis. It may be urged that in certain cases this is done for the same reason that the common names of animals are avoided in all hunting languages, and doubtless this explains why the bear is commonly spoken of as *hatuva* "the enemy[1]," but it will not account for one of the words for "smoke" being "that which goes from the fire when wet," or "to bring" being "to come having taken things" or for "wind" being "that which causes the stems of trees to break." Mr Parker informs us that the expression "having taken, come," for "bring" is common in Sinhalese, while Dr L. D. Barnett, whom we have consulted on the subject of periphrases, writes that "compound actions" are often expressed by paraphrase, thus the Hindi for "bring" is *le dana*, i.e. "taking give," and "depart" is *nikal jana*, i.e. "issuing go." These examples show that there is nothing peculiar or specially significant in the existence in the Vedda dialect of such periphrasis for "bring" as that given above.

Such expressions might be survivals from a time when the Vedda vocabulary was limited, when quick precision was unnecessary or at least had not been attained, and when all ideas, except the simplest, were necessarily expressed in a roundabout fashion and generally helped out by gesture. We allude in Chapter XVI to the absolute impossibility of making even such an intelligent man as Handuna of Sitala Wanniya realise the difference between a number of periods of time all shorter than a day, and in the same chapter we point out that the older generation of unsophisticated Veddas count only by saying

[1] At Sinda Wanniya we were told that the word *hawiya* might be used for "bear" without danger when the animal was at a distance, but that *hatuva* should be used if the animal were known or suspected to be close. Here too the word *hetabhaka* was used for elephant evidently to prevent these animals hearing their name and coming near. *Hatuva* should be written *hatuwa*, but as we never heard any Vedda pronounce this word otherwise than *hatuva*, we use this spelling throughout.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

"one" and "one" and "one," so that the suggestion we make need not necessarily be taken to carry back the formation of the Vedda dialect to remote antiquity. 192

Further the use of periphrases is common in Sinhalese and other languages closely related to Sanskrit.

We are indebted to Dr Barnett (who tells us that the list could be greatly extended without difficulty) for the following examples of Sanskrit periphrases, many of which occur in Sinhalese in unmodified or only slightly modified forms:

dvīpi leopard, lit. "spotted."

dvirepha bee, lit. "double R-sound."

hutāśana fire, lit. "devouring libations."

hutavāhana fire, lit. "conveying libations."

kari elephant, lit. "animal with a hand."

kṛishṇavartma fire, lit. "having a black path" (Sin. *kinmaga*).

pādapa tree, lit. "drinking with the feet."

paraputrikā cuckoo, lit. "nurtured by a stranger" (Sin. *paraputu*).

pārāvata dove, lit. "belonging to distant lands" (Sin. *paravi*).

śākhāmṛiga monkey or squirrel, lit. "branch-deer."

shaṭpada bee, lit. "six-legged" (Sin. *saṭpada*).

Even at the present day the vocabulary of the peasant Sinhalese is not a large one, and if from this there were taken away all ceremonial and agricultural terms, and those directly or indirectly due to European influence, it would, we believe, be surprisingly small. It is reasonable to suppose that it was no bigger centuries ago. It is therefore not surprising that the dialect which was formed by the Veddas from this vocabulary and took the place of their old language, adopted only a small number of words suitable to their jungle life, and so prepared the way for the use of large numbers of periphrases even if it did not at first necessitate their formation[1]."

[1] Perhaps the position of the Veddas linguistically at the time of the change may be compared to the position of the inhabitants of certain Melanesian Islands of the Pacific, where not only has a degraded English with an extremely limited vocabulary become the medium of communication between White and Black and between different native tribes, but the islanders in some instances when speaking to foreigners

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 Although Dr Barnett considers that many of the Vedda
198 periphrases seem to point primarily to a low level of culture, and although we believe that we should do wrong to ignore the influence of some such process as that which we have sketched, we think it probable that many of the expressions in the Vedda language (so called) arose as the result of a deliberate effort to mystify.

At the time when the Veddas began to use Sinhalese as their habitual mode of communication they would find it convenient, if not absolutely necessary, to be able to discuss matters between themselves in the presence of Sinhalese, especially Sinhalese traders, without allowing the latter to understand what they were saying. This necessity would naturally lead them to invent periphrases and onomatopoeic words while it would encourage mispronunciation and the use of archaic forms.

Further evidence in favour of this view may be gathered from other Indian tribes and even from the Veddas themselves. Dr Rivers found that the Todas have a secret language which "consists of a large number of expressions which they use in the presence of Badagas, Tamils and others, when they wish to be understood only by themselves. Many of the Badagas and Tamils with whom the Todas associate no doubt pick up some knowledge of their language, and even if this were not the case the Toda language is sufficiently like Tamil to enable a stranger to understand part of what is said. In consequence the Todas have adopted a secret code for use among themselves which they call *kalikatpimi*, literally 'stolen we tie,' while in distinction the ordinary language is called *itherkely* or 'front fact'."[1]

Thus "cook food in milk" which in the ordinary language is *pârs kâr* literally "milk cook" becomes in the secret language

who have acquired some knowledge of their tongue purposely use simplified and incomplete grammatical forms.

Mr Parker remarks that our statement concerning the vocabulary of the present Sinhalese is valid only so far as it applies to their ordinary conversation in which they use "a simple and limited" vocabulary, but that in working through his large collection of Folk-tales he found that "the vocabulary of the villagers was a very extensive one."

[1] *The Todas*, p. 616.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

monk mdr pud mdda tarak idsht literally "four sides come three on up put," i.e. "put what comes from the four teats upon the three (stones which support the cooking pot)." Further the leg may be called *metepol* "walk thing," also used for foot-prints, or *pdui dler pt pol* "thing that goes into the earth," while many other things have secret names; thus butter is called *pelthpol* "white thing" and clarified butter *hdrtpol* "melted thing."

192
198

All this seems to indicate that the so-called Vedda dialect arose, at least in part, as a deliberately invented secret language, and this view is supported by an anecdote told by Nevill which shows that even at the present time the formation of periphrases and the use of onomatopoeic words comes readily to the older Veddas, allowing them to communicate with their fellows in the presence of Sinhalese without using the ordinary words.

An old Vedda who died before 1886 was "fond of encouraging the others to learn a patois which strangers could not understand, and used to illustrate its use by a story of his being overtaken by a party of pilgrims to Katragam, who insisted on his accompanying them as guide some distance. A lad, partly a Vaedda, was with him. On the way they heard a deer give the peculiar bleating cry made when they are seized by a leopard. Seeing his companions did not understand it, he went on, and entering into conversation with the boy, sent him away, saying loudly and rapidly so as not to excite suspicion, Bûs kî bâs kî adina atak gena at baruwak gena pimbina atak gena, thopa ammât appât enda kiyâpa. This means, "Bûs was said, bâs was said, bringing the bow, axe and fire-stick, tell your mother and father to come." Here the bow is called the "pulling-bough," the axe is called the "bough heavy" or "heavy in the hand," and the fire-stick, the "blowing bough," in allusion to the blowing of the spark into a flame. *Bûs* imitates the snort of the leopard as it springs on the deer, and *bâs* the cry of the deer. The old man delighted to tell this tale, showing his own wit, and would then say "and because the boy knew huntsman's craft and how to speak aloud but secretly, he slipped away and called his parents. I went back as soon as I could, and we all had a grand feast, for the leopard had not time to eat much before the boy's parents were there[1]."

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 181.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 At Sitala Wanniya we learnt for the first time that two classes of words could be distinguished in the Vedda dialect. Words of the first class are commonly employed by the Veddas among themselves or their use is compulsory when hunting or travelling in the jungle; the second class contains words which are used only in invoking the *yaku*.

The monitor lizard commonly called *wunda* becomes in the *yaku* language *bimbada gunaka*, "one whose belly touches the ground"; the pig *dola* is called *hosadika*; the spotted deer *gambergodaya* is called *depatam magula*; the sambar *hankana* becomes *gusra magula*; and the wandura monkey *hotakana* is called *ude kolina*.

These were the only animals which were given *yaku* names at Sitala Wanniya, but betel leaves, usually known as *pangwi kola*, coconut milk *polikiri* and rice *depotulu* all used in offerings to the *yaku* are spoken of on these occasions as *nilikola*, literally "dark leaves," *ran kiri dalua* "golden bud milk" and *kuda hamka* from *suda samba*, lit. "white rice," respectively[1].

Probably all the wilder Veddas at one time used special words when addressing the *yaku*, for even at Rerenkadi among the sophisticated Veddas of the chena settlement we heard of the former existence of a *yaku* vocabulary, while at Lindegala the few words of the Vedda dialect that were still remembered were said to have been used especially in *yaku* ceremonies[2].

At Sitala Wanniya we obtained the expressions *yakak kerewitiya*, literally "iron walking staff," for boy, and *kanakana kilete*, "box for lime" or "lime eating box," for girl. We were not able to satisfy ourselves as to the significance of these metaphors, which were said to be used only in *yaku* ceremonies. According to one account the expression refers to the genitals of the sexes, another explanation states that a boy is a strong support to his relatives, while a girl is as precious as a supply of chewing materials.

198 The hypothesis that the Vedda language arose in part as 197 a secret language explains how it is that at the present day the

[1] *Sambā* is the name of a superior variety of rice.

[2] Nilgala, Bandigoyagiya and Bandarahawa were all visited before Sitala Wanniya where we discovered the existence of a *yaku* vocabulary, and no questions especially bearing on this matter were asked at these places.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Vedda dialect is best preserved among the Village Veddas of Bintenne. 198 197.

The people of Dambani and Bulugahaladena whose condition we have described in Chapter II and whom we have specially in mind as typical Veddas of the Bintenne are precisely in that stage of development in which a secret language would be most useful. They do not lead, and apparently have not for a considerable number of generations led the wandering life which until recently characterised the Veddas living further to the east, nor on the other hand do they even now show any tendency to be absorbed by the peasant Sinhalese of the province in which they live. They in fact constitute small autonomous communities enjoying considerable prestige in the eyes of their neighbours both on account of their ancestry and their reputed fierceness. Not only is their dialect directly useful to them in their trading with the neighbouring Sinhalese, but as we soon discovered their use of what their neighbours consider a language different from their own greatly enhances their prestige.

They have thus had a motive for keeping up if not for enlarging their store of periphrases and metaphors which probably never existed among the wilder, less sophisticated Veddas, who only preserve the old names of certain animals or foods which are used in *yaka* ceremonies or which have become part of their jungle language.

From this point of view we may detect three stages in the evolution of the present Vedda dialect. In the first stage their original language is effaced by an archaic form of the Sinhalese; the formation from this of a large number of secret words constitutes the second stage, while the third stage is represented by the process of substitution of more or less modern and colloquial Sinhalese words for the majority of archaic words and forms, during which process many of the modern words underwent phonetic changes.

The following sentences taken down from men of Bulugahaladena show the characteristics of the Vedda dialect as it survives among the Village Veddas of Bintenne. The notes given after each sentence have been supplied by Mr Gunasekara, the sentences themselves are written down in the form in which 192

we gave them (in English) to our interpreter. We have no doubt that he translated them literally into Sinhalese, so that not only the building up of the sentences but also the repetitions and inaccuracies in the Vedda dialect are of interest.

Come here quickly.

Hana hasihete mangaenpa.

Hasihete is from the Sinhalese *hasihaja* quickly.

This axe belongs to me.

Me galuda maiema.

Me is Sinhalese *maiema* from Sinhalese *mayima*, *magima* my own.

We two have come from Bulugahalandena.

Kakulai mai mangaenaw Bulugahalandewing.

Kakule, child, boy, then *kakulai mai* the child and I, the final *i* of each word is the equivalent of the Sinhalese *ji* (colq.) and *i*: *Mai* from the Sinhalese *mamayi*; *-ing -in* the ablative case ending. The finite verb in Sinhalese is placed last in the sentence.

Bring your bow and arrow.

Makaliyai marenai arang mangaenpa.

Marenai is a shortened form of *marienhene* arrow. *Arang* the equivalent of the Sinhalese *arae* having taken. The literal translation of this sentence would be "Having taken bow and arrow come."

This wood is wet, I cannot make fire.

Me dandu diapadge mandewin gina unana hadi.

Diapadge mandewin "water being absorbed" or "being surrounded by water" (Sk. *mand* or *mandi*).

Unana from Sanskrit *uah* to burn: *Me* and *dandu* are Sinhalese.

He climbed a tree to find a bees' nest.

Kandu ariai patagaenna rithe pitai nagigi.

Patagaenna is to begin and not to find; *pitai nagigi* is the equivalent of the Sinhalese *pinna nagigi*, literally he jumped and ascended.

But the branch was rotten and he fell.

Ehe diru hawin patagaenna paingu.

Ehe, Sinhalese it; there is no word for branch; *diru* having been rotten; *hawin* Sinhalese *pahalin* down; *paingu* he fell (Sanskrit *pat* to fall) or he jumped (Sanskrit *pla* to jump).

There are no bananas in my chena, but much Indian corn. 192

Mai hemptedge pusumma hewriana tunah tunah tibiyo hakiyedge hadai.

Mai Sinhalese *mahi* here; *hemptedge* is the Sinhalese *hetta*, i.e. chena; *pusumma* having been burnt; *hewriana* Indian corn (?); *tunah tunah* little little, some.

Literally translated the sentence runs "Here the chena having been burnt (i.e. prepared in the usual manner) there is some Indian corn, there are no bananas."

He killed the sambar and dried its flesh over the fire.

Kandana patagunala ginaunala punahalala hewilanya.

Patagunala being killed; *ginaunala* having made a fire (Sinhalese *gini avunala*); *punahalala* having burnt; *hewilanya* he eats.

Literally "The sambar being killed, having made a fire (and) having burnt (its flesh) he eats."

When a man is dead we go away from that cave.

Miri hetadawunna pata mang wenahetta mangunna ona.

Pata is the Sinhalese *vita* when; *mang* is the Sinhalese *mama* I; *wenahetta* is from the Sinhalese *wenataka*, to another quarter; *ona* is the Sinhalese *onda*, ought, must.

Literally "When a man is dead I must go to another quarter."

The dog scents a deer.

Kuka pakaragandahata mangunanya.

Pakaragandahata to smell good.

Literally this would be translated somewhat as follows: "The dog moves after a good smell."

Which is the road to Dambani?

Dambanete mangunna mamptedgah hakada.

Mamptedgah a road is derived from *mawa* Sinhalese *maga* road and *pedigah*.

Although we are unable to offer any opinion as to the precise age of the Vedda dialect there is no doubt that it is at least of respectable antiquity. Geiger (*op. cit.* p. 89), while admitting that the material at his disposal is insufficient to allow him to give "a full picture of the dialect," considers "beyond dispute" that it contains "an archaic element" and he cites the verb p. *gamhati* which in the Vedda dialect exists in the form *gunna*.

whereas only the gerund *gee* occurs in Sinhalese[1]. Nevill writes of the Vedda dialect as being "largely identical with the old Sinhalese now called Elu."

This carries its formation back some hundreds of years; and whether Nevill's statement is literally correct or not the archaic forms and incomprehensible expressions preserved in the invocations given in Chapter X show that the Vedda dialect arose at least some centuries ago[2].

Our Vedda vocabularies contain a few of the non-Aryan words of unknown origin which are noted by Geiger as occurring in Sinhalese such as *bale* leaf, *haas* coconut (in composition to form *haasgengediya*) and *rilawa* monkey. They contain a far larger number of Aryan words which Mr Gunasekara considers are not Sinhalese, or contain a non-Sinhalese element.

Such words are: *agedya* mouse deer, *baashawa* monkey, *bapatte* breast, *bata* man, *batadamanya* to kill, to die, *batahalale* elephant, *dendu* lightning, *dunda* monkey, *emenemawa* to strike, *emembalaya* to ask, *gabiari* iron, *galabaya* to fall, *hadiya* bat, *harriya* bear, *hatamanya* to speak, *hike* a small lizard, *hahawawa* to strike, *hengawawa* to make, *hewaha* axis deer, *mambada* tortoise, *mangawawa* to come or to go, *mada* elephant, *ohwa* buffalo, *pakawagunde gaaya* and *paahawa gaaya* to smell, *pakerwila* bad, *piriawi* dance, *pitagaya* crocodile, *rukka* squirrel, *sakalawa* sun, *sambala* axe, *sil pawa sali* rain, *tankiya* axe, *tali* honey comb, *yamaha* areca cutter[3].

[1] Mr Parker writes: "I do not find sure that *gaawa* is derived from the Pali word *gachati*, to go. There is a general absence of Pali derivations in the Vaddda dialect. When used to express 'to go' or 'to come,' the word is always *mangawawa*, to which *aawa* is of course 'road,' the Sinhalese *maduya*; this word would be unnecessary if *gaawa* means 'to go.' It seems not unlikely that the word is *gaawa*, 'to strike,' which in Sinhalese has several meanings when combined with other words, as in *ahingaawawawa*, 'to cull,' and *mija-gaahawawa*, 'to pluck off feathers.'"

[2] Mr Parker writes: "I think that the earlier forms of Vaddda words are of a later type than those of the inscriptions of the first five or six centuries A.D., and partly for this reason I used the expression 'some centuries after Christ,' quoted by you on page 413, without attempting to fix any date."

[3] Reference to the vocabulary at the end of the book will show that a number of these words are closely allied to Sinhalese words, while some appear to be corruptions of the latter. We are indebted to Dr Barnett for pointing out that *dunda* is derived from the Sinhalese *wandura* (Pushkin *vandurai*) while it seems reasonable to derive "*mada*" *bata* from the Sinhalese *padda* which has itself been adopted from Tamil.

C.G. Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AX3 Vedda AX3

Mr Gunasekara's opinion as to the origin and relationship of these words will be found in the vocabulary at the end of the volume, where we also give his explanation of the many periphrases we collected[1]. 192

We may refer here to the use of the affix *-pajo* which the Veddas join to many nouns, thus "blood" is called *lipajo* and the sun *irupajo*. Inquiries made from Veddas and peasant Sinhalese failed to suggest any origin for this affix, which can scarcely be connected with the Sinhalese words *pajjile* and *pale* "little," "little thing" as was suggested by some of our Sinhalese informants. We therefore fall back upon a suggestion made to us by Mr Gunasekara that *pajo* is a corruption of Sanskrit *pudgala* (P. *puggala*) "individual," "body," "matter," "personal identity." If this explanation is correct then *lipajo* is the equivalent of "the individual or thing (called) *li* blood," *irupajo* of "the individual or thing (called) *iru* sun," *landenpajo* of "the individual or thing (called) *landen* wind." The use of this word may have been found convenient when a foreign word was adopted by the Veddas, to make it clear that the borrowed word referred to a concrete object. Later, when the new word had become universally intelligible and was firmly established in the Vedda dialect, *pajo* must have been gradually dropped from a great number of nouns, and this doubtless is probably the reason why at present *pajo* is affixed only to a minority of words, and while commonly used by some Veddas is scarcely heard in other communities. This view is supported by Mr Gunasekara's remark that *pudgala* has been used by the Sinhalese in the sense of "person" (individual), though he considers that its use as an affix to a considerable number of nouns is a purely Vedda feature. 193

Mr Parker suggests that there may be more than one origin for *-pajo* as used by the Veddas, "thus, *lipajo* might be *lipada*, drop of blood. There is also a Sinhalese word *pajil* (Skt. *prajil*)

[1] It is extremely probable that some of the words in this list may be derived from Tamil, the following being suggestions for which we are indebted to Mr Parker: *ulud* bullock, T. *uldaru* a bull, ox or cow; *ambil* elephant, T. *ambil* a bamboo beast; *kurupi* bear, T. *kuri* black and *ubi* one; *mil* honey comb, cf. T. *mili* hole, perforation, tube; *ambaruwa* cow, cf. T. *ambaruwa* a drink, dish, wheel (Sk. *ambra*); *dunili* monkey, cf. T. *ungile* slave; *rukbili*, Sin. *ruk* tree and *ubi* one, i.e. "the tree one."

173 creature, one meaning of the Sanskrit word being 'designating,' 'indicating.'"

The occurrence of a large number of the non-Sinhalese Aryan
192 words in the Vedda vocabulary seems to us of considerable
197 importance. Many of these words are derived or borrowed from the Hindi and Marathi languages or from Sanskrit words which according to Mr Gunasekara "are seldom or never used in the Sinhalese language."

This implies that these languages must at one time have materially contributed to the formation of Sinhalese, and if it could be determined at what period they had passed into the vulgar tongue in Ceylon, this would give us the earliest date at which the Veddas could have adopted Sinhalese.

197 At present this seems impossible, but valuable suggestions concerning the period or periods at which the northern influence was exerted may perhaps be gathered from the age of the Sinhalese folk-tales of Northern origin collected by Mr Parker from districts in the interior of the Island "where story-books in Sinhalese, Tamil, or Arabic do not appear to have penetrated, and English is unknown by the villagers." This quotation as well as those which follow are taken from the introduction (pp. 37 and 38) to Mr Parker's recent volume *Village Folk Tales of Ceylon*. Mr Parker, after referring to stories due to immigrants from South India, writes as follows concerning those which he considers were brought in by "settlers from the Ganges valley, or near it.

"With regard to the latter, it is not probable that they consisted only of the early immigrants of pre-Christian times. King Nissanka-Malla, who reigned from 1198 to 1207 A.D., has recorded in his inscriptions that he was a native of Sinhapura, then apparently the capital of the Kalinga kingdom, which extended far down the east coast of India, southward from the lower part of the Ganges valley; and he and his chief Queen Subhadrā, a Kalinga Princess, must have brought into Ceylon many of their fellow-countrymen. The Queens of two other earlier Kings of Ceylon were also Princesses from Kalinga.

"In the Galpota inscription at Polannaruwa (Prof. E. Müller's *Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon*, No. 148), he stated that "invited

Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

by the King [Parākrama-Bāhu I], who was his senior kinsman, to come and reign over his hereditary kingdom of Lakdiva [Ceylon], Vīra Nissaṅka-Malla landed with a great retinue in Laṅkā" [Ceylon]. Further on in the same inscription he stated that "he sent to the country of Kālinga, and caused many Princesses of the Soma and Sūrya races to be brought hither. 197

"A connexion with the Kālinga kingdom seems to have been maintained from early times. In his inscriptions the same king claimed that the sovereignty of Ceylon belonged by right to the Kālinga dynasty. He described himself in his Dambulla inscription (*Ancient Inscriptions*, No. 143) as "the liege lord of Lakdiva by right of birth, deriving descent from the race of King Wijaya," the first king of Ceylon, who, according to the Sinhalese historical works, was also born at a town called Sinhapura, which is stated to have been founded by his father. In the Galpota inscription we read of "Princes of the Kālinga race to whom the island of Laṅkā has been peculiarly appropriate since the reign of Wijaya."

As we have already stated in Chapter I the story of Wijaya indicates that there was frequent communication between Ceylon and Indian ports; we may now refer to the Mahawansa, in which, as Mr Parker remarks, "there is a definite and credible statement that vessels sailed direct from it [the port of Tāmalitta] to Ceylon in the reign of Asoka in the third century B.C.[1]"

The respectable, if not the extreme antiquity of the Vedda vocabulary is supported by the existence of a few words retaining their common meaning in Vedda and the *kaslebaa* language. Although Mr Parker does not explain the origin of the words in the *kaslebaa* list published in *Ancient Ceylon*, he has given the derivation of a considerable number of words occurring in the *kaslebaa* of Northern Ceylon in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. II, pp. 15—21), in which he discusses the origin and age of the language. Accepting his conclusions "that many of these forms are very ancient;—that they are, in fact, probably survivals from an ancient dialect which was once spoken throughout a 192 197

[1] *Village Folk-Tales of Ceylon*, p. 42. The voyage from Tamalitta to Ceylon is mentioned in the *Mahawansa* on page 46. Another voyage from the same port, when the Bo-tree cutting was conveyed to Ceylon, is described on pp. 74, 75. Tamalitta is thought to have occupied the site of the modern Tamluk at the mouth of the Hooghly.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

great part of the island," the occurrence of such names in Vedda and *kaelebass* as *manda* (or *munda*) for the monitor lizard (Sin. *gyo*), and of *marulu* (from *maruka* a destroyer, a hawk, and *hrwa* great) for the Brahminy kite (Sin. *ukusa*), shows that the Vedda dialect was formed at least as long ago as that period when the Sinhalese were driven out of the Northern Province by the Tamils[1].

A single Vedda word *sappi* or *cappi* bird closely resembles the Sakai word *ciap*, *cap* or *cep*; in spite of the relationship recognised by some as existing between the Veddas and Sakai we hold this similarity to be of no significance, both words probably being onomatopoeic[2].

[1] Referring especially to the Wanniya "a race of hunters" who reside in small villages of badly built houses in the northern part of the North Central Province, extending from Padawiya to Tantrimalei, and who use a number of *kaelebass* words, Mr Parker writes (*op. cit.* p. 18): "Like the hunters of the North-Western and North-Central Provinces, the Wanniyas make use of the remnants of a special dialect when engaged on their forest expeditions, under the belief that its employment tends to preserve them from wild animals, and to render them successful in their search for honey and meat. This dialect is known as the 'kaelebass,' jungle language, and the Wanniyas themselves speak only a very few words of it. Other fragments are to be met with among Sinhalese throughout all Northern Ceylon. That these words originally formed part of one language is to be inferred from the fact that not more than a few of the forms which present the most ancient appearance can be specially selected as peculiar to a certain district. In one village, or a group of villages, a few are known; in another, some of the same words and a few others; while some of the words which are used at Padawiya are not only well-known in the North-Western Province, but are even used upon similar occasions in Southern and Eastern Ceylon. Some of them are also among the threshing-floor vocabulary, and a smaller number are employed by Waeddas." Again on page 20 we read: "So far as this language is concerned, it may be concluded that the Wanniyas are, as they state, Sinhalese. Taking into consideration the facts that they are found only on or near the northern borders of the Kandian Kingdom, that they (or at any rate such of them as I have met) speak Tamil, and that some of them have Tamil names, and also remembering the particulars which I have given regarding their religion, it may further be inferred that, as their name would seem to indicate, they form a remnant of the ancient Sinhalese inhabitants of what is now the Northern Province. Throughout the whole of this district, extending, in fact, within a few miles of Elephant's Pass, there are abundant proofs that it was once peopled largely by Sinhalese; yet it is doubtful if any other distinct descendants of the former occupants can now be found. The rest of the Sinhalese population may perhaps have almost completely died out, for the inhabitants of the Sinhalese villages in the southern parts of the Province are, with very few exceptions, comparatively recent settlers who have migrated during this century from the North-Central districts."

[2] Mr Gunasekara while not denying that *sappi* may be onomatopoeic suggests that it may have arisen as a corruption of the Sanskrit word *pakshi* bird. Mr Parker considers that this word is derived from the Tamil *kwappi* (pronounced *kwappi*) a fly-eater or bee-eater, from *sappu* to chew.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XVI

THE SENSES OF THE VEDDAS

THE extraordinary skill displayed by the Veddas in discovering game and honey led us to test their senses as far as the time at our disposal would allow. Before recording the results of these tests in detail we may state the impression produced by certain incidents of our intercourse with the Veddas. We several times had Vedda guides and invariably noticed that, however difficult the ground, they walked quickly and noiselessly without apparently paying any attention to their footsteps. Nor did they ever seem even momentarily at a loss as to the direction to take in order to reach any part of their territory, in spite of the absence of obvious tracks. We do not think that they depended to any considerable extent on the sun; indeed, the conditions under which our most striking experience of this kind took place puts that out of the question. We left our camp at Sitala Wanniya early one morning with Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira to walk to a cave which proved to be about four miles distant. Our course lay through dense jungle, it rained intermittently and the glimpses of the sky which we obtained showed that it was completely overcast during the whole of the time. There was no sign of a track, and except once for about a couple of hundred yards we did not follow any stream though we crossed several. Nevertheless Handuna led us at a rapid walk straight up to the rock shelter which was our destination. This faculty is shared by another people inhabiting Ceylon, the Wanniya, the inhabitants of the Wanni, a large forest tract in the North Central Province. The life led by these hunters in some respects resembles that of the

151

[481]

C.G. Seligmann & Seligmann 5-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

151 Veddas, for they depend largely on game and honey for their subsistence and like the Veddas are bow-men. Mr Parker, who has spent much time in the Wanni, gives an account of a journey 151 he made guided by Wanniya which is so interesting that we 151 quote it at length.

"I was taken by some Wanniyas through a piece of wild pathless forest ten or eleven miles across, near Padawiya tank, at the north-eastern boundary of the North-Central Province. The jungle was dense, and the journey therefore occupied all day. Of course we were unable to proceed in a straight line, and more than once we deviated into a right-angle from our proper direction in order to avoid thorny jungle that was said to be in front of us. At about one o'clock we came to a high rock, as they had promised, on the top of which good rain water is always retained in a hollow. There we cooked and ate some food, after which we resumed our tramp. In the middle of the forest, as we were proceeding along a deer-track, one of the men drew my attention to a half-broken twig hanging at the side of the path. 'I broke that two years ago,' he said; he was then proceeding at a right-angle from the line we were taking.

"When I asked him if he never lost his way in such thick forest, full of undergrowth, he at first could not understand my meaning. After I had explained it—feeling while doing so that I was making an interesting exhibition of my ignorance—he laughed consumedly and thought it a capital joke. 'How *can* one lose it?' he said. He had never heard of such a thing before; to him it appeared to be quite impossible, apparently as much so as getting lost in an open field would be to us. 'When we look at the sun we always know which way to go,' he remarked. The men justified my confidence in their powers by emerging, just before dusk, at the very spot where I wished to arrive, many miles from the homes of any of the party. Those who had acted as guides lived some twelve miles or more away, by the nearest footpath; and the house of the man who lived nearest was five miles from the point where we left the forest. I have always thought it a very clever feat[1]."

Mr Parker's account of the jungle craft of the Wanniya is

[1] *Ancient Ceylon*, pp. 77, 78.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so vivid and applies so thoroughly to the progress of the Veddas through the jungle that we again quote from his work. 151 171

"While engaged on a hunting expedition, these hunters [the Wanniya]...glide along in single file, avoiding every leafy twig the rustling of which might betray their presence, or if game be near holding it until the next man can take charge of it, and hand it over in the same manner to the man behind him. At such times all tread in the footprints of the first man, who when putting his foot on the ground first glides his toes along it in order to push aside any twigs or leaves that might emit a noise if crushed. Their eyes and ears are fully alert to catch the slightest sound or movement among the thick jungle around them....They hear sounds and see objects that to a person whose perception is dulled by civilisation might as well be altogether absent, so far as his power of observation is concerned. Their trained ears detect the footfall of the wild forest animals walking through the jungle at considerable distances away, and can distinguish even the species by means of the sound, which is quite inaudible to less experienced observers. If any uncertainty exists regarding it they crouch down, or kneel with one ear on the ground, and soon clear up their doubts. When they are in search of Deer or other animals with keen sight, they hide their cloth by hanging leafy twigs round their waist-string. This certainly gives them a very wild appearance, but there is no trustworthy evidence to show that it was the primitive dress of the aborigines of Ceylon.

"Wild honey being one of their favourite foods, their vision and hearing are trained to an astonishing quickness in detecting every Bee that flies across their path, and noting its species, and whether it is flying laden or is only in quest of food. When it is carrying a load of honey and flying straight through the trees, they at once move off in the same direction, if it be the season in which the hives contain honey, that is, August and September, knowing of course that the laden insect makes a direct flight to its hive—the proverbial bee-line. As the nest is approached other Bees are seen converging towards it, and in a few minutes it is certain to be discovered[1]."

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 70, 71.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 Doubtless Mr Parker is right in ascribing the marvellous jungle craft of the Wanniya to trained perception and powers of observation, for the equally fine performance of the Veddas is certainly not due to any all round superiority of the senses, as our observations on sight and hearing indicate.

Visual Acuity.

The visual acuity of twenty-four Vedda men and youths was tested by the E method described by Dr Rivers[1]. The majority of the subjects we tested quickly learnt what was required of them, though they were far less interested in this than in the colour vision tests and illusions, to which we shall refer presently.

The average distance at which a Vedda could distinguish the letter E was 14 metres, no appreciable difference being detected between the Veddas of the wildest groups (Sitala Wanniya, Henebodda) and the more sophisticated Veddas of Bandaraduwa. Giving the results on the same plan as that adopted in the second volume of the Reports of the *Expedition to Torres Straits*, 10 men (41·7 °/₀) have a visual acuity expressed by less than 2; 12 (50 °/₀) have an acuity between 2 and 3. The greatest distance at which E was recognised was

[1] This method is a modification of the E test devised by Cohn, "in which a letter E can be exposed in any desired position through a circular hole in a card. The subject of the test has to place a letter E which he holds in his hands in the same position as one shown to him. Instead of the small cardboard E provided in Cohn's test, I used a larger letter E pasted on a board. Cohn's method is very simple and convenient and it entirely removes the danger accompanying the older tests, that the letters may be learnt by heart during the process of testing.

"In general the procedure was the same as that previously adopted in Torres Straits; the observations were made in the open air, both eyes were used, and the distance at which a native made two mistakes in ten exposures was taken as his limit of vision. In one respect the procedure differed; with the older form of the test it was most convenient to begin with the observer beyond his far limit of vision, and to bring him up towards the test-types till he could decipher the letters. With Cohn's form of the test, I first showed the E in various positions at a short distance, and as soon as I had satisfied myself that the native understood the method of testing, I gradually increased the distance till I reached a point at which the positions of the letter could no longer be recognised." (*British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 1, 1905, p. 323.)

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

19 metres; this occurred twice. According to the system in ordinary use the position of the letter E used is supposed to be distinguished by the normal eye at a distance of 6 metres, that is, the average sight of a Vedda would be put down as 2·33 times the normal. It is, however, well known that the results obtained are greatly influenced by the quality and nature of the light existing during the test, and comparison with the figures obtained in other countries shows that there is little difference between Veddas and other races. This was confirmed by the results of the examination of ten peasant Sinhalese whose average visual acuity was 17 metres, while if one man of distinctly subnormal vision be ignored the average acuity of the remaining nine works out at nearly 18·5 metres. The keenest sighted individual could distinguish the position of the letter E at 22 metres. 151

Acuity of vision as tested by the E method seems to decrease in middle life, but this although often quite well marked does not lead to any recognised diminution of hunting capacity, practice and knowledge fully making up for the physical changes in the eye.

Colour Vision.

The alleged absence of the full appreciation of colours among the Veddas was brought forward in Ceylon as a proof of their low mental capacity, but careful observations made with coloured wools and papers showed their perception of colour to be extremely acute. Forty-two adult males, 15 women and 3 boys were tested for colour blindness with a negative result. The majority of our subjects matched the wools quickly and accurately, and of those who at first made mistakes nearly all matched a wool with another of the same saturation but of a different colour. This was particularly noticeable in one old woman who picked out the wools and arranged them in heaps composed of varying colours of the same saturation.

Colour names were collected from 31 men and 4 women [822]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151
822

by means of Rothe's set of colour papers and the results obtained in this way were checked by frequent reference to Holmgren's wools. When shown the coloured papers and asked the names the more sophisticated among the Veddas gave the usual Sinhalese colour names, red *ratu*; orange and yellow *kahu*; green (three shades) and blue and purple were all called *nil*; black *kalu*; white *sudu*. However few men used all the Sinhalese names, most of the men making comparison with natural objects for at least one or two of the colours, while the least sophisticated men made comparisons for all the colours. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya compared all colours to flowers and leaves except red and orange for which he gave the usual Sinhalese terms. As the flowering season had not begun at the time of our visit we were unable to test the accuracy of his comparisons with the objects themselves, therefore after the colour papers had been put away we repeated the names he had told us and asked him to pick out similar colours from the coloured wools. This he did, and we found that these matched the colour papers to which the flower names had originally been applied with extraordinary accuracy. This man and others as uncontaminated as himself distinguished the two shades of blue and the three of green of the papers, while those who had mixed more with Sinhalese applied *nil* to all shades of blue and green. In order to test whether Handuna knew the ordinary Sinhalese colour names, we gave him the bundle of wools and asked him to show us *sudu* (white), he then picked out white and the very slightly saturated colours of all shades. For *ratu* (red) he gave all the strongly saturated shades of red, purple, claret, bright pink and brown shading off to yellow; *kahu* (yellow) included yellows and a few pale pinks; *nil* (blue and green) included all strongly saturated blue and green-grey tints, violet and some dark browns; these darker shades he also said were *kalu* (black) and he compared them to the bark of trees.

It was noticed that on asking the names for the colour papers the Veddas made comparisons, likening the red paper to a red flower or saying "red like blood," while the purple paper was compared to a blue flower; the three shades of green shown would often be compared to three different kinds of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

leaves, whereas the rural Sinhalese would say *rata* for the two first colours and *nil* for the four last. 151

Other comparisons frequently made by Veddas were "like *hatu*" used both for orange and black, a source of great bewilderment till it was discovered that *hatu* was a general term for fungus, a bright orange and a black species being brought to us to clear up the difficulty. 822

Red was compared to fire, black to the coat of a bear, pure white to coconut milk and dirty white to the wax of the *bambara*. Generally speaking it appeared that the more unsophisticated the Vedda the less he used the Sinhalese colour terms, using in their place references to familiar objects. "Like blood" was a frequent comparison, sometimes used for red and sometimes for purple. Though colours were occasionally compared to bird's feathers we did not note any compared to butterflies. When shown purple, violet and blue, most Veddas said they did not know those colours or had never seen anything like them, and one said the same of yellow.

Forty-eight rural Sinhalese were tested for colour blindness and no case was found. The coloured wools were usually matched quickly and accurately. Colour names were collected from 25 men, the usual names given were *ratu* for red and purple, *kaha* for yellow and orange, *nil* for all greens and blues and sometimes for violet and purple, *kalu* for black and also often for indigo, *sudu* for white. Other words occasionally given were *dumbutu* or *dumburu*[1] once given for black, three times for violet, once for blue and once for purple, and on one occasion when wools instead of papers were shown the same word was applied to a shade of claret. *Illalu*[2] was used once for purple, and once for violet. *Guru*[3] which means mud was given on one 800

[1] Mr Parker informs us "that *dumbuta* is the same as *dumburu* and means a dark reddish purple or according to Clough 'a compound of red and black' and is sometimes applied to the dark rain clouds of the evening."

[2] *Elala* is stated in Clough's Dictionary to be applied to "a fair complexion, light red, brown."

[3] Mr Parker writes, "In Clough's Dictionary the meanings of *gurugala* are 'red chalk [?laterite], red orpiment, gold' but '*guru* colour' is applied colloquially to a purple sky." In the invocation to Pannikkia Yaka (Chapter X, No. XIV) *guru* is applied to the sky and the earth at dawn.

occasion for orange and on another for violet; *tamba* (copper) was used for violet and blue, this word was also given for the colour of our hair when it applied equally to dark and red hair. Sinhalese hair was called *kalu*. *Pachchá* was once used for yellow-green, this being a Tamil word for green.

151 Whereas the Veddas seemed to think of colours by a mental
171 reference to the appearance of leaves, flowers and other natural
122 objects, the Sinhalese far more usually made use of colour terms, and none distinguished as many shades as the Veddas except Tissahami, "the Vedda Arachi," whose keen comparisons make his observations worthy of record in full. Several Sinhalese likened red and purple to blood, and compared green with the colour of leaves. Tissahami was first shown the colour papers, for red he gave *ratu* and said it was like fire; yellow he said he did not know; bright green *nil*, blue-green *nil*, blue *kalu*, these three he compared to different kinds of creepers; purple he said he did not know; violet like the small stingless bee; black *kalu*; white *sudu*. He was so interested in looking at colours and comparing them that we showed him several other objects. The outside of a pig-skin pocket book he called *dumburu*, the cleaned and unpolished side of the leather he compared to clay. He was then shown the bundle of coloured wools which he examined at will, comparing and naming those he chose, a grey approaching violet he called *dumburu*; dark greyish-brown he said was like a certain kind of leaf; golden yellow like monkey's fat; a light yellow-brown like a spider's web; greenish-blue like the leaves of a particular kind of yam; a deep claret almost brown he compared to the bark of a tree which is chewed with areca nut and dark greyish-violet to a village potato. It seems that this man whose keen intellect we have referred to in Chapter II had retained something of the Vedda mode of thought acquired during his contact with them in his youth.

Visual Illusions

The Müller-Lyer Illusion. We used the improved apparatus made of thin xylonite (Fig. 15) devised by Dr Rivers. "One part of the apparatus slides in and out of a framework, on the upper surface of which is drawn one-half of the Müller-Lyer figure, while the other half is drawn on the moveable sliding portion. The lines of which the figure consists are only half a millimetre broad and the point of junction between the two parts of the figure corresponds with the line of junction between the two parts of the apparatus....

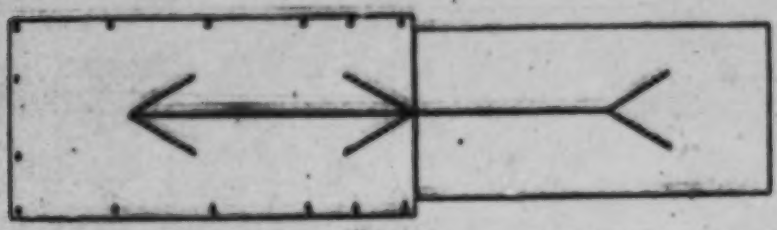


Fig. 15.

"The observer had to make five observations by sliding the moveable part in till the two lines of the figure appeared to him to be equal to one another, and then a second series of five measurements was made by drawing the sliding part outwards till the two parts again appeared equal. In the first series, the variable line was made equal to the standard by a process of shortening, in the second, by a process of lengthening the variable line[1]."

Seventeen Veddas were tested, all of whom appeared to take great interest in the matter.

The average length seen by them was 52·01 (begin long) and 52·09 (begin short). It is of interest to compare these figures with average taken from 13 Sinhalese—55·33 (begin long) and 55·7 ((begin short), as well as those taken by Dr Rivers in India.

[1] *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 1, p. 256.

C.S. Seligmann & Seligmann E-4 (1907-1908) 1911
AES Veddas AES

151 Twenty Todas gave an average of 61·2 (begin long) and 58·4 (begin short), while 28 Uralis and Sholagas, i.e. members of jungle tribes comparable in some respects with the Veddas, gave an average of 57·2 (begin long) and 53·4 (begin short).

One Vedda, who first gave 75, i.e. did not see the illusion, afterwards gave 61·54, 51·58. The most correct measurements were given by Vela, 66, 64, 63, 74, 72, average 67·8 (begin long), and 65, 65, 67, 69, 72, average 67·6 (begin short). In many instances although the men were interested and apparently trying their best each time the results in all their five attempts showed great variations. Among the Sinhalese, on the other hand, the results from separate individuals were often remarkably constant, one man giving 58, 58, 56, 60, 59, and another 60, 56, 57, 57. The average of 16 Sinhalese gave 55·3 (begin long) and 55·7 (begin short). The averages of the mean variations (M.V.) of Veddas and Sinhalese are as follows:

Veddas		Sinhalese	
Begin long	Begin short	Begin long	Begin short
3·3	3·1	3·2	2·5

Other Illusions. A number of illusions were shown to Veddas and Sinhalese. Colour after effects were in general seen very clearly as were the parallel line illusions numbered B. 3 and B. 4 in the Milton-Bradley collection. A number of Sinhalese peasants were especially interested in these parallel lines, working out the explanation for themselves; they were also interested in the illusion numbered C. 5, consisting of two curved pieces of cardboard of the same shape and of equal size which looked of very different size when placed side by side. The general explanation of these illusions offered by the jungle-dwelling Sinhalese was that their eyes were defective. The results obtained by showing equal black and white squares on white and black grounds were by no means constant.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

Tactile Discrimination.

The threshold for the tactile discrimination of two points was tested by the method devised by Dr W. McDougall, and used by him in Torres Straits[1]. 151

Preliminary observations on Sinhalese in which they were told after each test whether they were right or wrong suggested that this practice led to speculation on their sensations, their subsequent answers being influenced by inference and judgment. Accordingly neither Veddas nor Sinhalese were told whether their answers were right or wrong.

The areas of skin tested were:

(1) The middle of the flexor surface of the left forearm, the points being applied in a longitudinal direction.

(2) The nape of the neck, the points being applied transversely and about equidistant from the middle line.

(3) The palm or surface of the terminal phalanx of the left index finger, the points being applied longitudinally.

Our observations which were made on 12 Veddas and the same

[1] This method has been described by Dr Rivers (*op. cit.*, pp. 363, 364) as follows: "The important feature of this method is that the area of the skin which is being tested is touched with one point just as often as with two points. If stimulations with one point are only occasionally interspersed between the stimulations with two points so that the latter are given more frequently, the results are almost certain to be biased. If the observer either knows or thinks that he is being touched with two points more frequently than with one point, he will tend in cases of doubt, to answer 'two' more often than 'one.' The error thus introduced can only be eliminated by an absolute equality in the number of single and double stimulations.

"The compass points were applied at a distance from one another decidedly greater than the probable threshold, and the distance between them gradually diminished till the two points were no longer recognised as two. Twenty stimulations were made at each distance at which any error occurred, ten stimulations with one point, and an equal number with two points. The distance taken as the threshold is that at which two mistakes in ten occur in each kind of stimulation....

"A man who called two points 'one' twice and one point 'two' three times at a given distance would be rejected at that distance, and the distance next above it would be regarded as the threshold.

"When the skin was touched with one point only, this was applied in the neighbourhood of one or other of the spots touched in the double stimulations."

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

/51 number of Sinhalese showed that on the whole the tactile sensibility of the two races was equal; further no member of either race showed any great variation from his fellows.

	Forearm mm.	Nape mm.	Finger mm.
Vedda average	55	279	29
mean variation (M.V.)	5·8	11·7	0·6
Sinhalese average	50	30	2·6
mean variation (M.V.)	1·3	6·3	0·6

Sensibility to Pain.

The degree of sensitiveness to pain of both Veddas and Sinhalese was tested by means of the modification of Cattell's algometer used by Rivers and Head[1], which differs from the original in that the spring is extended instead of compressed. "It consists of an ebonite rod 9 mm. in diameter, with smooth, somewhat flattened hemispherical head, which slides within a large ebonite rod against the resistance of a spiral spring. The larger rod is grasped by the operator, and the end of the smaller rod applied perpendicularly to the skin and a steadily increasing pressure made until the subject cries 'Stop.' A brass pin projecting from the smaller rod pushes an index up a scale which is attached to the larger rod and graduated in kilograms. The degree of pressure exerted can then be read from the index after removing the instrument from the skin[2]." Our subjects were instructed to cry out directly they began to feel any pain, the algometer always being applied by the same observer who endeavoured to increase the pressure at a constant rate.

The areas chosen for application of the algometer were:

(i) the centre of the nails of the thumb and index of each hand;

(ii) the sternum, pressure being applied over the manubrium to corresponding spots on each side of the middle line;

(iii) above the knee, the subject being seated with the knee

[1] *A Human Experiment in Nerve Division.* Brain 1908.
[2] *Expedition to Torres Straits*, Vol. II, p. 134.

1; Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX3 Vedda AX5

best at right angles and pressure being applied in the centre of the limb immediately behind the knee-cap. 151

It has been pointed out by Dr Rivers that there is danger that "some individuals might regard the experiment as a test of the power of enduring pain, and might not speak till they had experienced pain for some time and could bear it no longer[1]." We were fully alive to this, and while one observer applied the algometer the other would often watch for the slight involuntary flinching which in many of our subjects—especially in the Veddas—marked the threshold of pain. As will be seen by the figures given below the threshold was consistently lower for the Veddas than for the Sinhalese. The Veddas were undoubtedly more interested in the experiment than the Sinhalese, and the flinching accompanying the onset of pain was more frequently noted in the former than in the latter. Nevertheless we consider that the difference in the figures is not due to carelessness or misapprehension on the part of the Sinhalese, but indicates a real difference in sensibility to pain in the two peoples. Were this not the case we should expect to obtain considerable variations in the same individual in the figures given by pressure on symmetrical areas; such variations are, however, quite rare.

We tested 21 Veddas and 18 Sinhalese, with the results shown in the following table:

	Thumb		Forefinger		Sternum		Above Knee	
	R.	L.	R.	L.	1 (L.)	4 (R.)	R.	L.
Veddas (21) average	4·3	5·8	5·71	5·6	5·8	4·1	6·2	6·1
" " M.V.	·15	·09	·6	·5	·5	·1	·1	·7
Sinhalese (18) average	5·3	5·3	5	5·8	5·3	5·3	10·3	9·3
" " M.V.	1·3	·4	1·3	·6	·06	·06	·06	·4

With a single exception (the forefinger in the Sinhalese) the thresholds are higher on the right side than on the left.

[1] *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 1, p. 372.

Lifeligmann & Seligmann 3-4 (1907-1908) 1811
AXI Veddas AXI

151 Dr Rivers' experiments upon the Todas gave the same result and led him to conclude that the threshold is slightly higher on the right than on the left side. In coming to this conclusion he took into account a set of control experiments in which the left side was first stimulated; it will be noticed in the above table that the left side of the sternum was the first stimulated[1].

Smell.

No attempt was made to determine the olfactory acuity of the Veddas, but our experiments with scents suggested to us that this was not specially well developed. Certainly the Henebedda Veddas suffered no inconvenience from the objectionable smell which arose round the Bendiyagalge rock-shelters after a few days' occupation, nor did they seek to [364] diminish this smell, which was due to the lack of the most elementary sanitary precaution.

The following scents were offered to a number of Veddas at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, Godatalawa, Sitala Wanniya and Unuwatura Bubula: civet, camphor, jasmine, *peau d'Espagne*, tonquin, orris, assafoetida, peppermint, verbena, crategine, chloroform, Lin. terebinthinae aceticum (B.P.), chloral, and eau de Cologne. The men examined were Tuta of Henebedda (1), Kaira of Henebedda (2), Poromala Walaha (3), Kaira (bearded) of Henebedda (4), the Vidane of Bandaraduwa (5), Banda of Bandaraduwa (6), a number of men of Godatalawa (7), Kaira of Sitala Wanniya (8), Handuna and Nila of Sitala Wanniya (9), Naida and Appu of Unuwatura Bubula (10), Tambia (11), Banda (12).

In most cases their opinions were taken down separately, but 151 at Unuwatura Bubula and Godatalawa the scents were passed 9.01 round and the general opinion of our informants recorded. The Veddas were always interested in examining the scents, but though they said a number of the odours were good they

[1] In his paper in the *British Journal of Psychology* Dr Rivers discusses at some length the possible fallacies of the method described.

seldom showed any emotion of pleasure: on the other hand their demonstrations of dislike were unmistakable. When a scent appeared to them particularly distasteful they invariably held their noses and cleared their throats, but we do not remember seeing them spit. It will be noticed that there is a great variation of opinion, and even such a distinct odour as civet is considered by some very pleasant and by others extremely disagreeable. Again the same simile "squeezed orange skin" was used by different men referring to such unlike scents as civet and peppermint, and while in the first instance it was considered good, in the second it was thought unpleasant. The men of Godatalawa compared camphor to the flowers of the *na* tree (*Mesua ferrea*), calling it a good scent, while Kaira of Sitala Wannlya said assafoetida was a very bad scent like *na* flowers, and assured us that he disliked the scent of the *na* flower intensely. Except such well known flowers as this and that of the *mara* tree we were unable to identify any of the flowers mentioned as they were nearly all out of season.

Civet. Good, wild boar's fat (1), good, squeezed orange skin (3), not good (4), very bad, like faeces (5); good, like burning (6); good, like a flower smell (7); bad, like *halle* flower (8); like wax of tree *hambara* (9); good, like leopard fat (10); bad, like faeces (11); bad, like faeces (12).

Camphor. Good (1); good (3); bad, like squeezed orange (4); bad (5); good (6); very good, like smell of *na* flowers (7); good, like *hoal* flower (8); good, like a kind of lime (9); good, like medicine (10); very bad (11); sour, bad (12).

Jasmine. Good smell, monkey fat (1); good, like smell of mangoes (3); like honey of *bulumal* (4); bad (5); very slight smell and not good (6); not good, like *kapumal* (? *Eriodendron anfractuosum*) (7); good, like *mimbuto* flower (8); like young oranges, good (9); bad, like pig fat (10); not good (11); doubtful (12).

Pous d'espagne. Doubtful, like betel leaves (1); good (3); good, like *meramal* honey (4); doubtful, partly good (5); too strong (6); like coconut spirit (7); good, like *hiala* honey (8); good, like orange (9); bad, like bear's fat (10); good (12).

Tamarin. Good, like bear's fat (1); like the fat of the monitor

151 lizard, good (4); good (5); good (6); very good, like *jak* fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) (7); *mahulai* fruit, good (8); like honey, good (9); bad, like bear's fat (10); good (11); bad (12).

Ovris. Good, lime peel squeezed (1); good, like fat of the monitor lizard (2); not good, like squeezed orange skin (4); bad (5); like smoke (6); good, like *mahulai* (7); bad (8); bad, like *hamdun* (edible) fruit (9); bad, like elk fat (10); bad (11); very bad (12).

Assafoetida. Bad, like bear's fat (1); good (3); bad (4); bad (5); good (6); very good, like *glue* (7); bad, like *na* flower (8); bad, like *na* flower (9); bad (10); bad (11); bad, like sour lime (12).

Peppermint. Like wild boar's fat (1); like pepper (2); good (3); bad, like orange skin (4); like smoke (6); good, like *epala* flowers (7); bad, like a flower (8); good, like *mahulai* fruit (9); medicine like coriander (10); bad, like burning (11); too strong, bad (12).

Verbena. Good, squeezed orange skin (3); good, like the flowers of the *mora* tree (*Nephelium longana*) (4); bad (5); no smell or very little (6); very good, like smell of oil (7); good, like *naran* flowers (8); good, like skin of lime (9); like coconut-spirit, good (10); like honey (11); bad (12).

A few jungle Sinhalese showed very much the same variations in personal likes and dislikes as the Veddas, but none of these men compared the scents to the odour of particular kinds of flowers—indeed comparisons were few—though one man who disliked the smell of assafoetida extremely called this *titai*. This word was commonly applied to the sensation produced by a solution of quinine applied to the tongue[1].

[1] We may here note the results of a very few experiments on taste. The Veddas of Henebedda (we speak especially of the young men of the community) have learnt to eat curry as "hot" and as highly spiced as that favoured by the Sinhalese—i.e. a curry for "hotter" than suits the palate of a seasoned European. These men resembled the peasant Sinhalese in calling the "hot" taste produced by pepper *kata pitamaya*, i.e. mouth burning; quinine they compared to the bitter *harawila* fruit. Sugar or anything sweet was always compared to honey by both Veddas and Sinhalese; one of the latter compared vinegar to the taste of the juice of limes.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

HEARING.

We made a number of observations on acuity of hearing; owing to the different conditions prevalent on different days and in different localities, no attempt is made to compare the results obtained from Veddas of different groups. Our observations were made with Politzer's *Hörmesser*, an instrument in which a small metal hammer strikes a metal bar and so produces a constant sound, and although no general conclusions can be drawn certain of our results seem worthy of record. Eight men of Bendiyagalge were tested immediately after each other; two of these men, judged to be under twenty, heard the sound at 8 and 10 metres respectively; four more or less middle-aged men heard it at 3 to 5 metres; and two men, Poromala (Wallaha) and his brother Handuna, both of whom we judged to be over fifty, could only hear it at one metre or less. The figures obtained with the Sitala Wanniya group though less striking point in the same direction, so that we seem justified in stating that the hearing powers of the Veddas are at their maximum during or soon after adolescence, after which they soon begin to lessen and may reach a rather low level while the individual is still active and energetic, and before his capacity as a hunter is noticeably diminished. None of the older men with a low auditory acuity had given us any reason in daily intercourse to suspect that their hearing was less acute than that of their younger comrades. We several times noted the very great influence of the position of the head, and we soon allowed our subjects to stand with the head in any comfortable position in which they could not see the *Hörmesser*, which was clicked behind them as nearly as possible at right angles to a plane passing through both shoulders. Under these conditions a Vedda of Danigala, with his head turned so that his left ear was inclined towards the *Hörmesser*, could hear four out of five clicks at 16 metres, though with his head facing directly away from the *Hörmesser* he could only doubtfully hear anything at 8 metres, and could not definitely hear the sound at a greater distance than 5 metres.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 Our observations on Sinhalese were very limited, but led us to consider that the acuity of hearing of the peasant Sinhalese between the ages of 30 and 40 did not excel that of Europeans, for although a few individuals had a higher acuity than ourselves, the majority fell below us.

Enumeration.

802 184 This is a convenient place to refer to the question of counting. With regard to village Veddas our observations confirm the experience of others that the village Veddas have adopted the Sinhalese numerals, which they use correctly, at least up to 20, but we cannot say whether they are equally accurate when using higher numbers. This facility in counting is not found among the wilder Veddas whose method among themselves on the rare occasions on which they wish to express a definite number is to take small pieces of stick and lay them on one side saying as each stick is put down *ekamai* "that is one." Beyond this the wilder Veddas have a slight knowledge of the meaning of the Sinhalese words for the lower numbers. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya made no difficulty in picking out 2, 3, or 4 pieces of stick from a heap on being given the Sinhalese number; the Sinhalese words for 5 or 6 (though he said he knew them perfectly well) led to hesitation and sometimes to failure in picking out the correct number, while larger numbers obviously failed to convey any precise idea to him. Although we interrogated only two other elderly Veddas of the wilder groups on this matter the results we obtained from them were so like those given by Handuna that we do not hesitate to accept his behaviour as typical of the old members of the less sophisticated groups of Veddas, and in support of this view we may refer to p. 33 on which we have stated the information given on this point by a very old Sinhalese informant. We do not attribute the Vedda inability to count to any lack of intelligence but simply to their having little need to be pretty in the matter of numbers[1].

[1] For further information concerning this point cf. *Ancient Ceylon*, pp. 88 and 89.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XVII

CONCLUSIONS

In the first chapter we have given an account of those facts in the history and pre-history of Ceylon which must be taken into account in any investigation of the Veddas, and we referred (p. 27) to the common Sinhalese belief that the Veddas were once rich and powerful. We stated that we could find no adequate reason for this belief, which is held only by the Sinhalese and is dismissed with contempt by all Veddas. It seemed to us that we had said enough on the subject, but the appearance of Mr Parker's recent work, *Ancient Ceylon*, which must always remain authoritative for much which concerns the Island, has persuaded us of the necessity for stating at greater length the reasons for our opinion. 174 114

Mr Parker's views on the subject of the former civilisation of the Veddas will be found on pp. 103 to 112 of *Ancient Ceylon*, and we cannot do better than begin our argument by quoting a considerable part of pp. 111 and 112 in which he both states the problem and summarises his views as to its solution.

"In dealing with the position of the Vaeddas, we are faced with this difficulty—that a portion of the race was relatively civilised in ancient times, while certain members of it are found at the present day almost in the state occupied by some of the most primitive peoples. We must adopt a theory which will include all the facts of the case; and not one which ignores some of the most important and significant and incontrovertible historical details and traditions. We cannot select the smallest and wildest group of Vaeddas, and because of their simple life as hunters place the whole race in the position which they con-

[p. 413]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 tinue to occupy...partly by accident and partly of their own free
114 choice.

"My conclusion therefore is that whether there has been any retrogression of the present Forest Vaeddas from a certain low state of civilisation or not, in very early times a great part of the race had reached a much more advanced state of culture than the wilder members of it, whose more or less isolated life either as hunters, or as hunters-and-villagers, did not in many cases induce them to feel any desire to participate in it. This more civilised portion has absorbed the Gangetic settlers, and acquired their status and language, and with some intermixture of Dravidian blood, or in many instances without it, has become the existing Kandian Sinhalese race.

"The ancestors of the present few hunting Vaeddas—who now most probably number much less than one hundred—either abandoned, some centuries after Christ, a form of village life in which they were partly or chiefly hunters, and reverted to the forest life of their forefathers; or, like some of the wild hunting tribes of the South Indian hills, remained, at least until very recent years, in nearly the original condition of the first comers to Ceylon, apparently simply because they preferred the free untrammelled life in the woods, and found their accustomed habits and household articles suited to all the requirements of a hunter's existence in the forests of Ceylon. The evidence afforded by the caves appears to me to be in favour of the former theory, which is also supported by the loss of their original language and their adoption of the Sinhalese tongue.

"The majority, however, of those who did not coalesce with the Gangetic settlers and their descendants, or accept their mode of life and culture, have, in comparatively modern times, and in certain instances partly through compulsion—since portions of the forests in which they were accustomed to hunt have been cut down in order to permit rice and millet cultivation—to some extent adopted the more civilised existence of their neighbours. Many keep buffaloes, and all but those few who live only by hunting and fishing, grow millet and other plants suited to their jungle clearings. An exceptional few in favourable sites for it even cultivate rice, and, as some of them informed me, in recent

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

years have settled down permanently and have planted such fruit trees as Coconuts, Areka-nuts, and Plantains about their houses." 174 114

Mr Parker admits such intercourse between the races as is necessary to allow intermarriage and a considerable amount of social contact-metamorphosis, so that we are in complete agreement with him concerning the "majority" of whom he speaks in the last paragraph, and no one will doubt "that in very early times a great part of the race had reached a much more advanced state of culture than the wilder members of it." It therefore only remains to discuss his conclusions concerning those of whom he speaks as the "present Forest Vaeddas."

We hold that there can be little doubt as to which of the two hypotheses put forward by Mr Parker is the correct one, and in spite of the fact that he leans towards the opposite view we shall now proceed to summarise our reasons for believing that the few unsophisticated Veddas of the present day do in fact represent the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon.

In the first place let us consider their physical characters. Experts in comparative anatomy will turn to the work of the Sarasins to estimate for themselves the significance of the primitive osteological characters they describe; it is only necessary here to refer to the more obvious external characters in which the Veddas differ from the Sinhalese. A single glance at the photograph reproduced in Plate III shows that two men in this group differ in general appearance and in their greater stature from their comrades; these two men, as has been mentioned on p. 16, are half-breeds, as are those shown in figure 1 of Plate XIV. The younger man might pass for a Sinhalese and in features closely recalls the Kandyan Sinhalese figured by Deniker[1], who does not at all resemble the relatively broad faced and broad nosed Veddas shown in Plates III, IV, V and VII. Further, among the measurements given in Chapter I the average height of 24 male Veddas measured by the Sarasins is given as 1·55 m. (about 60⅞ inches), while the average height of 10 Kandyan Sinhalese whom they also measured is 1·61 m. or 174.

[1] *Races of Man*, 1900, p. 416.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

194 about 63½ inches[1]. We may also refer to the measurements of Sinhalese made by M. Emile Deschamps and given in his book [113] *Au Pays des Veddas* (pp. 464 and 465). M. Deschamps has informed us that his measurements were all made on Kandyans, among whom he found that the average height of 16 males was 1·60 m. (about 63 inches) while the average cephalic index of 14 males was 75·9.

On the cultural side the evidence, though less obvious, is, we believe, no less convincing. There is as far as we can ascertain no evidence of there ever having been an organisation into exogamous clans among the Sinhalese, but there is not the least doubt that this exists among the Veddas, among whom it must therefore be considered to have arisen, and we know that this is characteristic of many of the more primitive Jungle (Dravidian) peoples of India[2]. The Vedda cult of the dead must also be looked upon as a primitive and not an adopted feature since it is found among many Indian jungle tribes. There is no need to labour this point since the information given us by Mr Parker and quoted on pp. 14 and 142 indicates, not that the Vedda cult of the dead is derived from Bandar worship, but that this has arisen among the Sinhalese from a cult previously existing in Ceylon. These considerations seem to us to put beyond doubt the fact that the present day Veddas are the lineal descendants in culture as well as in physique of the early (Dravidian) people who inhabited Ceylon, before it was colonised by an Aryan-speaking people, though they do not rebut the "evidence afforded by the caves" (Parker *loc. cit.*) or explain the adoption by the Veddas of the Sinhalese language.

The caves, however, do not seem to us to present any insuperable difficulty. A very small number of caves or rock

[1] We may here quote the opinion of Mr Edgar Thurston who, on looking at a number of photographs of Veddas, made the remark that he should not have known them from photographs of members of a number of Indian Jungle Tribes.

[2] This is not the place to discuss the meaning of the term "Dravidian" or the Dravidian problem; we use the term to signify the short, dark, dolichocephalic peoples of the Deccan. Dr Haddon considers that the Veddas should be classed with the Kurumbas, Irulas and some other Jungle Tribes of the Deccan as pre-Dravidians (*Races of Man*, pp. 7 and 13).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

shelters have been excavated, and although the drip-ledges and other signs of stone working on those we have ourselves examined indicate that they were inhabited by Sinhalese about 2000 years ago, there are doubtless many others which were not used in this way, and we see no difficulty in believing that when, during the efflorescence of Buddhism, these caves were inhabited by monks, those Veddas who were not drawn within the ever widening circle of Sinhalese influence withdrew to other shelters in the wilder parts of the country, their descendants, who had preserved their independence in the jungle, returning in time to what is now the Vedirata and re-occupying the caves. It was not perhaps necessary for the Veddas to migrate to another part of the country; this at least is Mr Parker's view, who holds that it "is clear that in many instances little establishments of only two or three monks must have occupied the caves on some of the most secluded of these hills, buried in the depths of the dense forests of the wildest parts of the Island. In such sites the aborigines could have regained possession of their caves with ease and impunity, and with practically no fear of punishment by the Sinhalese authorities. In the histories also, there is no hint of any quarrels with the natives after the time when Pandukabhaya became king[1]."

We believe that there is nothing *a priori* improbable in these views, and the records of "wild" Veddas all through historic times show that there was always some part of the country so thinly settled as to allow them to persist as a jungle tribe.

We come now to the question of language. Mr Parker's translations of the invocations we collected, and Mr Gunasekara's examination of our vocabularies and songs, indicate that no trace of the old Vedda language has survived. This does not, however, prove that the Veddas who were the ancestors of the present "wild" Veddas were a highly civilised race who had adopted all the customs of their Aryan-speaking neighbours; it is generally admitted that a people may adopt a foreign language while retaining its old customs and without greatly altering its old method of life.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 31.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 171 The case of the Bhumij of Western Bengal is particularly illuminating. "Here a pure Dravidian race have lost their original language and now speak only Bengali. They still retain a set of totemistic exogamous sub-divisions closely resembling those of the Mundas and the Santals. But they are beginning to forget the totems which the names of the sub-divisions denote, and the names themselves will probably soon be abandoned in favour of more aristocratic designations. The tribe will then have become a caste in the full sense of the word, and will go on stripping itself of all customs likely to betray its true descent. The physical characteristics of its members will alone survive[1]." Further, "some of the leading men of the tribe, who call themselves Bhuinhars, and hold large landed tenures on terms of police service, have set up as Rajputs, and keep a low class of Brahmans as their family priests. They have, as a rule, borrowed the Rajput class titles, but cannot conform with the Rajput rules of intermarriage, and marry within a narrow circle of pseudo-Rajputs like themselves[2]." The rest of the tribe, numbering at the last census 370, 239, are divided into a number of exogamous groups, which include the Sabusi (*sal* fish), the Hansda (wild goose), the Lang (mushroom), Sandiliya (a bird) and Hemron (areca palm) clans.

174 Mr Parker (*op. cit.* p. 96) lays some stress on "the fact" that the Veddas "understand and use" the "classical expression" Nirindu "chief of men" which occurs in an invocation (Chapter X, No 16) we obtained from the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya. We may perhaps point out that very many expressions occur in the invocations given in Chapter X which the Veddas do not understand at all, or to which they attach a secondary and incorrect meaning. That the expression is classical and is "never employed in modern colloquial Sinhalese" is not surprising, for as we have shown in Chapter XV the time at which the Veddas gave up their own language and assumed the Sinhalese is relatively remote, so that their charms and invocations may reasonably be expected to contain archaic expressions. We may also refer to the passage (already quoted on p. 417) from Mr Parker's

[1] H. H. Risley, *People of India*, p. 74.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 94, 95

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

work in which he speaks of the existence of small and scattered Buddhist establishments in the midst of the jungle in which the Veddas still lived. We can imagine no condition more favourable for the passage of classical expressions and formulae into the Vedda language and religion.

The use of rice and coconuts in the offerings to the *yaku* also demands discussion. We have shown that many of the *yaku* ceremonies are essentially acts of communion uniting the living with the spirits of the dead, and we have hinted our belief that the reason for rice and coconut being almost essential parts of the offering is that they are the foods of which the Veddas are especially fond and which they regard as great delicacies. It is, however, obvious that there might be another reason for the almost constant offering of these foods; if we regard the Veddas as having fallen from a higher state in which they were cultivators then the necessity of offering just these foods to the *yaku* would be a survival from the times when rice and coconuts were offered by the civilised ancestors of the present day Veddas.

This period might theoretically coincide either with the time referred to in the Mahawansa when equal thrones were set up at Anuradhapura by king Pandukabhaya for himself and "the yakkha chief Citta[1]," or it might have been long before the time of the conquest of Ceylon by the northern invaders, in which event it must be assumed that the Veddas learnt to cultivate rice and to grow coconuts from the Nagas or some other immigrant race.

Concerning these two possibilities we can only say that we have already on pp. 9 and 10 stated our views as to the significance of the elevation of the chief Citta and the political organization of his followers. With regard to the possible origin of the offerings of rice and coconut in the times before the invasion, the Nagas doubtless exercised some influence on the aborigines among whom they settled, yet there is every reason to believe that outside Nagadipa, this influence was not widely spread throughout the Island, at least in any developed form.

The Mahawansa differentiates very clearly between Nagas

[1] *Op. cit.* Ch. x, p. 43.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 and Yakkas and the conditions it chronicles at the conquest seem to us to indicate the existence of a wild jungle people such as we know existed at the time when Europeans first came in contact with the Sinhalese.

We take this opportunity of alluding to the following literary evidence which shows the existence of a jungle people in Ceylon in the 4th, 7th, and 11th centuries.

Tennant has drawn attention to the treatise *De Moribus Brachmanorum* written in the 4th century A.D. and ascribed to Palladius. In this the author cites the account of the Βεσαδες given him by a Theban scholar who, having failed to prosper as an advocate, had turned traveller and explorer. The Theban stated that "when in Ceylon, he obtained pepper from the Besadae, and succeeded in getting so near them as to be able to describe accurately their appearance, their low stature and feeble configuration, their large heads and shaggy uncut hair—a description which in every particular agrees with the aspect of the Veddahs at the present day. His expression that he succeeded in 'getting near' them, ἐλθασα ἐγγὺς τῶν καλουμένων Βεσάδων, shows their propensity to conceal themselves even when bringing the articles which they had collected in the woods to sell[1]."

Further information concerning the Βεσαδες is given by the Sarasins (*op. cit.* pp. 578, 579) who used the Greek account in the edition of Bissaeus, ignoring the poor translation of this into Latin which Bissaeus also gives. The Theban relates "that having fallen in with some Indian trading boats which were crossing over (to Ceylon) from Axume, he sought to penetrate further into the interior (of the Island) and suddenly arrived in the vicinity of the so-called Βιθεσαδες (in this place written Θηβαιδες, doubtless in error) who gather pepper. But this people is by far the smallest and weakest, they live in rock-caves, and know how to climb over the most intricately massed rocks and thus gather pepper from the bushes; for these are small trees as the scholar informs us.....

"The Βιθεσαδες are little men, with large heads and long and

[1] Tennant, *op. cit.* Vol. 1, p. 593 n.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174

straight hair; whereas on the other hand the others, the negros (Ethiopians) and the Indians, are black and powerful, and curly haired. There, he says, I was stopped by the one in power (δυναστεύων) and asked about my business and how I dared to force my way into their land; and while they could not accept my explanation because they did not understand our language, I could not understand their questions because I did not know theirs.....Their loud voices, their bloodshot eyes, and the savage gnashing of their teeth inspired me with fear.....Held captive.....I.....did them service, the task of cooking being allotted to me."

References in Arabic and Chinese writers have also been collected by Tennant, who notes (*op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 272 n.) that in the 7th century the Chinese traveller Hioueng Thsang remarked that the "Yakkhos" had retreated to the south-east part of Ceylon, while in the first half of the 11th century the Arabic geographer, Alberuni, described the "silent trade" as carried on with the *gins* or, according to others, with men who were absolute savages.

We have already cited passages which show that there were Veddas living a free life in the jungle in the 17th century, and it can scarcely be suggested that between the 12th and 17th centuries the Veddas ceased to lead this sort of life and for a time adopted the civilisation of the Sinhalese to again lapse into wild life in the jungle about the time that European influence began to be felt in the Island.

There is one matter which seems to us more difficult to understand than any other, and which, if the Veddas had not kept up their division into exogamous clans, it would be difficult to explain otherwise than by their having at one time adopted Sinhalese habits and customs and having later reverted to a wandering jungle life. We refer to their terms of relationship which, as already set forth in Chapter III, are identical with those employed by the Sinhalese. We consider that this must be accounted for in the same way as the assumption by the Veddas of an Aryan language, and that the factors which determined this at the same time led to the adoption of the Aryan terms of relationship.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 In conclusion we may state our opinion of the relationship of the Veddas to the jungle tribes of India and to the civilised races of Ceylon. We regard them as part of the same race as the so-called Dravidian jungle tribes of Southern India. Perhaps the few surviving "wild" Veddas have altered less socially than the people of the Indian jungle groups, and are therefore to be regarded as more primitive than these, but even this is and must remain uncertain until we know more of the social life of the Indian jungle tribes. Turning to the historic races of the Island, we believe that the Kandyans and indeed all the "up country" Sinhalese have absorbed a considerable amount of Vedda blood, and that their customs have been influenced by the Veddas, who, in turn, have learned to speak an Aryan language. The Tamils do not appear to owe anything to the Veddas, though the religion of those Veddas who live in or near the Tamil zone has been influenced by the latter.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

VEDDA VOCABULARY.

192

ABBREVIATIONS.

B.	Bandaraduwa.	O. S.	Old Sinhalese.
Bl.	Bulugahaladena.	P.	Pali.
D.	Dambani.	Port.	Portuguese.
Fl.	Kaelebasa language.	R.	Rerenkadi.
G.	Godatalawa.	S.	Sinhalese.
H.	Hindi.	Sk.	Sanskrit.
Hind.	Hindustani.	T.	Tamil.
K.	Kovil Vanamai.	Tel.	Telugu.
L.	Lindegala.	Tf.	Threshing floor language.
M.	Marathi.	Tk.	Tamankaduwa.
Mal.	Malay.	U.	Unuwatura Bubula.
N.	Nilgala.	W.	Sitala Wanniya.
O.	Wannaku of Unicha.	Y.	Yaka.

GRAMMATICAL ABBREVIATIONS.

adj.	adjective.	masc.	masculine.
cf.	compare.	pl.	plural.
coll.	colloquial.	p. p. a.	past participle adjective.
f.	feminine.	p. p.	present participle.
gen.	genitive.	pres.	present tense.
imp.	imperative.	sing.	singular.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

VEDDA VOCABULARY

192. 1. **Areca-nut**, *gaiguli* B. K. Bl. L. T.; *gayiṭuli* R.; *kahatagudi* B. K. (S. *puwak*).

Gaiguli from *gai*, stone, S. *gal*, and *guḍi*, fruit, nut.

Gayiṭuli from *gayi*, stone, and *ṭuli*, that which is small (T. *ṭuli*).

Kahatagudi perhaps from S. *kahata*, astringent; cf. Sk. *kashāya* (H. and M. *khaṭṭa*), acid, and *guḍi*, *v. supra*.

2. **Areca-nut cutter**, *yamahe* Bl. from Sk. *yamaka*, a pair, an areca-nut cutter being composed of two limbs (S. *gira*). [At Bulugahaladena *yamahe* was used for betel pouch instead of the ordinary Sinhalese words *bulat paiya*.]

3. **Arm**, *adanu*, *aidanda* D. Bl.; *atula* O. (S. *ata*, *atdaṇḍa*).

Adanu. If this is the correct word, it is connected with S. *adina* (older form *adanu*), pulling, carrying, i.e. that by which carrying etc. is done; if incorrect it should be *adanda*.

Aidanda from *ad*, *at*, hand, and *danda*, staff, arm, hand (S. *atdaṇḍa*).

Atula from *at*, hand, and *tula*, Sk. *tala*, forearm. Cf. M. *tāṭa*, stem, stalk and S. *atula*, palm.

4. **Arrow**, *aude* T.; *danda* D.; *morian hecu* Bl.; *morian hetiya* B. K.; *morian mate* K. (S. *iya*).

Aude from S. *āwudé* (Sk. *āyudha*, P. *āyudha* or *āwudha*), weapon. [*Aude* is the term applied by all Veddas except the village Veddas of Bintenne to short-handled ceremonial arrows such as are shown in Fig. 8 (page 138).]

Danda from S. Sk. and P. *daṇḍa*, stick, rod.

Morian hecu from *morian* S. *maraṇa*, killing (Sk. √*mṛi* P. and S. *maru*), and *hecu*, knife, from Sk. √*kṛit*, to cut, cf. T. *katti*.

Morian hetiya, *v. morian hecu* supra.

Morian mate, *mate* is from S. *moṭala*, arrow.

5. **Ashes**, *alu poja* D. from S. *alu*, ashes, and *poja* from Sk. and P. *puṇja*, mass, heap (S. *alu*).

6. **Ask** (*v.*), *enunuhalapa* Bl. from *enunu* M. *unēpanā*, want, *h*, *a* (indef. article) and *alapa*, to question, to speak to (M. Sk. and P. √*āḷap*). (S. *illanawā*, *asanawa*.)

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

7. Axe, *asirihatuma* W.; *gahrukiya* K. D. Bl. L. T.; *parodatula* O.; *parohatiya* B.; *parona* W.; *sambala* B.; *tarian hun* K.; *tekkiya* R. (S. *parona*). 192

Asirihatuma, lit. "a cutting instrument with a sharp side or edge," from *asiri* (Sk. *atri*), sharp side or edge, and *hatuma* (Sk. *hrit*, M. *hata*, to cut), cutter.

Gahrukiya is given by some writers as *gahruskha* and derived from *gal*, stone, *ruskha*, rubbed or sharpened, cf. H. *rugar*, rubbing. It appears to be connected with H. *kulhāri*, axe.

Parodatula from *parada* (Sk. *paraśvadha*), hatchet, battle-axe, and *tula* (Sk. *dala*, S. *tala*), piece, blade.

Parohatiya from S. *para*, axe, and *hatiya*, a short thing, i.e. the axe itself, cf. M. *hātā*, *hatahā*, T. *hattai*, that which is short.

Sambala, cf. M. *tabala*, axe.

Tarian hun from *tari*, tree (Sk. and P. *taru*), *an*, destroying (Sk. and P. *adana*), and *hun* (v. *supra*, No. 4).

Tekkiya, from Sk. *taśka*, axe.

8. Bad, *napari*, B. T.; *paherenila* D. (S. *naparu*).

Napari from Sk. *na*, not, and *paru*, heaven, i.e. hell, cf. *naraka*, hell, colloquially used in the sense of "bad" in place of *naparu* which is confined to books.

Paherenila perhaps from *paharu* (Sk. *priyakaru*), pleasant, and *nili* (Sk. *vina*), without.

9. Banana, *kolelugi* D. Bl.; *ratgudi* O. (S. *kalalugī*).

Ratgudi, lit. red-fruit, from S. *ratu*, red, and *guliya*, fruit.

10. Bat, *kadira* N. from Sk. *kritti patra*, one who has a hide (*kritti*) for its wings (*patra*), cf. Sk. *ajinapatrā*, bat (S. *vavula*).

11. Be, exist (n.), *indina* O.; *laba tibenya* Bl. (S. *innanā*, *tibenanā*).

Indina from S. *indinanā*, to sit, to be.

Laba tibenya from *laba*, having gained (existence), and *tibenya*, (it) is.

12. Beads, *galmiu* Bl.; *galwadana* B.; *velpatuta* W. (S. *pahala*).

Galmiu, lit. throat-gems, from *gal*, throat, neck (S. Sk. and P. *gala*), and *miu*, gems, beads (S. *mini*, P. *mani*, H. *manki*), or perhaps stone-gems, from S. *gal*, stone.

Galwadana, lit. string of stones, from S. *gal* and *wadana*, string.

Velpatuta from *vela*, S. *vasla*, creeper, slender cord (M. *vēla*,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

Sk. *vallī*), *pate* (S. *paṭa*, *paṭi*), of a single string, and *ata*, S. *aṭa*, bone, seed, bead.

13. **Bear** (*Melursus ursinus*), *hatova* W.; *hovia*, N. G. U. D. B. L. R. T.; *hori hande* K.; *malaptulahana* O.; *mallaṭa* L. (S. *valahā*).

Hatovā, lit. enemy (S. *hatova*, Sk. *hatru*).

Kori hande, lit. black-bodied one, *hori*, T. *hori* (Sk. *kṛishṇa*), black; *hande*, who has a body (S. *handa*, P. *khandha*, Sk. *skandha*).

Malaptulahana, lit. one who throws up dust; probably referring to the habit of breaking up antheaps. *Mala*, dirt, dust (S. Sk. and P. *mala*); *pula*, throwing (Sk. *prutha*, to throw, cast); *hana*, one who.

Walhala, lit. wild dog; *wal* S. jungle, wild (Sk. and P. *vana*); *valā* is either a form of *vata* (S. *valahā*) or a derivative from H. *khālī* (Sk. *khālaka*), from which S. *halli*, dog, is probably also derived. Cf. Sk. *khaṭaka*, barker, dog. Nevill notes that *halā* and *vala* are also used for bear.

14. **Beard**, *handuke* Bl. perhaps from S. *hana* (Sk. and P. *hana*), body hair, and *huca* (Sk. and P. *puccha*), tail (S. *vacuvala*).

15. **Beautiful**, *rana* B. (S. *rana*).

16. **Become possessed** (*v.*), *anunnana* L.; *murtavana* O.; *yakanna* B. (S. *yakīnvanakenavā*).

Anunnana from *anuni*, demoniacal possession (Sk. *āvēśa*), and S. *unavā*, to become.

Murtavana from Sk. *mūrchā*, fainting, swooning.

Yakanna from *yaka*, spirit, and *ana* (S. *vanakenavā*), to be seized or covered.

17. **Bee**, (i) *hainhara* (*Apis indica*), *hande pali* Bl.; *hande arini* Bl. (S. *halikhavā*).

Kande pali; *hande* from S. *gandha*, scent, perfume, and *pali* (Sk. and P. *ali*), black bee. Possibly *pali* is a compound of *pa*, to drink, and *ali*, i.e. the bee that drinks perfumes. Cf. Sk. *gandhana*, a large black species of bee.

Kande arini; *hande*, cf. *supra*, *arini*, who takes (S. *hara*, Sk. *hṛi*, to take, to carry). [Mr Gunasekara points out that this expression may also mean "one who lives in the hollow (S. *arupa*) of a trunk (S. *hatida*)." If this explanation be correct *hande*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

arini cannot refer to *bambara*, for these never build their comb in holes, and when they build in trees their comb is always hung under a branch.] 192

(ii) stingless bee (*Trigona sp.*), *poti* Bl., perhaps akin to S. *poṭawā* or Sk. *pōta*, a young one (S. *pilawā*).

A bee's nest is called *mehi heligama*, "bee village" or "bee house," the nest of the *bambara* is sometimes called *maha mehi heligama*.

18. Belly, *bada* K. (S. *baḍa*).

19. Betel, *nilikola* W.; *pangirikola*, *pengirikola*, W. K. O. U. D. Bl. L. R. T. (S. *bulat*).

Nilikola, lit. "dark green" or "dark-coloured leaves," from S. *kola*, leaves, and *nil*, this word being commonly used in Sinhalese for all dark (not black) colours including the darker tints of blue (cf. Chap. XVI, p. 400).

Pangirikola from *pangiri* (S. *paeñgiri*), acid, having zest, and *kola*. Fl. and Tl. *pēngirikola*.

20. Big, *apade kote* K.; *kudaminete* W.; *malia* D.; *mamakeke* Bl.; *metarati* B. (S. *mahā*, *loku*).

Apade kote from *apade*, vast, huge (M. *aphāṭe*), and *kota*, heap, mass (S. *goḍa*).

Kudaminete from *kuda* (Sk. *khaṇḍa*), a multitude, or Sk. *gaṇḍa*, mass (S. *goḍa*), and *minete*, measuring or measurement (S. *minita*).

Malia from *ma*, big (S. *mā*, *maha*), and *alia*, elephant (S. *aliyā*). Cf. S. *maha ali* (adj.), very large.

Mamakeke from *mama*, very big, and *akeke*, one.

Metarati, a contraction of *mevitaraeti*, from S. *me*, this, *viṭar*, size, and *aeti*, will be.

21. Bird, *cappi* D. Bl.; *kurula* T.; *sakeleo* O.; *sappi*, *sappia*, *sappeo*, N. W. G. K. L. R. (S. *kurullā*).

(i) Hawk, *capi* D.; *māil* G.; *velina* N. W. O. (S. *ukussā*).

Māil; Mr Parker suggests that this word may perhaps be derived from T. *mayilai*, grey or ash colour.

Velina, lit. "the crooked-nosed one" from S. *weli*, crooked, and *na*, nose; cf. Sk. *vakranāsikā*, owl, from *vakra*, crooked.

(ii) Owl, *bakumuna*, *bakuna* G.; *bakutuang kaneke* O.; *velina* N. (S. *bakamunā*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

Bakumuna, lit. "one having a large face," from S. *baka*, large, *mūnā*, having a face.

Kakutuang kaneba, lit. "he who eats lizards," from P. *kakaṭuka*, lizard, *ng* being the ending of the accusative plural.

Velina, cf. Hawk, *supra*.

22. **Bite** (*v.*), *dothecamande kerenya* D. from *dot*, teeth (S. *daṭ*), *hea* (S. *haetiya*), knife or blade, *mande*, with middle, and *kerenya*, to do; the expression would literally mean "to make (it) come between the teeth" (S. *wihanawā*, *haṭanawā*).

23. **Black**, *kaluipoja* D. (S. *kalu*), *v.* p. 391.

24. **Blacksmith**, *talabacanaas* Bl., lit. one who hammers and welds, from *tala*, having hammered, or who beats (S. *taḷa*), and *bacana*, which may be connected with Sk. and P. *pacha*, to cook, melt (S. *ächäriyā*).

25. **Blood**, *lepoja* D. Bl. from S. *le*, blood, and *poja*, *v.* p. 391 (S. *lē*, older form *leha*).

26. **Body**, *angapoja* K.; *enge* Bl.; *kanda* Tk. (S. *aṅga*, *kanda*, Sk. *śarīraya*).

Angapoja from S. *aenga* and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

Enge from *aenga*.

27. **Bone**, *aca* O.; *atepoja* K. D. (S. *aṭa*).

28. **Bow**, *donda* R.; *dunne* B. K.; *ikple* W.; *malaliya* D. Bl. L.; *mandaliya* Tk. (S. *dunna*).

Donda from Sk. and P. *hīdaṇḍa*, bow, or from S. *daṇḍa*; cf. No. 4.

Dunne from S. *dunna*.

Malaliya from S. *mala*, a bow, and *liya*, a stick, rod.

29. **Bowstring**, *dundia* B.; *puriya* Tk. (S. *dunudiya*).

Dundia from S. *dunna*, bow, and *diya*, string. Sk. *jya*, bowstring.

Puriya, lit. that by which a bow is drawn from, S. *purana*, to draw a bow (Sk. √*pur*).

30. **Break**, (*v.*) *patagacena* Bl. *Puṭa* (Sk. *sphuṭ*, P. *phuṭa*, break) means lit. to cause a sound; *gacanawā* (S. *gassanawā*), to cause to strike (S. *kadanawā*).

31. **Breast**, *kepatte*, *kepota*, B. K.; *lagaca* Bl.; *tanepoja* D.; *tanya* O. (S. *laeṭṭa*, *laya*, *tanī*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

Bopatte from *bo* (M. *pōta*), heart, and *patte* (M. *pattia*), surface, exterior part.

Lageea from S. *la*, breast, and *gena*, which appears to be corrupted from S. *paette*, side.

Tanpoja, *tanye*, applied at Bulugahaladena to the female breast, is derived from S. *tanū* and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

32. Bring (*v.*), *anohalagena mangaeana* D.; *enawarin* B.; *humbeta mangaenawa* Bl.; *uengena* K. (S. *genenawā*).

Anohalagena mangaena, lit. to come, having taken things, from (S.) *anohala*, things, *gena*, having taken, and *mangaena*, to come.

Enawarin, lit. "come having taken." *Ena* from *gena*, *v. supra*, and *warin* from S. *warun*, come.

Humbeta mangaenawa from *humbeta*, to this place, here (S. *mohata*), and *mangaenawa*, to come.

Uengena from *ua*, S. *ussā*, having lifted, and *gena*, to bring.

33. Buffalo, *amberawasa* L.; *madaya* U.; *manya* G. L.; *miwa* N. O.; *okma* N.; *tanikura* T.; *wadena* Bl.; *walmanya* K. (S. *minā*).

Amberawasa, lit. horn-bearing calf or bull, from *am*, S. *ag*, horn (Sk. *śringa*, P. *singa*), *bera*, S. *bara*, bearing (Sk. and P. *bhara*), and *wasa*, S. *vassā* (Sk. *vatsa*, P. *vaccha*), calf, bull. *Wasa* may also be derived from H. *bhaisā*, buffalo. Fl. *umbarwwā*, buffalo.

Madaya is the low-country Sinhalese for a young lusty bull, Sk. *madagama*, buffalo.

Manya appears to be a corruption of *madaya*.

Miwa, Sk. *mahisha*, P. *mahisa*.

Okma, Sk. *ukshan*, ox, bull.

Walmanya; *wal*, wild, and *manya*, a corruption of *madaya*, *v. supra*.

34. Build (*v.*), *mandaherenawā* Bl., lit. to make a hut, from *manda*, hut, small shed (S. *mahdu*), and *harenawā*, to do, to make (S. *hadanawā*, *tevanawā*).

35. Burn (*v.*), *pucahadal* D. from S. *pucā*, *pukssa*, burning, and *dal*, flame, blaze (S. *dennawā*, *pucanawā*).

36. Bury (*v.*), *bimpoja patagaeala* D.; *metedaman* L.; *paiga dennapunu* B. (S. *mahalanawā*).

Bimpoja patagaeala is derived from *bimpolgu*, earth, ground, and *patagaeala*, digging.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mitidaman, cf. M. *mātī ditī*, to bury a corpse. This word may be explained as *mata*, earth (S. *mati*), and *daman*, to put (S. *damanaya*), i.e. to put earth over a corpse. In Sinhalese *mati-damanaya* is not used in the sense of to bury.

Puiga damapanna from *puiga*, dead body (H. and Sk. *pūti*), and *damapanna*, throwing away.

37. Butterfly, *ammalayā* D. from S. *ammalayā*, and *eyyā*, bird (S. *ammalayā*).

38. Buy (v.), *Hingalaging ambala gannna* Bl.; *ridīpara ambalala matīkata* D. (S. *mīlīya*, or *mīlīmalaya*, *gannaya*).

Hingalaging ambala gannna, lit. "to take *ambala* from the Sinhalese." *Hingalaging* is derived from *sinhalayāgana*, *hingala* being commonly substituted for *sinhala* by the peasant Sinhalese of the Veddas, and *gannna* (S. *gannaya*) means "to take."

Ambala is probably connected with the M. word *ambāla*, valuables, trifles, small articles.

[This expression was generally stated to mean both "to buy" and "to sell" and this is doubtless correct, for so far as the Veddas were concerned both operations were but aspects of bartering with Sinhalese traders.]

Ridīpara ambalala matīkata. Mr Parker considers this expression means "having given silver coins for my thing"; *matīkata* appears to be compounded of *magē* (often pronounced *mayi*) and *ekata*, "for my one."

39. Cave, *gulge* B.; *galkalala* B. (S. *gulgē*, *gulgulāwa*).

Galkalala from S. *gal*, stone, and *kalala* (M. *khalalaya*), cave, den.

40. Centipede, *ratya* N., lit. the red one (S. *rat*, Sk. *rakta*, P. *ratta*, red). In S. too, *rattayā* is used to signify centipede (S. *rattayā*).

41. Charcoal, *dalgaja* D. (S. *alguru*, *dalā*) from S. *dalā*, burnt, black, charcoal, and *gaja*, s. p. 391.

42. Child, *hinata* D.; *kalala* Bl.; *kalawana* K.; *pati* Tk. (S. *kumāyā*, *putā*).

Hinata from S. *kin*, little, and *ata*, one who is (S. *atā*, Sk. *atā*, is to be).

Kalala from S. *kalala*, flower bud.

Kalawana from S. *ka*, tender (Sk. *kala*), and *daruma* (S. *daruwā*), child.

Pati, cf. S. *putā*, child, and Sk. *pōta*, the young of any animal.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

43. Chin, *hata* W.; *tale* O. (S. *nihata*).
Hata, v. No. 133.
Tale, cf. Sk. and P. *talu*, palate.

44. Claw, *kurapaja* D.; *sapige hakul* K. (S. *nya*, *nyapatta*).
Kurapaja from S. *kura*, hoof, foot, and *paja*, v. p. 391.
Sapige hakul from S. *hakul*, feet, and *sapige*, of a bird (v. p. 394).

45. Cloth, *konam* Bl. L.; *konam paja* R.; *pilala* W.; *watre* O. (S. *pili*, *redda*, *vata*).
Konam, T. *kōvaṇam*, Sk. *kaupina*, a strip of cloth worn over the pudenda.
Konam paja, v. *supra* and p. 391.
Pilala, cf. Sk. and P. *paṭa*, *paṭi*, cloth.
Watre, cf. Sk. *vastra*, P. *vattha*, cloth.

46. Cloud, *wala* K., cf. Sk. and P. *valāhaka*, cloud (S. *valāhaka*, *valāhaka*).

47. Coconut, *kanapangudiya* Tk.; *gulgudi* W. U.; *kirigudi*, *kirigudi*, *kirigujia* G. D. Bl.; *wangudia* L. (S. *pol*).
Kanapangudiya from *kana* (Sk. *kandika*), instead, *pan*, water (S. *pan*, Sk. and P. *pāniya*), and *gudiya*, fruit. This word is also used by the Kandyan Sinhalese. Cf. Sk. *kandikāphala*, coconut tree.
Kirigudi from S. *kiri*, milk, milky juice, and *gudi* (S. *guḍiya*), fruit.
Wangudia, lit. fruit with water, from *wan* (Sk. P. and S. *vana*), water, and *guḍiya*, fruit, cf. Sk. *jalaphala* (*jala*, water, and *phala*, fruit), coconut.

48. Coconut-milk, *rangkiri daluo* W., lit. "golden milk juice," *rang* (S. *rang*), golden, being used by Veddas as "excellent"; *daluo* probably means white juice from S. *dala* (P. and Sk. *dhavala*), white, and *ula* (Sk. *ulaka*), water, these words are contained to give *dalada*, whence *daluo*.

49. Cold, *angundamal* D. from *anga* (Sk. and P.), body, *anda*, cold, and *mal* a corruption of S. *hal*, time, or S. *mahal*, rainy season (S. *sisil*).

50. Come (v.), *anahala gaayayi* D.; *hamhala mangaanawa* D.; *mahala mangaapa* T.; *mitaganawa* W. L. (S. *ananā*).
Anahala gaayayi from *anahala*, things, and *gaayayi*, take. "Taking things" indicates activity and so movement towards

[12] someone or something, hence perhaps the idea of coming. Or *gayayi* may be connected with *gayayi*, approach, move, and *enehele* with M. *ikadi*, this side, here.

Hunehele [illegible] from *hunehele*, here, and [illegible], to move (v. f. n. p. 390).

Mitiganaanna from *mitu*, here, and *gaanna* ([illegible]).

51. Cook (n.), *tahanele pacahadanya* Bl. (S. *[illegible]*, [illegible]) from *tahana*, in the pan (M. *thata*, Sk. *sthala*), *hale*, having put (Sk. *ri*, to put), *pacu*, to cook (Sk. and P. *pacu*), and *hadanya*, to seethe (M. *ukada*, *hadhe*).

52. Crocodile, *enehele* O.; *pitigana*, *pitigana*, *pitigatya* N. D. Bl. (S. *hinduli*).

Mahehele, lit. he who has a large head, *mahe* S., large, and *hale* (M. *hade*), head.

Pitigana, *pitigatya*, lit. he who goes on his belly, from *pite*, belly (H. *pite*), and *gana*, that which goes.

53. Cry out (n.), *andatelipe* B.; *hergenna* Bl. (S. *hergenna*).

Andatelipe from S. *ahpe*, cry, and *telipe* (S. *telenna*), to beat, strike, speak. This seems to be the imperative form.

Hergenna from *hir* (S. *hi*), to cry, yell, and *gaanna* (S. *gaanna*), strike, make.

54. Cry, weep (n.), *hitpoja eradamala* D. (S. *ehipanna*).

Hitpoja, heart, *era*, raise (S. *era*, *eerna*, Sk. and P. *ura*, high), and *damala*, putting down. [This expression seems to refer to the motion of the thorax when sobbing.]

55. Cut with axe (n.), *gulahiying lahanna* Bl., from *gulahiying*, with the axe (v. No. 7), and *lahanna* from Sk. *vallana*, violence, or from Sk. *la*, to cut (causative form *lawyati*) (S. *[illegible]*).

56. Dance (v), *otadamanya* Bl.; *pisiami* W. (S. *[illegible]*).

Otadamanya, "to move in a circle," from *ota*, S. *vata* (Sk. *vritta*, P. *vatta*), round, and *damanya*, to jump (Sk. *jhampa*, jumping).

Pisiami, cf. Sk. *prapand*, to tremble, to quiver.

57. Deer, (i) Axis deer (*Cervus axis*), *ambera* L.; *dipatana magala* W.; *gambera podaya* W.; *hakeraya*, *hakeraa* O. D. Bl. L.; *hawa* N. U.; *mellapurunage* T. (S. *[illegible]*).

Ambera from Sk. *hambara*, deer. This word is distinct from *ambera* in No. 33 *supra*, cf. Sk. *ambarisha*, a young animal.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Dipatum magala, lit. two-antlered deer, from *de*, two, *patum*, antler, and *magala*, deer. (Sk. *mṛiga*, P. *miga*, deer, beast. Also P. *magī*, deer.) 192

Kaura probably from Sk. *gaura*, a species of deer.

(ii) Sambar (*Rusa unicolor*), *gawara* N.; *gawara magala* W. L.; *gawara hala* W.; *halia* G.; *hankuwā*, *hankuni* O. D. Bl. L. T.; *heriguna* U.; *walpengira* N. (S. *gōnā*).

Gawara may be from Sk. *gaura*, a kind of deer, or from Sk. *gavaya*, a kind of ox.

Magala, v. axis deer, *supra*.

Gawara hala from *gawara*, *gawara*, dusky white, and *hala* (Sk. P. *hala*), one who makes a jingling noise.

Halia from Sk. *sulanna*, deer.

Kankupā may mean one whose ears (S. *kan*) are dirty (S. *kupu*), or it may be connected with Sk. *karṇa-urṇa*, a kind of deer (from *karṇa*, ear, and *urṇa*, wool, i.e. one having wool in its ears). *Karṇa-ūrṇa* or its combined form *karṇorṇa* is not known to have been used in Sinhalese, and even in Sanskrit it is not a common word and is not given in Professor Wilson's Sanskrit dictionary, though *karṇa* and *urṇa* have both been used in Ceylon. ["Dirty ears" was the meaning attached to *kankupa* by the peasant Sinhalese with whom we discussed the origin of the word, the Veddas did not appear to have considered the matter. The two well-developed black patches on the concha of the sambar's ear make this name particularly appropriate.]

Kerigūna from *keri*, black, and *gonā*, buck, bull.

Walpengira from S. *wal*, wild, and *pengirā*, a young sturdy animal.

(iii) Mouse deer (*Tragulus minimus*), *agalja* N.; *dusa* N. (S. *minimā*).

Agalja, lit. one who sports about, from Sk. *ākrīda*, sporting.

Dusa, perhaps originally *pusa*, from Sk. *pṛishata*, small deer.

58. Destroy (v.), *patagaccia mando kerala damanya* D., from *patagaccia*, having broken, *mando kerala*, having made small or defective (S. *mahda*, small, defective), and *damanya*, to throw away (Sk. √*dhāna*).

59. Die (v.), *bolodamana*, *mahatadamanawa* D. Bl.; *bolagia* T.; *gia* L.; *maapu* K. (S. *mārenawā*).

Bolodamana from S. *bola*, body, and *damanawa*, to become calm.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

Miniketadamanamma from *mia*, to die (Sk. √*mṛi*), and *keta-damanamma*, v. *supra*.

Batagia from *bata* (v. *supra*), and *gia*, dead, cf. Sk. *gata*, departed, dead (√*gam*, to go); *gia* is probably a contraction of S. *malagiya*, "dead and gone." In S. *giya* is never used in the sense of dead.

Maapu from *mama*, to go; *maapu*, departed (from this world).

60. Dig (v.), *bimpaja patagamma* D. from *bimpaja*, earth, ground, and *patagamma*, to break (S. *bīrapanna*).

61. Dig a grave (v.), *pelema patagamma* Bl. from *pelema* (*pelava*), earth, and *patagamma*, v. No. 30 (S. *malak bīrapanna*).

62. Digging stick, *danda* D. (S. *dandu*).

63. Dog, *balahubba* N. T.; *bahumaya* Bl.; *huba*, *hubba* N. W. K. D. Bl. T. (S. *balla*, *hubba*).

Balahubba, lit. wild dog, from S. *wal*, wild, and *hubba*, dog.

Bahumaya from *bahu*, dog, and *maya* (Sk. and P. √*mav*, to sound), barker.

64. Door, *paragamata ruhulana ruhulai* Bl. from *paragamata*, to the house, *ruhulana*, which is fixed or attached, and *ruhulai* S., support, related to Sk. √*rakshu*, P. *rakha*, to protect, to guard (S. *dora*).

65. Drink (v.), *diapaja hewilana* D. from *diapaja*, water, and *hewilana* from *hevi*, to eat, and *la* (used as an auxiliary), put (S. *bonnanna*).

66. Drip (v.), *capi manganamma* D. from *capi*, drop (M. *tapa*, *tapaki*), and *manganamma*, v. No. 30 (S. *bindu mangenanna*).

67. Dwell (v.), *randadaman* D. from *randa*, staying, and *daman* (in), house, condition (Sk. *dhāman*) (S. *randanamma*, *nanatinanna*).

68. Ear, *kanrubula* D. Bl.; *rubulu* K. (S. *kana*).

Kanrubula, lit. that which helps hearing, from *kan* (S. *kana*), ear, and *rubula*, v. No. 73.

69. Earth, *bipa* K. (S. *bima*).

70. Eat (v.), *anaganapan* B.; *enalapu* K.; *hewilanya* Bl.; *hewilidamana* T.; *hewilan* D.

Anaganapan from S. *ana*, food (Sk. and P. *anna*), and *ganapan*, to take (probably imperative).

Enalapu from *ena*, food, and *lapu*, to eat (Sk. √*glas*, to eat, devour); *pu* in S. is an ending.

Hewilanya, from *hevi*, to eat, and S. *la*, to put, used as an auxiliary

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Kavillidamana from *kavilli*, eatables, and *damana*, to put.

Kewilan, *v. kavilanya*.

192.

71. **Egg**, *bide* **N.**; *capi bitera* **D.**; *kakula randala indinepotai* **Bl.**; *sapi biju* **W.** (S. *bijuwa*, *bijaya*).

Bide, cf. Sk. and P. *bija*.

Capi bitera from *cappi*, bird, and *bitera*, egg (S. *bittara*, corn, grain).

Kakula randala indinepotai from *kakula*, child, young, *randala indine*, staying, and *potai*, covering, receptacle (Sk. *puṭa*). *Potai* may also be from S. *potta*, shell, but it can hardly be from S. *paeṭi* (Sk. *pōta*), young one, owing to *kakula* at the beginning of the expression.

Sapi biju, lit. bird's egg.

72. **Elephant**, *botakabala* **N. W.**; *botakanda* **K. U. D. Bl. R. T.**; *gomeru uhale* **L.**; *mola* **N. G.**; *relle* **O.** (S. *aetā*, *aliyā*).

Botakabala, lit. the big-bodied one having strength, from S. *bota*, big (Sk. *brahat*), *ka*, body (S. *ka* or *kā*, Sk. and P. *kāya*), and *bala*, S., Sk. and P., strength.

Botakanda, lit. the big-bodied one, from S. *bota*, big, *kanda*, body (P. *khandha*, *skandha*).

Gomeru uhale, lit. the dusky white tall one, from S. *gōmara*, dusky white, and *uhala* (S. *uhallā*), tall one.

Mola, lit. the huge one, from S. *bola*, thickness, solidity (M. and H. *mōlā*, big).

Relle, lit. he who has wrinkles, from S. *raella*, wrinkle.

73. **Eye**, *acaldeka* **O.**; *airukula* **Bl.**; *aiyarukula* **D.**; *aslonjia* **W.**; *etel* **K.** (S. *assa*, *akse*).

Acaldeka from *acal*, eye-ball, and S. *deka*, two.

Airukula, *aiyarukula* from *ai*, *aiya*, S. *akse*, eye, and *rukula*, the meaning of which is obscure, for here it can scarcely represent the S. "support," "stay." Perhaps it refers to an attribute shared by the eye and tongue, *v.* No. 175.

Aslonjia from *as*, S. *æs*, eye, and *lonjia* (Sk. and P. *lōcana*), sight, eye.

Etel, cf. Sk. *akshigōla*, P. *akkhigōla*, eye-ball.

74. **Face**, *hosu* **K.**; *hota* **W.** from S. *hossa*, snout, mouth.

75. **Fall** (*v.*), *gulakepa* **W.**; *patagana vetigu* **Bl.**; *vetigu* **B.** (S. *vaetenawā*).

192

Gubhaṭa from *gub* (Sk. and P. √*gup*), to fall, and *haṭa*, let go (Sk. *hāṭa*, P. *hāṭa*).

Putagaṇa vaṭiga from *puta* (S. *pāta*), down (Sk. *pata*, falling), *gaṇa*, going (P. *gacchati*, goes), and *vaṭiga* (S. *vaṭinavā*), fall.

76. Far off, *mamahaṇṭ maṇgaṇaṇnā* Bl.; *mamahaṇ* D.; *ele* B.; *etamit* K. (S. *ēta*).

Mamahaṇṭ maṇgaṇaṇnā, lit. to go a great distance, from *mamaḥ*, big, great, *aṇṭ*, distance (Sk. and H. *aṇṭaḥkṣa*), and *maṇgaṇaṇnā*, to go.

Mamahaṇ from *mamaṇ*, very greatly (S. *mahamu*), and *haṇ* (Sk. *hrishṭa*), drawn away, indicating distance; *aṇ* may also be corrupted from S. *ēta*.

Ole from *ele* is an old Sinhalese word used also as a pronoun (*he*, *you*) to show respect.

Otamit, cf. Sk. *atyanta*, much, very much, or from *ot*, S. *ēta*, distant, and *mit* (S. *miti*), measurement.

77. Fear (*v.*), *aṇgaṇ damaṇya* D.; *beweri haraṇaṇnā* K. (S. *bayavenavā*).

Aṇgaṇ damaṇya, lit. to afflict the body with trembling, from *aṇgu*, body, *aṇ*, trembling (Sk. and P. *aṇ*), and *damaṇya*, to afflict (Sk. √*dama*).

Beweri haraṇaṇnā from *be*, heart, *weri*, strength (Sk. *wirya*, P. *wiriya*, S. *vīru*), and *haraṇaṇnā*, to leave, to lose (S. and P. *haru*, to take away).

78. Feather, *aṭpihaṭ* D. Bl. from *aṭṭi*, bird, and *haṭa*, leaf (S. *pihāṭa*).

79. Finger, *aṇgiliṭaja* D. from *aṇgili* (S. *aṅgili*), finger (Sk. and P. *aṅguli*), and *ṭaja*, v. p. 391 (S. *aṅgilla*).

80. Fire, *gini* K.; *gini ṭaja* D. Bl.; *ratumala* W. (S. *gini*).

Gini ṭaja from S. *gini*, and *ṭaja*, v. p. 391.

Ratumala from S. *rata*, red, and *mala* (Sk. *mālā*), group, cluster.

81. Fish, *diemaṇ*, *dia maṇja*, *dia maṇi* W. D. Bl.; *hinmaṇ* B.; *kudumaṇ*, *kudumaṇ* G. K. T. (S. *maṇ*, *mālu*).

Diemaṇ, lit. water-flesh, from S. *dia*, water, and *maṇ* (S. *maṇ*), flesh.

Hinmaṇ from S. *hin*, dead, killed, small, and *maṇ* (S. *maṇ*), flesh.

Kudumaṇ from S. *kuḍā*, small, and *maṇ*, flesh. *Kuḍu* is the ancient form of S. *kuḍā*. [Mr Parker points out that *kudumaṇ* in Sinhalese means "small fishes."]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

82. Flesh, *malu* K. (S. *mālu*).

83. Flower, *malpoja* D. from *mal*, flower, and *poja*, v. p. 391 (S. *mala*). 192

84. Fly, *nilya* K., cf. Sk. *nīlī*, a species of blue fly (S. *massā*).

85. Foot, *kura* W.; *paiapatula* Bl. (S. *paya*, *aḍiya*).

Kura, S. hoof.

Paiapatula from *paia*, S. *paya*, foot, and *patula*, surface of the foot.

86. Ghost, *newana* K., lit. one who vanishes from sight, S. *nuvana*, cf. Sk. *nirvāṇa*, vanishing from sight, disappearance (S. *avatāraya*).

87. Give, *anohalanawa* Bl.; *enohalanya* D.; *den* K. (S. *denawā*).

Anohalanawa from *anohal* (S. *ānēkala*), when necessary, and *anawā* (*hanawa*, Sk. √*hā*), to abandon, give up.

Enohalanya from *enohal*, things, and *lanya*, put.

Den from S. *dev*, give (imp.).

88. Go (*v.*), *mangacawa* D.; *mitagacapan* B.; *naman* L.; *numa* W. B. K. O.; *yanda mangacan* T. (S. *yanawā*).

Mangacawa, *v.* No. 50.

Mitagacapan from *mita* (S. *mehāṭa*), this side, and *gacapan*, go; this appears to be the imperative.

Numa appears to be connected with Sk. *nigam*, to go to, or may be a corruption of S. *yama*, go (imp.).

Yanda mangacan from *yanda* (S. *yanṭa*), to go, and *mangacan*, to move.

89. Good, *honda* D. (S. *hoṇḍa*).

90. Gun, *pucuchu* Bl., *pucuchu*, lit. one that burns, from S. *pucuna*, that which burns, and *chu*, one (S. *tuvakkuva*).

91. Hair, *iaha* D.; *icaha* K.; *issehaya poja* D.; *lombua* Bl.; *rambio* T. (S. hair of the head, *isahī*, of the body, *lom*).

Iaha from S. *iya*, head, and *hi*, hair of the head.

Icaha, probably a corruption of *iyaha*.

Issehaya poja. *Issehaya* from S. *isa*, head, and *haya* (*Kaya ?*), S. *hayya*, *heha*, Sk. *hāta*, P. *hāta*.

92. Hand, *athandia* W.; *athira* O. (S. *ata*).

Athandia from S. *at*, *ata*, hand, and *tandia*, *tuṇḍa*, *daṇḍa*, v. No. 4.

Athira from *at* and *hira*, S. *hara*, neck. Cf. S. *athara*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

Rumbu, cf. Sk. *lōma*, hair of body.

172 *Lombuna*, lit. hair tail, or flowing like a tail, from S. *loma*, hair, and *buna* (Sk. and P. *puccha*), tail.

93. Head, *inhalu*, *ishalula*, *ashalula* W. D. Bl.; *iggulua* K. (S. *hisa*, *isa*).

Ishalula from *is*, S. *isa*, head, and *halula*, skull, cover (Sk. and P. *kapāla*).

Iggulua from *gulua*, a thing like a fruit, a knot, and *igga*, from S. *isa*.

94. Hear (v.), *hanpaja mandrunna* D.; *hanrukulula bitulanya* Bl. (S. *asunawā*, *ahanawā*).

Kanpaja mandrunna from *hanpaja*, ear, *manda* (Sk. *madhya*, P. *majjha*), in the middle, and *wana* (Sk. and P. *wana*), to sound.

Kanrukulula bitulanya from *hanrukulula*, to hear, and *bitulanya*, to pervade; cf. Sk. and P. √*vinar*, pass through.

95. Hill, *gulluna* D.; *gula* K.; *hala* W. O.; *hana* T.; *handuppaja* Bl. (S. *kanda*).

Gulluna from S. *gal*, stone, and *kana*, rock (M. *kāṇā*, *khaṇḍala*, rock).

Gula from S. *guṭa* (M. *guṭṭa*, *guṭa*), a heap, lump.

Hala, cf. P. *sila*, Sk. *śaila*, hill, rock.

Hana, cf. Sk. and P. *hima*, the Himalaya mountains.

Kandupaja from S. *kanda*, group, body, and *puja*, v. p. 391.

96. Hiss (v.), *hewitat hinawā* B. from Sk. *sīrmakāra*, hissing sound, and *hinawa*, S. *hiyanawā*, to say (S. *sūgānawā*, *sū hiyanawa*).

97. Honey, *kanda arini patagunupuwā* Bl.; *kirimirinangu* O.; *massimiria* B.; *penya* K.; *ural* W. (S. *mīpani*).

Kanda arini patagunupuwā, lit. what is deposited by the bees. *Kanda arini* bees (v. No. 17), *patagunupuwā*, that which is deposited.

Kirimirinangu from *kiri* (Sk. *kshudra*), bee; S. *miri*, sweet, *n*, expletive, and S. *angu*, part, thing.

Massimiria from *matsi* (S. *mesi*, M. *māsi*), bee; *mālli* and *miria*, v. *supra*.

Penyi from T. *pani*, honey.

Ural, lit. that which is sucked up, cf. T. *uvital*, act of sucking up, or perhaps from Sk. and M. *kshaudra*, honey, which may be corrupted to *kudura*, *udura*, *urada*, *urula*, *ural*.

1,Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

R2

98. Honeycomb, *ilele* W.; *tell* O. (S. *mitmale*).
Ilele, cf. T. *ittil*, honeycomb.
Tell, cf. M. *pill*, honeycomb.

99. Hot, *rudumangale* D.; *utume*, *utme* K. (S. *usna*).
Rude from S. *rude*, sun's rays (Sk. *rudhira*, P. *rudhira*); *man*, S. *sinin*, hot, perspiring (Sk. and P. *nidāgha*); *gale* (*hale*), time (Sk. and P. *kāla*).
Utume, cf. M. *ūpu*, M. and P. *upha*, Sk. *ushna*.

100. House, *perugame* Bl.; *perugale* D. (S. *gē*).
Perugame from *peru*, village (S., Sk. and P. *pura*, town, city), and S. *gama*, house, home, forming part of a village, or *gama* may be a corruption of Sk. *dhāma*, house; cf. S. *gamgada*, village, lit. a collection of houses, and *minimahagam*, house of a deceased person.
Perugale from *peru*, v. *supra*, and *gale* (S. *gala*), hut.

101. Infant, *kakulale* D. from *ka*, tender, and *kulale*, v. No. 42 (S. *kiddala*).

102. Iron, *galine* Bl. from *gale*, black (?), and *ani*, metal (Sk. *ayas*), or perhaps from *gale*, in the middle, inside (Sk. *gardha*, P. *gaddha*), and *ani*, fire (S. *ani*, Sk. *agni*), *i.e.* lit. "that which has fire inside it" (S. *yakaṇa*).

103. Jackal, *hinalle* N.; *hunulale* O.; *walle* N.; *wallakka* N. (S. *hinala*, *ninali*, *nariyā*).
Hinalle, cf. Sk. *śṛigāla*, P. *siyāla*, H. *siyār*.
Hunulale from *hunu*, crying out (Sk. √*hvā*), and S. *halla*, dog.
Walle, probably a corruption of *wallalle*, wild dog.
Wallakka from S. *wal*, wild, and *hakka*, dog.

104. Jungle, *kale*, *kale*, W. K.; *kale* O.; *kalyale* Bl. (S. *kalla*, *kalē*).
Kale is probably connected with Sk. and P. *kalila*, entangled.
Kale, cf. T. *kāḍu*, Sk. *kānana*, jungle.

105. Kill (v.), *kalakumanya* Bl.; *miyapale dunnanne* B. (S. *marapanni*).
Kalakumanya from *kala*, body, and *dunnanya*, to restrain (cf. Sk. √*dhan*, to restrain).
Miyapale dunnanne from *miyapala*, having caused to die, having killed (cf. S. *miya*, to die, from Sk. √*mṛi*), and *dunnanne*.

106. Knife, *pilakale* O. from *pila*, knife, and *kale* (T. *kaṭṭi*), cutter (S. *pilāla*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

R2

107. Know (n.), *hitalanya* D. from S. *hita*, mind, and *hanya*, to receive, to put; cf. Sk. and P. √*hā* (S. *danawa*).

108. Leaf, *halapaya* Bl. from S. *hala*, leaf, and *paya*, v. p. 391.

109. Leg, *kuripatala* O.; *paidanda* Bl. (S. *halula*, *halula*).

Kuripatala from *kuri*, *kura*, foot, and *patala*, leg, derived from *pa*, foot, and T. *tala*, stem, stalk.

Paidanda from *paia* (S. *paya*), foot, and S., Sk. and P. *danda*, staff.

110. Leopard, *diula*, *diya* W. R.; *kurihatia* T.; *hatia* G.; *mita* N. W.; *palaua* N.; *palua*, *palata*, W. K. D. Bl. L.; *wal-haparuhala* L. (S. *divyā*, *hetiyā*).

Diya, cf. P. *dipi*, Sk. *dvipi*.

Mita, probably a corruption of H. *dita*.

Palaua, cf. T. *puli*, tiger, leopard. This word may also be derived from T. *pulli*, spots.

Walhaparuhala, lit. spotted jungle dog, from *wal*, jungle, wild, *haparu* (S., Sk. and P. *hahara*), variegated, piebald, and *hala*, dog.

111. Lime (CaO), *galmada* L.; *hunu* K.; *karampaya* B. R.; *patahenda* O.; *patahenda papapu hapana* W.; *tahipuapu ahu* Bl. T.; *tahipaya* D. (S. *hunu*).

Galmada perhaps from S. *gal*, stone, and *mada*, kernel (Sk. *madhya*).

Hunu, cf. Sk. *cūrṇa*, P. *cuṇṇa*.

Karampaya, cf. T. *hāram*, Sk. *hahāra*, ashes; for *paya*, v. p. 391.

Patahenda papapu hapana, lit. "that which is prepared for chewing by burning shells and slaking them," from *pata* (Sk. *vata*), shell, *henda* (S. *handa*), having roasted (burnt), *papapu*, slaked (Sk. √*puṣhpa*, P. *puppha*, to expand), and *hapana*, what is chewed (*sapanawa* or *hapanawa*, to chew, H. *cabānā*, M. *cāvaṇē*).

Tahipuapu ahu from *tahi*, the shells of *wantahi* (*Cyclophorus involvulus*), *puapu* (S. *puapu*), burnt, and S. *ahu*, ashes. *Puapu* is the colloquial form of *pilum*.

112. Live, be alive (n.), *hendawage*, *randahala* D. (S. *innawa*, *papanawa-innawa*).

Hendawage from *henda*, good, well, and *wage*, to live (M. *wagaṇ*).

Randahala from *randa*, having stayed, and *hala*, living, cf. S. and P. *vasa*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

113. **Lizard**, (i) Monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*), *bimbadu* W.; *ganeka*, *ganava* W.; *gaya* G.; *munda*, *mundi*, U. Bl. L. R. T.; *munge* D. (S. *gayā*, *talagoyā*). 192

Bimbadu, lit. one who goes rubbing its belly on the ground, from S. *bim*, ground, earth, and *badu* (S. *bada*), belly.

Ganeka or *ganava*, lit. one who rubs (its belly on the ground), from S. *gāna ekā*, one who rubs.

Munda may be connected with Sk. and P. *muṇḍa*, shaved, bald, the body of the monitor lizard not being covered with hair or feathers like that of most other animals known to the Veddas.

ii) Small Lizard, *kotaka* W.; *huna* O.; *kika* N. (S. *hūnā*).

Kotaka from Sk. *kṛikavaku*, lizard.

114. **Louse**, *iakabala kavelanika* D.; *ikinne* Bl.; *olu gediya kaneka* O. (S. *ukuṇā*).

Iakabala kavelanika, lit. one who eats (or bites) the head, from S. *iakabalu*, head, and *kavelanika*, one who eats.

Olu gediya kaneka, lit. one who eats the head, from S. *olugeḍiya*, head, *kana*, eating, and *ekā*, one.

115. **Make, do** (*v.*), *langacenawa* B. Cf. M. *ragadanī*, to do (generally) in a hurried, tumultuous, reckless style (S. *karaṇawā*).

116. **Man**, *bota* T.; *mina* K. D.; *minigeja* Bl. (S. *minihā*).

Bota. M. *bhōṇḍā*, adult male, P. *buḍḍha*, Sk. *vṛiddha*, old man. Some Veddas use the form *buḍā* (f. *buḍī*).

Minigeja, lit. human person, from *mini*, human (Sk. *manushya*), and *geja*, connected with M. *gadi*, person, e.g. *brahmanagadi*, a brahman.

117. **Milk**, *kekulati kevulanika* D., lit. (that) which is fed to the child, *v.* No. 42 (S. *kiri*).

118. **Monkey**, (i) *wandura* (*Semnopithecus sp.*), *bazaloka* K.; *botakuna* W.; *butwandura* K.; *kandenatanaca* O.; *kerīwandura* U. D. Bl. L. T.; *kolanda mina* K.; *kokka* N.; *manya* G.; *munakuna* N.; *ude kelina* W. L. (S. *wandurā*).

Bazaloka, lit. big reviling one, from *baze*, reviling, and *loka*, big one (S. *lokka*).

Botakuna from S. *boṭa*, body, and *kuṇā*, who is black.

Butwandura from *but* (S. *bota*), big, and *wandura*.

Kandenatanaca, lit. one who dances (among the) tree trunks from S. *kaṇḍa*, trunk of a tree, *naṭana*, dancing, and *aca* (*ekā*), one.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Kariumahru from *kari*, black, and *mahru*.

192 *Kalanda minu*, lit. jumping man, from *kalanda* (M. *kalanche*), to jump, and *minu*, *minihā*, man [or as Mr Parker suggests from *kalau*, leaves, and *damanaā*, he who throws down].

Kokka appears to be an onomatopoeic word in imitation of the animal's cry.

Manya, probably a corruption of S. *mandaya* (v. No. 33).

Munakuna, lit. one whose face is black, from S. *mūqa*, face, and *kiru* (S. *kiyu*), black.

Uda kelina, lit. he who sports on high (trees), from S. *uḍa*, high (on trees), and *kelina* (S. *keliyanā*, he who sports).

119. Moon, *delungrajal* B.; *handa* K.; *handagya* B.; *handaṭaja* D. Bl. (S. *handa*).

Delungrajal from √*deula*, sky (S. *devlā*, Sk. *divyalōka*); *angra*, powerful, intense (Sk. *agra*); *jal*, flame, light, torch (Sk. *jvāla*, P. *jāla*).

Handagya from S. *handa*, moon, and *gaya* (Sk. *graha*), planet.

120. Mosquito, *ramav kaveladana me paja* D. (S. *madurumā*), lit. the small black fly that bites at night, from *ramu*, black, *ev* (S. *ev*), shade, night, at night, *kaveladana*, who is engaged in biting, *me*, fly (S. *maski*), and *paja* from *podi*, small.

121. Mouse, *miya* N. from S. *miyā*.

122. Mouth, *katahabak* W.; *katarukula* K. D. Bl. (S. *kaṭa*, *muvu*).

Katahabak, here *kabala* seems to take the sense of cover, lid, which the Sk. *kapāla* has.

Katarukula, lit. that which helps to make a sound, cf. S. *kaṭa*, mouth, Sk. and P. *kaṇṭha*, throat, from √*kana*, to sound, *rukula*, v. No. 73.

123. Near, *mettamai*, *metatenmai*, B. Bl.; *metetena* D. (S. *laṅgu*).

Metatenmai, lit. this very place, from *meta*, this (S. *mē*), and *tenmai*, this very place (S. *tanamai*).

Metetena from *mete* (S. *mēta*), near, and *tena* (S. *tana*), place.

124. Nest, *capirandana gumpaja* Bl.; *gete* N.; *sapigete* W. (S. *kūḍuma*).

Capirandana gumpaja from *cappi*, bird, *randana*, S. staying, remaining, *gam*, house, and *paja*, v. p. 391.

Sapigete from *sappi*, bird, and *gete* (S. *gaṭuma*), nest. In Sinhalese *gaṭuma* is generally applied to an ants'-nest built of leaves. [Mr Parker tells us that *gōṭi* meaning "bird's nest" is used by Kandyans.]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

125. New, *atetenmele* D., lit. one (thing) of this moment itself, cf. Sk. *idānintana*, present, of the present moment, *ela*, S. one (S. *alut*). 192

126. Night, *rumarerena* D. from *rume* (Sk. *rātra*), obscure, dark-coloured, black, and *enena* (S. *senaya*), shade (S. *rui*, *rātri*).

127. No, none, *kodei* B. O. Bl.; *ne* W. (S. *nā*).

Kodei may be connected with M. *khotai*, want of reality, non-existent, no, or perhaps it is corrupted from S. *koyida*, *koyinda*, where? where have I? indicating absence of the thing desired.

Ne, cf. Sk. and M. *na*.

128. Nose, *nahedande*, *naidande* D. Bl.; *nayekahale* K. (S. *nātaya*, *nāke*).

Naidande from *nai*, S. *nāke*, nose (Sk. and P. *nāsā*), and S., Sk. and P. *daṇḍa*, staff, trunk, cf. Sk. *nāsā daṇḍa*, bone of the nose, bridge of the nose.

Nayekahale from *nāke*, nose, and *kahala*, v. No. 130.

129. Open (v.), *patagaetha* D., v. No. 30 (S. *ariyanā*).

130. Pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*), *kaguna* W.; *eya* N.; *kahalikuna* N. (S. *kahalitunā*).

Kahalie from S. *kahala*, shell, and *ēyā*, pangolin.

131. Path, *manga* K.; cf. Sk. *mārga* (S. *maga*, *matgu*).

132. Peel (v.), *patagurenewa* Bl. from *pata*, S. and Sk. *pattā*, rind, and *gurenewa*, to strip (Sk. √*ghrish*, rub) (S. *pattagahanenā*).

133. Pig, *dole* K. N. U. L. R. T.; *heendike* O. D. Bl.; *heendika* W.; *hetu haria*, *hetua* G. (S. *uru*).

Dole, lit. long-lipped (or snouted) one, from S. *tolā*, *tollā*, long-lipped. The form *dollā* also occurs; *dole*, in Sk. *rāgadale* (*rāk*, *rāg*, and *dale*, lip) is probably connected with *dollā* and S. *tole*, lip. Cf. Sk. *dale*, blade of a weapon, which becomes *tale* in Sinhalese.

Heendika, lit. long-snouted one, from *heni* (S. *hanu*), snout (Sk. *āsyā*, lip) and *dikā* (S. *digā*), long.

Hetu haria, lit. one having a heavy or hanging snout, from *hetu*, snout (P. *aṭṭha*, Sk. *āsyā*), and *haria*, heavy, hanging (S. *haru*); *haria* may also mean one who bears, cf. Sk. √*bhāri*, to bear.

Ketua from S. *hetu*, a hog.

134. Plant (v.), *himpajage mende heruwa* D. from *himpajage*, of the earth, *mende*, middle, and *heruwa*, to do (S. *indaruwā*).

Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

135. Porcupine (*Mystrix leucura*), *itona* G.; *hetaheiliu* T.; *hetahaw* D. (S. *itāmal*).

Itona from S. *it*, *itā*, spines, and *dona*, *dyā*, pangolin.

Kapahelin, lit. one (boasting) many thorns, from S. *kapu*, thorns, *ha*, many, *ilin* (*ehā*), one.

Ketahaw, lit. (he who has) thorn-blades, from S. *kapu* and *hawa*, he who has blades. Cf. Sk. *kavitakāṇḍa*, porcupine.

136. Pot, *puwala hewalanda* D.; *talawa* Bl. (S. *hak*, *mangi hak*, *mattiwalakkā*).

Puwala hewalanda from *puwala*, burnt, and *hewalanda*, (a thing) from which (one) eats, i.e. a burnt earthen pot.

Talawa is connected with S. and T. *ātā*, Sk. *sthālī*.

137. Rain, *dindamaya* D.; *sil pawa ata* K. (S. *varsa*).

Dindamaya from S. *dia*, water, and *damaya*, that which eats or throws away, cf. Sk. *√dhāna*.

Sil pawa ata from *sil*, sky, *pawa* (Sk. *pata*), falling, and *ata* (Sk. *nīra*), water.

138. Rice, *dapatalan*, *dapatala* W. O. D. Bl. L. R.; *hada hamba* W.; *mulang* L. (S. *hal*, *vi*).

Dapatalan from *da* (Sk. *√jīv*), to subsist on, and *patalan* (Sk. *vartula*), round, i.e. corn.

Hada hamba from *hada*, white or cooked (Sk. *sīda*, to cook), and *hamba* (S. *sambā*, T. *sampā*), a kind of rice.

Mulang from S. *muhalan*, food prepared for the gods or kings.

139. Rilawa (*Macacus*, sp.), *hatahawa* N.; *hetalawa* N. G.; *handapanina* L.; *heri rilawa* D. Bl.; *madawa* T.; *rosawa*, *rosi* N. W. O.; *udahelina* L.; *virawa* U. (S. *rilawā*).

Hatahawa from *hata*, railing at, reviling, and *hawa*, bear, or from *hāvyā*, one who does.

Betalawa, v. *vajra*, 'monkey.'

Handapanina, lit. he who jumps on trees, from *handa*, on trees, and *panina*, he who jumps.

Heri rilawa from *heri*, black, and *rilawā*.

Madawa, probably a corruption of S. *madaya* (v. No. 33).

Rosawa from Sk. *rōsha*, anger; the word is repeated to indicate frequency of action, hence this expression may mean one who is frequently irritated.

Virawa, lit. he who displays (his teeth), from S. *vivarayati*, to show, display.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

140. **River**, *diagama* Bl.; *diapoja mangama* D.; *gangu* O.; *eya* W. (S. *gaṅgā*, *eya*). 192

Diagama, lit. "where water goes," from S. *dia*, water, and *gama*, going.

Diapoja mangama, lit. where water goes or flows, *v. supra* and No. 50.

Gangu, cf. Sk. and P. *gaṅgā*, river.

141. **Roof**, *pōrugamaṭu dandalala* Bl. from *porugamata*, of a house, *danda*, S. *daṇḍa*, wooden (Sk. and P. *daṇḍa*), and *lala* from Sk. and P. *paṭala*, roof; *lala* may also be S. *lāla*, having put (S. *piyaṇna*).

142. **Salt**, *haramboja* Bl.; *madura hora* B. (S. *luṇu*).

Haramboja, cf. M. *khāra*, Sk. *kshāra*, salt, T. *hāruu*, caustic, *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

Madura hora from *madura*, sea (Sk. *samudra*, S. *samudura*), and *hora*, dregs, sediment.

143. **Salt water**, *hunadia* K. (S. *luṇu diya*).

144. **Sand**, *pahi* K., cf. Sk. and P. *pāṇu*, dust, S. *paṭa*, earth (S. *vali*).

145. **Sea**, *mada* K. (S. *māda*).

146. **See** (*v.*), *aiparukulata mandewaya* D.; *atala hanala tibenya* Bl. (S. *peyenawā*).

Aiparukulata mandewaya from *aiparukulata*, of the eye, *manda*, middle, and *waya* (Sk. *vav*), to recognise, to see.

Atala hanala tibenya, lit. "near about (S. *asala pasala*) there are (things)"; this phrase states the experience of seeing and may perhaps be connected with M. *aila paila*, here and beyond and *tibenya* from S. *tibenna*, there are.

147. **Shadow**, *hewanpoja* D.; *hila* T.; *sewanella* K. (S. *hewaya*, *sewanella*).

Hewanpoja from S. *hewana*, shade, and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

148. **Shoot with a bow** (*v.*), *gaema* D.; *nilanhipi* B.; *wadamanalla* B. (S. *gasanawā*, *tat hewanawa*, *wāḍinawā*).

Gaema, lit. to cause to strike against, to cause to spring.

Nilanhipi from *nilan* (Sk. *nālika*), arrow, and *hipi* (Sk. √*hap*), to cut off, destroy, injure.

Wadamanalla, cf. M. *wāḍavane*, to shoot, and *da* (or *hv*), to cut, destroy, or this word may be connected with S. *wāḍawana*, shooting.

(92) 149. Sing (v.), *giliqtan* B.; *atadamanya hatadaman* Bl. (S. *gāiyanawā*).

Giliqtan from S. *gī*, song, and *hiqtan* (imperative), to say.

Atadamanya hatadaman, lit: "to (make) sound(s) (with) the mouth while dancing," from *atadamanya*, to dance (v. No. 56), *hata*, throat, mouth, and *daman* (Sk. √*dhma*), to blow, to sound.

150. Sit (v.), *andamana* W.; *indqta* K.; *randa damanya* D.; *randa indiya* Bl.; *veteran* O. (S. *innawā*, *indinawā*).

Andamana, cf. S. *ana*, squat, Sk. and M. *asana*, sitting, and *hamana*, S. *hāmanā*, to lower.

Indqta from S. *indqtiya*, sit (imp.).

Randa damanya from *randa*, S. *randilla*, having stopped, and *damanya*, to be calm.

Randa indiya from *randa* (v. *supra*), and *indiya*, S. *iddinawā*, to sit, or to be.

Veteran, cf. S. *vatirila*, having stretched.

151. Skin, *hamqta* K. D.; *hamqta* W. (S. *hama*).

Hamqta from S. *hama*, skin (Sk. *carma*, P. *camma*), and *qta*, v. p. 391.

Hamqta may be a corruption of the above, or *qta* may be derived from S. *pata*, rind.

152. Sky, *ai* K.; *ahaw* Bl. (S. *ahas*, *āhah*).

153. Sleep (v.), *Otrandala hata damanana* D.; *vatraqanana*, *vatranana*, *vatranda*, *vatran* W. K. L. T.; *vatrila hatadamanya* Bl. (S. *nidanawā*).

Otrandala hata damanana from *ata* (M. *khāṭa*), sleeping cot, *randala*, having remained, *hata*, body, and *damanana*, to pacify (Sk. √*dam*, to be calm).

Vatraqanana from S. *vatiraqanawā*, to stretch oneself, cf. Sk. *vistri*, to spread, to stretch.

Vatrila hatadamanya from *vatrila*, S. *vatirilla*, having stretched, *hata*, and *damanya*, v. *supra*.

154. Smell (v), *paharaqanda gaya*, *pamma gaya* Bl. (S. *mandala gahanawā*, *dugandha gahanawā*).

Paharaqanda gaya from *pahara*, Sk. *priyahara*, P. *piyahara*, pleasant, or from Sk. *pruhara*, P. *pahara*, a bunch of flowers; *qanda*, S. *gandha*, Sk. and P. *gandha*, smell, and *gaya*, S. *gahanawā*, to emit. In Sinhalese *gandha* is used colloquially of a bad smell,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the Sk. *pushpa*, flower, being used of a good smell. In the classics *gandha* is used of any smell. Perhaps *pahara* may be connected with Sk. *pushkara*, the blue lotus (S. *pokuru*, H. *pokhara*, P. *pokhhara*). 192

Pucama ganye from *pucama*, S. *pusma*, Sk. and P. *pūti*, stench, and *ma*, expletive or intensitive, *ganye*, *v. supra*.

155. Smoke, *duma* Tk.; *dun* K.; *ginipojagin mandevela mangacena* D. (S. *duma*).

Ginipojagin mandevela mangacena; *ginipojagin*, from fire, *mandevela*, slowly (Sk. *manda*, slow, *vēlā*, time), *mangacena*, that which goes. The expression literally means "that which goes from fire slowly," or, "that which goes from fire when wet,' the latter meaning being supported by the sentence collected at Bulugahaladena and given on p. 388.

156. Snake, *polinga* D. (S. *poloṅga*).

157. Speak (*v.*), *katadamana* D.; *katamanye* Bl. (S. *katāharaṇawā*).

Katadamana from *kata*, throat, mouth, and *damana*, sound (Sk. √*dhwan*, *dhmā*, Sk. and P. *maṇ*, to sound).

Katamanye, *v. supra*.

158. Spider, *mekini* Bl. (S. *makuḷiwā*).

The form *makuṇā* is also used in Sinhalese.

159. Spit (*v.*), *kelapoja anokelanawa* D. from S. *kela*, spittle, *poja* (*v.* p. 391), *anoke*, away (S. *ahaka*), and *lanawa*, to put (S. *kela gahanawā*).

160. Squirrel (*Sciurus macrurus*), *dandulena* N.; *panina* L.; *peruma* D.; *rukha*, *rukia* R. T. (S. *daṇḍulēnā*, *lēnā*).

Dandulena from S. *dandu*, stem, stalk, erect, and *lēnā*, squirrel, probably referring to the long tail of this squirrel.

Panina, lit. the jumper (S. *paninnā*).

Peruma, lit. the animal (which lodges) among the leaves of trees, cf. Sk. *parṇamṛiga*, squirrel, from *parṇa*, leap, and *mṛiga*, animal.

Rukha, cf. Sk. *vṛikshaśāyikā*, from *vṛiksha* (S. *ruk*), trees, and *śāyikā*, who sleeps, i.e. who sleeps in trees.

161. Stand (*v.*), *anahitala indinya*, *hitala indinya* D. Bl.; *indaṇe* B.; *punumangipu* K. (S. *siṭinnawā*).

Anahitala indinya from *ana* (Sk. and P. *anu*), the part of the leg immediately above the knee, *hitala*, being erect (Sk. √*sthā*, P. *ṭhā*, to stand, to remain), and *indinya*, *v.* No. 150.

Punumangipu, cf. S. *punumanga*, to rise up.

Lifeligmans & Ratligmans E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

162. Star, *giniṭapinnal* Bl.; *tarupaja* D.; *tarka* K. (S. *tara*, Sk. *tarakā*).

Giniṭapinnal from S. *gini*, fire, and *piṭpinnal*, heaps; *nal* being the pl. suffix (T. *ha'*), is probably a contraction of H. *sakal*, all.

Tarupaja from S. *tara*, star, and *paja*, s. p. 391.

163. Stone, *gala* K. (S. *gala*).

164. Strike (v.), *lakaccanna*, *enaccanna* Bl. (S. *gahanawā*).

Lakaccanna is probably from Sk. *rakṣana*, violence, and lit. means "to do violence."

Enaccanna from *ena* (Sk. *hana*), to strike, and *nacanna*, to throw over, or drive away.

165. String a bow (v.), *patanala mandu kerenna* Bl. (S. *dunuwala*, or *dunudiya*, *dunawanā*).

Patanala mandu kerenna; Mr Parker considers that this phrase means "to loop the bark cord (on the bow)." *Patanala* may be from S. *paṭṭi*, bark, and *mala*, cord; *mandu kerenna* is to loop or noose, *mandu* being a noose.

166. Sun, *iraṭaja* D. Bl.; *sahalana* B.; *suriya* K. (S. *iru*).

Iraṭaja from S. *iru* (Sk. *sūrya*), and *paja* perhaps from Sk. and P. *puṇja*, mass, heap (cf. p. 391).

Sahalana is connected with Sk. *sahasrakiraṇa*, sun.

Suriya (Sk. *sūrya*, P. *suriya*) is not used in colloquial Sinhalese.

167. Sweat, *dadilapi* W. from S. *dadi*, sweat, and *dapa* (Sk. *darpa*), heat (S. *dapiya*, *dadiya*).

168. Take away (v.), *enanna* B. K.; *ena mangaccana* D.; *ena mangaccanna* Bl. (S. *aragena yanawā*).

Enanna from *ena*, S. *gena*, having taken, and *nana*, which appears to be connected with Sk. *nīyate*, to go to, or may be a corruption of S. *yana*, go (imp.).

Ena mangaccana from *ena* (*aṭpena*), and *mangaccana*, go.

Ena mangaccanna from *ena* (S. *eyin*), from that place, thence, and *mangaccanna*.

169. Tears, *dia* Bl., lit. (S.) water (S. *hakdaḷu*).

170. Teeth, *daiparana* Bl.; *dathathai* D. (S. *dat*).

Daiparana, lit. "tooth board," or row of teeth, from *dai*, teeth, and *parana*, board, plank (H. *paṭrā*, or *pirhā*, plank, M. *phalī*, row, line).

Dathathai from S. *data*, tooth, and *hathai* (M. *hapuṭa*), piece.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

171. Thick, *parahata* K., cf. S. *parvata*, adj., large, huge, and Sk. *parvata*, *pārāpata*, mountain, which may be used to indicate thickness (S. *gana*). 192

172. Thunder and lightning, *akunu* O.; *diadamana* Bl.; *dīula* W.; *devula andanawa* K.; *devula gerawanawa* R.; *katadamanan* Bl. (S. *gerawima vidulīya*).

Akunu, cf. P. *akkhayā*, Sk. *akshaya*.

Diadamana, lit. light thrower, from *dia* (Sk. *dīpta*), light, rays of light, and *damana*, that which throws; cf. S. *dema*, to put, to throw, probably from Sk. √*dhma*, to throw, to cast.

Dīula is a corruption of M. *sōjvāla*, lightning.

Devula andanawa from *devula*, heaven, and S. *andanawa*, making a sound.

Devula gerawanawa from *devula* and S. *gerawanawā*, rumble, growl.

Katadamanan from *kata* (Sk. *kānti*), lustre, and *damanan*, which appears to be either a mistake or another form of *damana*.

173. Tinder, *hudihamba* W.; *pulum* K. (S. *giniṭuluv*).

Hudihamba from *hudu*, S. *sudu*, white, and *hamba* (Sk. *samidha*), fuel. [For another and more probable derivation cf. p. 386.]

Pulum, cf. S. *puḷum*, cotton.

174. Tobacco, *vanhola* K.; *vanhola* O. D. Bl. R.; *vanhola* K. W. L. T. (S. *dumbolu*), perhaps from S. *visa*, poison, and *hola*, leaf.

175. Tongue, *divapaja* D.; *divarukula* Bl.; *radiya* O.; *tale* T. (S. *diva*).

Divapaja, from S. *diva*, tongue, and *paja*: v. p. 391.

Divarukula, lit. that which helps licking or tasting, from S. *diva*, tongue, and *rukula*, v. No. 73.

Radiya from S. *ruha*, taste, flavour, and *diya*, S. *diva*, tongue.

Tale from S. *tala* (Sk. *dala*), blade.

176. Track (n.), *atoken mangaenlewa* Bl., lit. "gone this way," or "gone from there"; *atoken*, from there, cf. S. *atanāi*, from that place, *man*, way, path (S. *maga*, Sk. *marga*), *gaenlewa*, gone, cf. P. *gacchati*, goes.

177. Tree, *ga*, *gapaja*, *gaipaja* K. D. Bl., from S. *gaha* and *paja*, v. p. 391 (S. *gana*, *gaha*).

C.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

(192)

178. Ugly, *ugpori* B., v. No. 3 (S. *ewalakkaya*).

179. Understand (v.), *Aittakale ikkeya* Bl. from S. *Aitta*, in the mind, *kale*, having put, and *ikkeya*, there is, or *Aittakale* may be corrupted from H. *aithalt*, mind (S. *hetigenanni*, *ikkepanni*).

180. Water, *dia* K. O. T.; *diarace* D.; *diarakale* Bl. (S. *wathura*, *diya*).

Diarace from *dia*, water, and *race* (Sk. *rasa*), fluid.

Diarakale, lit. support of life, from *dia*, S. *diwi*, life, and *rakale*, v. No. 73.

181. Waterhole, *madamale* W., lit. mudpit, from S. *maela*, mud, and *waela*, pit (S. *wathuramala*).

182. Water tortoise, *kalale pite kade* N.; *mamkade* N. (S. *ibbi*, *kachchapi*).

Kalale pite kade[1], lit. "white on the back of the shell" from S. *kalale*, shell, *pitti*, on the back, and *kade* (S. *rada*), white.

Mamkade from *mam* (Sk. *mamsa*), pigmy, and *kade*, body.

183. Wax, *ili* K. (S. *ili*).

184. Wind, *dandapatagamma* D.; *kulamptaja* Bl.; *silmara* K.; *silmadarangu* W. O. (S. *kulatiya*).

Dandapatagamma from Sk., P. and S. *danda*, staff, stem of a tree, and *patagamma*.

Kulamptaja from S. *kulam* and *paja*, v. p. 391.

Silmara, lit. that which causes to shake, from S. *salanna* (Sk. and P. *sala*), to shake, the gerund of which is *salanna*.

Silmadarangu from *sil*, tree (S. *sala*, Sk. and P. *sala*), *madarangu* (Sk. *samuddharanga*), eradicating, and Sk. *gu*, that which moves.

185. Yam, *alapaja* D.; *hakki* K.; *kattalla* T. (S. *ala*).

Alapaja from S. *ala* (Sk. and P. *ala*), and *paja*, v. p. 391.

Hakki, cf. Sk. *hakki*, heart, which may have been applied to yams on account of their shape.

Kattalla from S. *katu*, thorny, and *ala*, S. *ala*, yam (Sk. and P. *ala*).

[1] Mr Parker points out that the animal referred to is the pale, edible freshwater turtle called by the Sinhalese *kiri ibbi*.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

APPENDIX.

THE DERIVATION OF THE *KAELE-BÂSE* NAMES OF SOME ANIMALS[1]

BY

A. M. GUNASEKARA.

1. **Ant-eater.** (i) *Pottu*, f. *potti*, lit. "who has a shell," from S. *potte*, "shell." The shell of the ant-eater is called in S. *ápotu* (nom. sing. *ápottu*), *á* is the basal form (generally taken by the first part of a compound word) of *ápu*. 192

(ii) *Ápu*, literally "who ploughs or digs." This word is formed from S. *ápu*, derived from S. √*ap*.

(iii) *Tallola-pottiyá* from S. *tallola*, "palmyra leaves," and *pottiyá*, "who is or has a box" (S. *pottiya*, "box"), *i.e.* the ant-eater is or has "a box made of palmyra leaves." I assume that *pottiyá* should be *pottiyá*.

2. **Bear.** (i) *Uyangowá*, lit. a keeper or protector of pleasure gardens, from S. *uyan*, "parks," "pleasure gardens," "gardens," and *gowá*, "keeper," "who guards or protects."

(ii) *Tuppiyá*, lit. "the fat one," from Tamil *tuppi*, "fat." In Sinhalese *tuppiyá* is a fat man or animal.

(iii) *Kalubá*, lit. "the black one," from S. *kalu*, "black"; *á* is the personal nom. sing. ending, and *kalu* becomes *kalubá* by euphony. *Kalubá* is often used by the Sinhalese as a pet name for a male child who has a particularly dark complexion.

(iv) *Kalu-mullikiní*, lit. black she-bear, from *kalu* and *mullikiní*, "she-bear."

(v) *Gamayá*, lit. "the village headman," from S. *gama*, "village"; *gamayá* also means "villager." *Gamarálá* is the more common form for the headman of a village.

[1] The Sinhalese names of the animals in this appendix are taken from Mr Parker's work *Ancient Ceylon*.

[p. 451]

3. Buffalo. (i) *Ambarawat*, lit. horn-bearer, from S. *ambu*, "horns," and *karawat*, "who is laden" or "who bears" (from Sk. √*bhṛ*, to bear, to support); "*u*" is changed into "*a*" before "*b*" which requires before it a vowel of the class to which it belongs.

(ii) *Gomeyā*, a Sinhalese word meaning "bull," "ox," "one of the ox kind," corresponding with the Sk. *gauva*, *gō*, cf. Sk. *gavaya*, "wild buffalo."

(iii) *Fittāhaut* is a Sinhalese word meaning "who snorts or makes a hissing sound with the nostrils" (as when the animal is charging), from S. √*pittāha*, "to blow."

4. Civet cat. (i) *Appale-kaṭayā* appears to mean "one who moves skilfully among branches," from S. *appale* (*aṭpale*), "on branches," and *kaṭayā* (*kaṭayā*, *kaṭayā*), "soldier," "one skilful in action."

(ii) *Aiṭuhilliyā* is probably a variant of *Aiṭuhiyā* (s. *kyōra*); *Aiṭuhilliyā* literally means "he whose ears are red," from S. *ai*, "ears," and *kuhilliyā*, "one like a king-coconut," *i.e.* "one who is red."

(iii) *Aiṭuhiyā* from *ai*, "ears," and *kuhiyā*, "copper-coloured one," *i.e.* "one whose ears are copper-coloured."

5. Cobra. *Aḷyi-kaṭayā*, lit. "the animal with a hood," from *Aḷyi*, "hood" (expanded), and *kaṭayā*, "animal"; *Aḷyi* is a corrupt form of S. *kaṭa* (Sk. *kaṭa*), "(expanded) hood," "coil," "snake," and *kaṭayā* is a corrupt form of the Sk. *kaṭayā* (with S. nom. sing. ending) used by illiterate Sinhalese, "being," "animal."

6. Crocodile. *Gomeyā*, s. No. 2 (v), *kyōra*.

7. Deer, Axis. (i) *Ambarawat*, s. No. 3 (i), *kyōra*.

(ii) *Pitpaṭaṭiṭi*, this expression may mean "who is a yellow bag," from *pit* (Sk. *pīta*), "yellow," and *paṭaṭiṭi* (threshing-floor dialect), "bag." Perhaps *paṭaṭiṭi* is a corruption of S. *paṭiṭi*, "young animal," while *pit* may be a mistake for, or a corruption of, S. *ati*, "spots." The spotted deer is called *Ati-mānā* in Sinhalese, in which language *pit* also means "bile," "bilious."

8. Deer, Mouse. (i) *Kokka*, lit. "who makes the cry of kok"; in Sinhalese the cry of the peacock is called *kokā* (Sk. *kōkā*).

(ii) *Yalapiyā*; lit. "who is like iron," "who is stern," from S. *yalapa*, "iron." [Mr Parker suggests that this expression is satirical and refers to the fragile appearance of the animal.]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

(iii) *Batgaraya* is a Sinhalese word meaning "who wears," "who deceives," "fast runner"; the Sk. *jadghâhâra*, "runner," is identical with the Sinhalese word. 172

9. **Deer, Sambar.** (i) *Ambarunâ*, v. 3 (i), *supra*.

(ii) *Karahalayâ*, lit. "who is a raw talipot leaf." *Karahala*, the "leaf of the talipot palm."

(iii) *Polla*, S. "young animal" (of deer, etc.), the S. *polla*, "club," "staff," can hardly be connected with this.

10. **Dog.** (i) *Âdurâ*, a S. word meaning "teacher," "messenger," "expeller of devils," the corresponding words in Sk. and P. are *âtarya* and *âcariya* respectively.

(ii) *Bandinnâ*, lit. "binder," "who binds or ties," in which sense only the word is used in S. If taken as a contraction of *anu-bandinnâ* (S.), it may mean "follower"; if taken as a contraction of *hulu-bandinnâ*, it may mean "who chases or pursues."

(iii) *Hatarabâgayâ* from S. *hatara*, "four," and *bâgayâ*, "who has parts" (probably referring to legs).

(iv) *Hatara-bâgu-atta* from S. *hatara*, *bâgu*, "parts," and *atta*, "who has."

11. **Elephant.** (i) *Uhalla*, lit. "the tall one." This is another form of *usalla* which, though the original form, is less used in Sinhalese.

(ii) *Uhalla* (v. *supra*).

(iii) *Uangalla* from S. *us*, "tall," and *angalla*, "who has limbs." *Angu* (S., Sk. and P.) in *angalla* means "limbs" and the *ll* seem to have been added to conform with the preceding words.

(iv) *Gajjarâ* from *gajja*, "trumpeting (of elephants)," and *rû*, "who gives." Though *gaja* is a Sk. word also used in S. for "elephant," *gajjarâ* is not connected with it, but comes from the root *garj*, "to roar or growl"; from this root is formed the Sk. word *garja*, "trumpeting of elephants," of which the Pali form is *gajja*. The Sk. *garja* itself may be corrupted into *gaja* by the illiterate.

12. **Leopard.** (i) *Dipiyâ*. This is the common S. word which corresponds with Sk. *dîpin* and P. *dîpi*.

(ii) *Sivupâvâ* from S. *sivu*, "four," and *pâvâ*, "who has feet," *i.e.* "the four-footed one."

(iii) *Bandi-mutta* from S. *bandi*, "forest," "jungle," and *mutta* (S. *mutta*), "grandfather," *i.e.* lit. "grandfather of the forest."

Mhiti appears to be a mistake for *mitti*, the form *hetiti* occurs in the threshing-floor dialect.

(iv) *Rasayā*, lit. "inhabitant of the forest," from S. *rasyaṇ*, "who dwells in the forest."

23. **Monitor lizard** (*Varanus sp.*). (i) *Kawalla*, lit. "who is like a skein or bundle" or "who has stripes or lines," from S. *kawalla*, "skein," "bundle," "line," "stripe."

(ii) *Kapurala* from S. *kapu*, "priest of a temple," and *rala*, "chief," "lord" (generally used as honorific); *kapurala* is more respectful than *kapuwa*, which is also used. The word may also mean "barber," in which sense it perhaps refers to the bare skin of the monitor lizard.

(iii) *Mandā* from the Sk. *manda*, "slow," "dull," "lazy," which is also used in Sinhalese.

24. **Monkey** (*Simopithecus sp.*). (i) *Gaegaṇā* from S. *gaṇ*, "tree," and *gaṇā*, "bull." *Gaegaṇā* is probably a corruption of *gaegiyā*, *gaṇāgul* is an old S. word for monkey.

(ii) *Gaegiyā* from S. *gaṇ*, "tree," and *giyā*, "member."

25. **Monkey** (*Theropithecus sp.*). (i) *Kaddenpaniyā*, from S. *kaddan*, "trunks" (of trees), and *paniyā*, "who jumps."

(ii) *Pataganaya-eka* from S. *pataganaya*, "who is stripped of his cloth" (S. *pata*), and *eka*, "one."

26. **Pig.** (i) *Hapa-kaeyā*, v. No. 133 of the Vedda list.

(ii) *Tapiyā*, v. No. 2 (ii), *supra*.

(iii) *Tilhaliyā* from S. *til*, "oil," "fat," and *haliyā*, "who is a pot" (S. *hala*), *i.e.* "who is (like) a pot of fat."

27. **Porcupine.** (i) *Ittiyā*, a Sinhalese word, though the form *ittiyā* is more commonly used.

(ii) *Kapuwā*, lit. "the spiny one," from S. *kapu*, "barber," *i.e.* "spines."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

GLOSSARY OF NATIVE WORDS

104

Adukku, an offering of cooked food.
Aiya, elder brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.
Akka, elder sister, daughter, paternal uncle's daughter.
Alutyakagama, a bower-like structure to which the *yaku* are called in certain ceremonies.
Arachi, the headman of a Sinhalese village settlement.
Aude, a ceremonial arrow (S. *awuda*).
Baena, sister's son, brother's son, hence son-in-law.
Bambara, the rock bee (*Apis indica*).
Bapḍara, often shortened to *Bandar*, the spirit of a deceased chief or important ancestor to whom offerings are made. *Bapḍara* are generally hurtful, but have certain protective functions (Sinhalese).
Bulatyakagama, an elaborate form of *mata* used at Unuwatura Bubula.
Chena, a piece of rough cultivation.
Deva, a god.
Deyo, god, properly *deviya*, pl. *deviya*, often altered to *dyiya* and *dyiya*.
Dia lanuwa, a waist string.
Dugganawa, shaman (Vedda).
Gamarale, a village headman (Sinhalese).
Hangala, a length of white cloth worn by the shaman in certain ceremonies.
Hangotu, the Sinhalese for *maladema*, q.v.
Hura, father's sister's son, mother's brother's son, i.e. the cousin whom a girl should marry.
Kaduwa, a wooden sword used in certain ceremonies.
Kaelebasa, the jungle language of Ceylon.
Kapurale, a devil-dancer (Sinhalese).
Katandirale, a devil-dancer (Sinhalese).
Kiriamma, lit. grandmothers, generally used for the spirits (*yakine*) of old Vedda women.
Kirikoraha, lit. a pot containing coconut milk, hence one of the ceremonies in which this is the chief offering.

[p. 455]

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Kolamaduwa, a ceremony which takes its name from the structure round which it is performed.

Kudaram, a rough altar erected by Coast Veddas.

Maesa, an altar-like structure on which are placed offerings to the *yaku*.

Maleya, younger brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.

Maludema, a deerskin vessel in which honey is collected (cf. Plate LXV).

Maaliya, a wooden implement for taking honeycomb (cf. Text Fig. 12).

Mukkaliya, the tripod used in the *kirikoraha* and other ceremonies.

Naena, father's sister's daughter, mother's brother's daughter, i.e. the cousin whom a man should marry.

Pilliyar, a sacred stone within the precincts of the temple at Pellanchenai (Coast Veddas). *Pilleiyar* is the Tamil name of the God Ganesa: a rude stone placed under a shady tree may be treated as representing the god.

Pingo, a carrying stick.

Ran kaduwa, lit. "golden sword," a wooden sword or stick used in certain ceremonies (cf. Text Fig. 11).

Ratemahatmaya, hereditary overlord or "laird."

Ruwala, the central pole and structure erected for the *ruwala* ceremony.

Sannasa, a record of a grant of land generally inscribed on a metal plate or rock face.

Talawa, an open space in the jungle, a glade.

Tavalam, a train of pack bulls.

Ule, a yam stick.

Vederale, a native doctor (Sinhalese).

Vidane, a Vedda headman appointed by Government.

Wadia, trading places where Veddas and Moormen pedlars meet to barter.

Wanniya, a Vedda chief, also used as a proper name, e.g. Sita Wanniya. The word is also applied to the inhabitants of the Wanni, a wild tract in the North Central Province.

Waruge, a clan.

Wilkoraha, a pot used for fetching water in the ceremony invoking the Rahu Yaku.

Yaka, f. *yakini*, pl. *yaku*, f. *yakina*, (i) the spirit of a dead Vedda.
(ii) Other spirits.

Yakka, yakkini, the aborigines of Ceylon referred to in the Mahawansa.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

INDEX

500 Adam's Peak, 9 n., 19, 20; *see* Maskeliya
Adoption not practised, 104
Address, terms of, 65
Adukganna Hulawali Yaka, 177
Aembala *warige*, 30, 72, 74; distribution of, 80; status of, 78, 79
Ale Yaka, 152; *see* Bambura Yaka, 245 etc.
Alutnuwara, 1, 2; song, 351
Alutyakagama, 165; ceremony, 260–3; invocation used, 306; resting place of *yaku*, 212, 248
Alut Yaku, 260
Ambarapoti kiriamma, 316, 317
American Indian music, comparison with, 363
Ammal (Goddess), 336
Amulets, 201, 204–7
Amusement songs, 35, 344, 347, 348
Amusements, of children, 91; pantomimic, 321
Analysis of music, 352–7, 364, 365
Animals, charms against, 191–201; love of, 47, 116, 117; messengers of Bandar, 143
Arachi, 41, 52, 53
Arrow dance, 213–18
Arrows, as children's toys, 91; as presents, 97; as protection for children, 137, 154; as seisin, 172; chief weapons, 324–5 (*see* bows); feathers for, 32; heads, 19, 94; inheritance of, 118; in religious ceremonies, 137–9, 212, 252–4 (*see also aude*); note by Knox, 7; used as knives, 325
Arts and crafts, 55, 318–30
Arunachalam, P., 187
Aude, 48, 76; description of, 171, 172; ceremonially used, 167, 169, 219–30, 234–7, 259–63; not known at Elakotaliya or Ulpota, 175
Avana ceremony, 270–2
Avoidance, of certain foods, 102, 129, 139, 178–80, 191, 334, 335; of certain relatives, 68; of names, 69, 192; of property of dead, 123
Axe, 32, 118, 119, 324; as marriage present, 98

Bailey, John, 15, 35, 36, 40, 66 n., 87, 88, 93, 94, 95, 97, 116, 117, 135, 146, 160, 161, 162, 178, 187, 193, 205, 213, 234, 367, 381
Bambara, 326–9; honey collecting, 91, 92 (*see also* honey); nests as marriage portion, 112
Bambura Yaka, 141, 152; invocations to, 237–47, 297–300; same as Ale Yaka, 152, 245; song to, 349; unknown at certain places, 165, 173, 175, 176
Bandar, cult of, 141–3, 181–2
Bandar, Galaridi, 163; Gange, 164, 167; Godegedara, 145; Irugal, 164; Kalu, 164; Kongama, 143, 144; Peradeneya, 164; Rangnal, 163; Ranhoti, 164; Sandual, 164
Bandara beliefs, 14 (*see* Bandar)
Bandara *warige*, 70, 72, 76–8, 80
Bandaraduwa, arrow dance, 216; beliefs, 133, 157–159; burial, 123, 124; charms, 201, 202, 206; chena, 41; condition of, 36, 233, 234; early marriages, 95; foreign influence, 216; invocations, 274 n., 278, 283, 294–6, 303; Kataragam God, 156, 187; lullaby, 367; music, 342; *Nae Yaku* ceremony, 130, 154, 230, 233–7; songs, 344, 345, 347, 349, 350, 369, 370; stature, 41; *warige*, 75; wearing of amulet, 207
Bandarawela, 19, 20, 22
Barnett, Dr L. D., 382, 383, 384, 390 n.
Barter, 33, 94
Barutugala Yaka, 170
Batticaloa, 1, 4
Beads, as possible charm, 193; bark substituted for, 249, 255; held sacred, 48; magical power of, 206; used in ceremonies, 226, 261, 262; wilder Veddas, 205
Bell, H. C. P., 22, 319 n.
Bendiya *warige*, 73
Bendiyagalge, caves, 20, 22, 83–7, 108, 109, 408; hair as marriage gift, 98, 99; *kolamadama* ceremony, 267–9; *kiriburuba* ceremony, 219–23; love of beads shown, 206; 'stone throwing,' 125; Veddas of, 35–7; women possessed, 134

[p. 457]

1.Seligmann & Seligmann. E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Betel bags, 31, 117–19, 223, 330
Bible, W. E., 10 n., 13, 31, 36, 38, 40, 62, 73, 101 n., 103, 104, 120, 121, 270
Bilindi Yaka, 30, 31; arrows used in hunting, 139; giver of prosperity, 34; invocations to, 132, 133, 150, 151, 152, 163, 185, 219–30, 235, 263–90; song to, 321; unknown among certain communities, 170, 173, 175, 176
Bitterness, beads worn, 225; beliefs, 168–70; charms, 203, 204; description of, 2, 3 n.; exogamy, 74
Bo Gaha Yaka, 170, 171
Boundaries, 7, 106, 112, 113; settlement of disputes over, 116
Bourneuf, 26 n.
Bows and arrows, 32, 42, 116, 203, 324–6, 333–4; as marriage gifts, 97; as toys, 91; invocation with, 290; sometimes buried with dead, 124; special place for, 86, 87; used as carrying sticks, 241
Broome, R. R., 359
Budatyakana, 229
Bulugahakadana, 32, 98; invocations, 274 n., 279; language, 367–9; music, 342; *Nae Yaka*, 168–70; song, 348
Burial, 123, 124, 147

Caves, 32, 33; Bandiyagalge, 22, 22, 83–7, 108, 109, 408; description of, 34, 122, 126, 127; drawings in, 318–21; evidence of pre-Sinhalese occupation, 24, 417; excavations of, 18, 19, 20–4, 416, 417; names of at Henebedda, 107; Pattiwelagalge, 24, 109; Pilillegolagalge, 83–7, 91, 92, 111, 318, 319; Punchikirimmagalge (Punchimmagalge), 84, 109; Sitala Wannaya, 111; Uhanagalge, 84, 109
Cephalic index, Sinhalese, 416; Vedda, 17
Ceremonial dances, 209–72
Ceremony at childbirth, 102; for safety in honey collecting, 131; to ascertain power of dead, 127; to obtain game, 130–33; to settle boundary disputes, 116
Characters, cultural, 416; physical, 13 n., 15–18, 47, 48, 49, 56, 352, 415–16
Charms against animals, 35, 291–302; for bows and arrows, 203; love charms, 204; music of, 339; to obtain food, 202–4
Chastity, 37
Childbirth, 101, 102; invocation of yaka, 257–61
Children, 50, 91; see puberty before birth, 250 n.; yaka dangerous to, 103, 226
Chitti, 10, 62
Chena, 36, 41, 49, 52, 62
Clan organization, 70–8 (*see also* totemy)
Clans, grouping of, 79, 80; status of, 76, 79
Clothing, 3, 84, 90–3, 117; wilder Veddas, 34, 213
Coast Veddas, 27, 30–2, 80, 321–40; country of, 4; dance performed by, 337–40
Colour vision, 399–402
Conclusions, 413–22; music, 363
Constancy, 87, 88
Costa, Don Juan de, 206
Courtesy, 37
Cousins, marriage of, 64, 65, 77
Crafts, 318–30
Cult of the dead, 126–44, 146–49; in Southern India, 181; origin of, 14, 30
Cult of foreign spirits, 149
Cunningham, Sir A., 26 n.

Dadayan Yaka, 167
Dagaba, 2; made by Galadili Bandar, 163
Dambani, 49–133; invocations at, 274 n., 276, 280; music, 342; *Nae Yaka*, 168–70; songs, 344, 346, 351; marriage, 78
Dances, 105, 133, 134, 168, 211, 318; amusement, 217–18; arrow, 213–18; of Coast Veddas, 337–40; to procure prosperity, 34
Danigala, 34, 37–40, 49; kinship, 62; message sticks, 121; marriage, 75
Davy, 214
Death, beliefs as to condition of, 30, 31, 133, 147, 148, 159, 160; bodies deserted, 34, 122, 147; burial of, 123, 124, 147, 339; communion with departed, 130, 131; property of, 115
Degenerate Veddas, 45–6
Dehigama marriage, 73, 77, 78
Dehigale Yaka, 171
Deniker, Dr J., 415
Descent, matrilineal, 30, 74, 76, 77; patrilineal, 76, 78, 334
Deschamps, Emile, 52, 214, 217 n., 416
Desertion, of caves after death, 34, 122; of wives, 100
Devs, 1, 167; Gana, 168, 175; Gangi Bandar, 167, 173, 176; Gambadda, 176; Handa, 144; Isa, 144; Kataragam, 173, 176; Mangara, 176, 177; Nawaliya, 174; Pahagamma, 176; Sanna, 174; Sunda, 149
Dila kanana; see waist string
Dishes, hunting, 274, 275, 281–4; yaka, 275
Diseases unknown, 100
Dogs, affection for, 47, 116, 117; mentioned

1:Seligmann & Seligmann: E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

in ceremonies, 118, 223; as marriage gifts, 97, 126; drawings of, 319–21; formulas to recover, 130; names of, 127; partake of sacrifice, 130
Dola Yaka, 133, 206, 207; ceremonies, 232–4, 302
Dowry, 96, 97
Dream, 135, 136, 161, 177
Drip ledges in caves, 22, 83, 417
Drum, use of, 234
Dumu Yakini, 212, 237, 238, 243, 244

Ear boring, 32, 35, 205
Ekhakotaliya, 55, 76; marriage, 76; *yaku*, 174, 175
Ele Yakini, 173, 174
Emasculation, 33, 112 n., 412
Eschatology, 14, 30, 31, 133, 135, 136, 147, 148, 161
Evil eye, no fear of, 191
Exogamy, 39, 74, 75, 416; Ekhakotaliya, 55, 76; Gonadura, 78; Ulipota, 77; Unuwetura Bubula, 76; Yakure, 77

Facial characters, 18
Family life, 63, 81–105
Fire, ceremony, 153; legendary origin of, 321; obtained by drilling, 32
Fishing, 333
Food, 32, 81, 88, 94, 326–9, 394–7; taboos, 102, 129, 138, 178–80, 334, 335
Foreign influence, 43, 47, 62, 103, 120, 206, 216, 334, 332, 335
Forest Veddas, 81, 82
Fowls, 47, 178, 334
Freeman, H., 3 n.
Furness 3rd, Dr W. H., 53–5

Gale Yaka, 151, 182–4, invocations to, 166, 260–3; possible identity with Indigitilee Yaka, 265, 184
Gale Yakini, 186
Gale Yaku, 167
Galmada, 44–6; beliefs, 130; exogamy, 74
Gamanda, 48
Gamb, urgency to discover, 233; given by Hunde Yaka and Billindi Yaka, 30, 34, 232; invocations for, 169, 202, 283; skill in finding, 394
Gane Deyo, 166, 175
Gangi Bandar, 164, 167, 173, 176
Gelgar, 380, 389, 390
Gemmingbo, 55–62
Generosity, 62
Geographical position, 1
Ghosts unheard of, 133
Gifts, see presents
Gimbara marriage, 78
Gobiyahewa, 36, 44; avoidance of certain relatives, 68; death ceremony, 130, 131; exogamy, 74; family life, 63; invocations, 187, 274 n., 276, 277, 286, 287, 291; naming of children, 102; religious beliefs, 130; marriage, 76
Godegedara, 143, 145
Goens, Ryklof van, 106
Graves, 123, 124, 147, 339
Green, E. E., 18, 19
Gunasekara, A. Mendis, 387–94, 366–79, 417, 451–54

Hangula, 34, 213, 224, 227, 231
Hagen, Karl, 363
Hair, as charm, 197, 198; as marriage gift, 98–100; as semin, 114; as sign of death, 120; decoration of, 205; description of, 17; mode of wearing, 7, 320; shaman's not cut, 129
Hantane Mahavedi Unehe, 163
Harpoon, 334
Hartshorne, B. L., 13 n., 66 n., 85, 169, 170
Hearing, tests of, 411–12
Heavenly bodies, 144, 329
Hemberewa, 173; song, 349
Henebedda, 13, 18, 35, 39, 40; arrow dance, 214, 215; *avana* ceremony, 270–72; avoidance of property of dead, 123; beliefs, 159, 160, 164; charms, 193, 197, 200, 202; chena cultivation, 267; dedication of food to *yaku*, 285, 286; early marriages, 95; exogamy absent, 75; food taboos, 102; invocations, 141, 274 n., 282, 287–9, 293, 294; isolation of women, 94; Kataragam God, 187; kinship, 62; *Kiri-kuruha*, 213, 219–23; music, 342; *Nae Yaku* ceremony, 130; naming of children, 102, 103; pantomime, 92, 321; pottery, 323, 324; songs, 347, 348, 350; terms of address, 65; territory, 107–91; marriage, 75
Hillier, Dr H. M., 53–5
Hiouceng Thsang, 421
History of Veddas, 1–28
Hobson Jobson, 16 n.
Holland, W. H., 21
Honey, 326–9, 394, 397; ceremonial dance to obtain, 232–4; invocations for, 291–6; songs, 344, 348, 350; pantomimic collecting of, 92, 92; shared in community, 42, 62; *yaku* connected with, 162–4, 169
Horsborawewa, 33; marriage, 82, 78; *yaku*, 170, 171
Hornbostel, von, 363, 365
Horsburgh, E., 57, 72, 177
Houses, 49, 53, 353
Human liver as a charm, 34, 190; eating of, 207, 208
Hunting, 62, 160–4, 172, 397

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1997-1968) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

Irwin, R. W., 200 n.
Isalgoda Yaka, among Isalgoyaks, 180–91; at Elehaeliya, 173; at Kalebokkaha, 173; at Limbawala, 172; at Ovuvel, 167; at Sinhala Wanniya, 153, 223–6; at Uruwaduwa Bulaka, 165, 208; at Yakawa, 176; in the Hinterland, 169; possible identity with Gale Yaka, 169
Isalgoyaks Kiriwanna, 184, 186
Isalgoyaks to children, 90
Isalgoyaks, 106–21
Inscription, ancient, 22
Intermarriage, with Sinhalese, 35–7, 53, 62; with Tamils, 56, 332, 334
Intervals in music, 359–3, 364, 365
Invocations, 132, 134, 273–318; of Gale Yaka, 183; of Godagamara Bandar, 143; of Maha Yakino, 166; of Nae Naka, 161, 200, 201, 223–5, 227, 228, 236, 344, 348, 351; with bow, 290
Irugal Bandar, 264
Itale Yaka, 218, 216

Jayawardene, G. W., 56, 57, 177
Jealousy, 33
Jungle craft, 395–8; Punchhi Yaka the patron of, 141
Jungle language, 274–5, 381, 451–4
Jungle Veddas, 29

Kadadde Nalla Punchhi, 163
Kadawara Yaka, 270, 272
Kadawa, 152, 155–9
Kadaham (jungle language), 274, 275, 381, 451–4
Kalladi, 57, 72, 73, 76
Kalukadawa, 55, 56; invocations, 274 n., 278; marriage, 76, 77; pahu, 173, 174
Kalu Yaka, 170; see Wanagala Yaka
Kanda Swami; see Kataragama God
Kande Yaka, 31, 139, 141, 144, 169; giver of prosperity, 34; identical with Itale Yaka, 216; invocations, 131–3, 150, 151, 163, 172, 183, 219–31, 235, 283–7, 351; origin of, 131; possible relation to Kataragama God, 187; unknown among certain communities, 170, 174–6
Kandyan Sinhalese, beliefs of, 180–91; castes of, 13 n.
Kapalpol (Kapalpol), 173, 236–40
Kapuralu; see shaman
Katandiyala, 210
Kataragama, 18, 135–7
Kataragama Deya, 173, 174
Kataragama God, 143, 151, 173; temple of, 187; unknown, 34; worshipped, 168, 175, 181
Kaubal Oche Yaka, 170
Kinship, 59, 63–70
Kiriwanna, 140, 309
Kitchenka, ceremonies, 31, 34, 35, 132, 206–30, 284, 285, 289, 289, 300; songs, 345, 346, 351
Knox, Robert, 2, 8–9, 24, 48, 49, 52, 57, 58, 106, 115, 246, 249
Kobagalla, 9
Kobawaduwa, 34, 201; ceremonies, 172, 267–9, 306–17; song, 348
Kobawaddala, 80, 94
Kocura Devan, 338
Kodimunala Yaka, 243, 244
Kongana Bandar, 332–40
Kovil Vanniyal, 40–3; condition of, 133, 234; exogamy absent, 75; non-slaughter, 208; songs, 35, 348; marriage, 75; worship of Kataragama God, 136, 137
Kudaran, 142, 144
Kumarakulasinghe, A. Bart, 336, 337

Land, as marriage gift, 97, 98, 111–23; transference of, 111–15
Language, 380–94; jungle, 274, 275; survival of, 42, 49, 56, 330; vocabulary, 402–34
Leaves, as clothing, 34, 213; dead bodies covered with, 120
Legends, 72, 74, 300
Le Mesurier, J. C. R., 119
Lepat Yaka, 163
Lewis, Frank, 95, 109
Lime, 330
Lindagala, language, 386; matrilineal descent, 76; marriage, 76; pahu, 171, 172
Lullabies, 345, 347, 350, 367, 368

Mace, 176, 224, 226, 227
Magic, 190–208
Maha Kiriwanna, 154, 166, 186
Maha Oya, 46, 57, 71, 76
Mahawanna, 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 23, 26, 135, 189
Mahaweli Ganga, 1, 2
Maha Yakino, 160, 166, 316, 348
Mahayangana; see Alutnuwara
Malgode; see Hombanawela
Malgi (song), 35, 348
Malkadawa, 329, 332
Mangara Deya, 176, 177
Marasinha, A. J. W., 381
Marriage, 33, 35, 64–6, 72, 92–7; of brother and sister, 66 n.; positions, 8, 92, 97
Mashaliya, 19, 20, 21
Matrilineal descent, 30, 74, 76, 77
Matrimonies, 329–30
Mawangala Punchhi, 163
McDougall, Dr W., 403
Measurements, of living, 23, 28, 418, 426; of dead, 23, 28
Memory, lack of, 39
Menage clubs, 119–21

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Metal introduced, 28, 37
Mihiluna Yaka and Yakini, 265, 266
Monkey drives, 201, 202, 343
Monogamy general, 87, 88
Moorman traders, 36, 37, 44, 83, 93, 252, 323
Moorna marriage, 30, 37, 42, 57, 62, 333; distribution of, 71–2, 75, 80; intermarriage of, 33; position of, 78, 79
Moramgala Yaka, 266
Music, 341–65
Myers, Dr C. S., 135, 341–65
Myths, absence of, 73

Nabalan marriage; *see* Namadewa
Nadun, 168
Nae Yaka, 34, 132, 171–6; ceremonies, 137–9, 167, 238–7; friendly attitude of, 127; invocations to, 132, 171, 172, 173–83; propitiation of, 30, 31; reverenced by Village Veddas, 168–70; song invoking, 351
Nagas, 96, 419, 420
Na Gaha Yaka, 170, 171
Namadewa marriage, 30, 37, 52, 62, 72–5, 80; chena settlement of, 56; position of, 78, 79
Names, 103, 104, 117; avoidance of, 69; given to children, 102–4; nicknames, 104
Nasal indices, 18
Nevill, Hugh, 9 n., 11, 12, 15, 27, 66 n., 70, 71, 72, 75, 81, 85, 87, 89, 91 n., 96 n., 107, 111, 137, 147, 156, 172 n., 205, 213, 292, 293, 327, 328, 329, 331, 332, 368, 377, 381, 383, 390, 426
Nilgala, 2, 3, 4, 35, 36; beliefs, 146; songs, 368, 369, 372–4
Nuwaragala Hills, 4, 35

Offerings to *Yaka*, 34, 127, 128, 139, 175, 176; eaten sacramentally, 130, 131
Oldham, Brigade Surgeon C. F., 26 n.
Omuni, 45–7; avoidance of relatives, 69; beliefs, 167, 168; burial, 124, 148; marriage, 95; naming of children, 103; wearing of beads, 205
Origin of Veddas, 4–6, 414–18
Ornaments, 32, 204–5, 318

Pain, sensibility to, 406–8
Panikkia Yaka, 141, 144, 165, 282
Panikkia Vaddia, 10
Pantomime, 91, 92, 321; in dances, 218–30, 237–45
Parents, 90; respect for, 67
Parker, H., 8, 9, 13 n., 14, 20, 26, 121, 126, 141, 142, 144, 145, 164, 165, 166, 176 n., 178, 180–3, 194–204, 260 n., 272, 273–317, 372, 376 n., 380–94, 396–8, 402 n., 413–19
Parsons, James, the late, 10, 20, 21
Pata Yaka, 165, 247–51
Patrilineal descent, 76, 78, 334
Pattiavelagalge cave, 14, 109
Perera, Samuel, 43, 264, 265
Physical characters of Veddas, 13 n., 15–18, 415–16; of Coast Veddas, 332; Dambani, 49; Kalukalaeba, 36; Omuni, 47; Unawatura Bubula, 48; Yakure, 36
Pig, Bambura Yaka ceremony, 237–47; not eaten by shaman, 179
Pigments, use of, 239, 241, 245, 321
Pihilegodagalge cave, 83–7, 91, 92; drawings in, 318–19; ownership of caves, 111
Pillai, V. Kanakasabhai, 25
Pole, J., 18, 19, 20
Possession (by *yaka*), 130, 134, 135, 209–72
Pottery, 23, 24, 55, 324, 332
Pregnancy, diagnosis of, 101; invocations respecting, 174, 247–51, 300
Presents, at marriage, 95, 97, 98, 111; songs asking for, 347, 369
Property, division of, 118; inheritance of, 106–21; list of, 117–19
Puberty, absence of ceremonies, 94
Punchiammagalge cave, 84, 109

Quartz, fragments of, 21–4; implements, 10 n., 18–24

Rahu Yaka, 153, 172, 173; invocations of, 185, 206, 254–9, 262, 305
Rainbow, legendary origin of, 320
Rangrual Bandar, 163
Ranhoti Bandar, 164
Ratnapura, 20, 21
Read, C. H., 205
Relations, affection for, 67; attitude towards, 66–8
Relationship terms, 63, 64
Religion, 7, 30, 31, 122–69, 335
Rerang Yaka, 173
Rerangala Yaka, 162, 170
Rhythm, analysis of, 357, 358, 363
Riri Yaka, 170, 173, 185, 210
Risley, Sir Herbert, 418
Rivers, Dr W. H. R., 384, 398, 403–8
Rock drawings, 318–21
Rock shelters, 4, 18, 19, 42, 81–7; *see also* caves
Rock Veddas, 29
Rotawewa, 56, 177, 178
Rugam marriage; *see* Bambura marriage
Rutimeyer, Dr L., 13, 119, 139
Ruwale ceremony, 35, 211, 263–67, 346; Yaka, 263–7

Sabaragamuwa, 9, 20

Lifelingmen & Sellingmen E-S (1907-1909) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bowls, Dry Rod and Pole, 13 n., 15, 18, 18, 19, 20, 24, 26 n., 71, 106, 107, 108 n., 204, 245-9, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 282, 283, 298, 299
Bread Knife, 6, 7
Bribe, 119, 124, 178
Brides of Vedda, 160-1, 162
Bull Yaka, see Bull Yaka
Bunsen Yaka, see Bull Yaka
Burials, of 2n., 42, 48; exposed dead, 109-111; Bad Demon for, 109, 110, 179-80; hole for, 109; special Bull for, 110; ceremony of people, 110-30
Burning, 324
Burrows, 81, 82
Bush Vedda, 36-40
Butterfly, transformed to man, 160-1, 170, 173, 175, 192; song to generate pulse, 308; pulse connected with, 160-1, 169, 176
Butter, ceremony, 32, 33
Bhikshuni, Indrani, 47, 60, 110, 206, 208, 234; influenced by Vedda, 13, 14, 242; monks, 32, 309; composition of caves, 21-41; polyandry among, 100; songs, 322; rules of Bhikshus, 422; lists of Bhikshus, 422
Bhikshu Wimalajo, 43-4, 63; boundary disputes, 116; chiefs, 193; drawings, 318-21; ownership, 78; Bad Demon, 233; invocations, 184, 206, 227-100, 233, 234 n., 253, 272, 280, 284, 287-92, 294, 295, 298, 299, 300-1, 304, 305, 306, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314; Alexandria, 314-5; language, 316; monks, 320; Alar Yaka ceremony, 130, 131, 132-3; naming of children, 202, 203; pottery, 322-3; Rahu Yaka, 234; substitutes, 63; religious beliefs, 130-41; songs, 344, 347-50, 366, 371, 372; terms of address, 63; territory, 109-110; ceremony of people by chiefs, 110-30; use of cover to protect child, 137; omens, 76; pulse, 169-7
Bhuddha; see Kataragam God
Blade, measurements of, 17, 18
Bread, taste of, 408-10
Bride, Bagdadi, 24
Bride, Vimana, 27 n.
Brides, chiefs against, 159-160
Bridal congratulations, 39-40
Bunga, composition of, 363; general character of, 363-63; Bad, 216; music of, 360-361; translations of, 362-70
Bull Yaka music, 360, 361
Bulls of the dead, in gambling, 160; influence to be in music, etc., 132, 163; conditions of, 108, 109, 130-3, 170; see also Alar Yaka
Bunsen, 13 n., 18, 27, 41, 42, 48, 108, 116
Burnett, C., 13 n., 109
Burnt Implements, absence of, 24, 25
Bunty, 324
Bunkin, 24
Bunnet, 324
Bulbils, 100, 101; song commemorating, 350
Bunsenmund, operation, see Bunkin, Dupe, Yaka; sacred Bunsenlog, 215
Tobacco, fresh, 104, 109, 130, 178-80, 193, 194, 211; sacrifice, 130, 170; ground, 32, 193
Tombs, distinctation, 400, 406
Tom ceremony, 30, 31, 60
Transformations, 1, 3, 42, 52-7; beliefs, 168, 177; ceremony, 30; ceremony, 60
Tamil influence, 43, 94, 216, 222, 231
Tattoo, absence of, 56, 107
Temperament, 84-6, 90
Temples, 32 Bahuchaiyan, 110, 326; of Gale Devata, 164; of Gamen, 168; Village Vedda, 168
Tennent, Sir James Emerson, 14, 16, 18, 124, 126, 214
Terms of address, 63, 70
Thomson, Edgar, 408 n.
Tools, 322-36
Traps and snares, 326
Tree pulse, 170, 172
Trepan, 107, 125
Trichinosis, 37
Twins unheard of, 101

Ubaingalge cave, 24, 209
Ulpata, ceremony, 77; pulse, 172, 176
Ulu Yaka, 137, 138, 140, 143
Unapana, ceremony, 37, 41, 60, 72, 73, 80, 111; meanings of, 111; stages of, 98, 99
Unapana Kiriamma, 160, 172, 188, pulse 10
Unapana Yakini, 188
Unicha, 131; beliefs, 139; Bad Demon, 100; invocations, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

70-80; country of, 70-2, 107n., 131, 137; disposition of, 42, 46; dwellings of, 72, 90-3, 81, 80; dying out, 32, 37; education, 38, 122 n., 422; family life, 80-103; foreign influence on, 42, 46, 60, 102, 107, 108, 116, 122, 124; government, 60, 61; hamlets, 90; history of, 1-18; inheritance, 108-11; hunting, 32-34; names, 103, 104; origin of, 4-6, 41-44; present status, 37-46; religion, 32, 37, 122-8; settlements of, Bandarawela, 90; Bibile, 90; Dambana, 90n.; Dambulla, 90, 91; Dangala, 90, 91, 122; Dimbulagala, 32, 72, 174, 175; Galamuda, 90, 91, 130; Gonabova, 78; Gonagala, 90n.; Hambegamu, 172, 349; Hambegala, 90n.; Kalugamuwa, 80, 91; Lindugala, 36, 171, 172, 368; Mawela, 46-8, 69, 95, 109, 124, 148, 163, 168, 169; Ratnapura, 32, 171, 172; Uhana, 72, 175, 176; Unichchai, 90n.; Uraniyagala, Bakiella, 90n.; Wallamulla, 32, 168, 213; Yakaru, 90n.; Yakaru, 36-40; tradition of, 27; Vilagya, 46-57, 94, 168, 209, 422

Vedi Yaka, 177

Veddas, see Coast Veddas

Vihara Daya, 172, 176

Vijaya, 4, 5, 8, 14, 16, 74, 149, 164, 165

Visal society, 398, 399

Visal Hamaya, 402-4

Wadia, 32, 44

Wahi ceremony, 93, 98, 102

Walakadagala Yaka, 169, 167, 368

Walakadagala Yakini, 167

Wanagala Yaka, 151, 169, 170, 171, 239, 260

Wanniya, 10 n., 356, 357

Warren, F., 46

Waruga, 30, 32, 50, 70-80, 122

Wasgamu, 324, 324

Wattegama, 32, 166-70, 174, 174 n., 177

White, Herbert, 144

Widows, marriage of, 32, 62, 89

Wild Veddas, 31-4, 37

Willey, Dr Arthur, 356

Woodhouse, E. W., 46

Women, chiefs, 101; clothing of, 32; initiation of, 92, 93; property, 108; protection of, 124; position of, 68, 69; physique, 36, 37, 89; rank among, 89, 399; work of, 48, 89, 399

Yaka Adahagamma Hakurali, 177; Ala, 150; Alut, 150, 260; Amoor (Yaksha), 172, 176; Bandaran (gold supply), 170; Bimbal (gold supply), 170; Dadagala, 170, 171; Dadagama, 167; Dahigala, 170; Dala, 152, 168, 169, 170-2, 300; Gale (gold supply), 170; Galle (gold supply); Kaha, 170; Kandu (gold supply); Kaduwal Gilla, 170; Kurutumunda, 149, 150; Lagal, 169; Maraka, 173; Marangala, 170; Mihiladu, 169; Murangala, 168; Na Gaha, 170, 171; Panikka, 149, 150, 169, 182; Pata, 169, 247-52; Rabu, 152, 172, 173, 169, 168, 254, 255, 260, 303; Ranaga, 173; Ranagala, 169, 170; Rid, 170, 173, 169, 200; Ranala, 167-71; Ulu, 152, 156, 240, 243; Vedi, 177; Wallamulla, 169, 167, 316; Wanagala, 151, 169, 170, 171, 239, 260; Wilaya, 170; Yam, 150; for additional names see 171 n.

Yakagala Hill, 300, 303

Yakini, Dunna, 221, 222, 240; Ella, 173, 174; Maha, 161, 168, 316, 318

Yakkas, 1, 4, 16

Yaka, Alut, 160; associated with rocks, 170, 172, with special localities, 140; beads associated with, 168, 227; injurious to children, 109, 116; Kaduwa, 170-2; Kidamma, 140; Alut, 30, 32, 34, 127, 130, 150, 157-9, 167, 172-6, 230-7, 272-89, 321; stone throwing by, 125; various unimportant, 140, 142, 172 n.

Yakkaw, 56; temple to Ganga Bandar, 168; worship, 77, 80; judge, 176, 177

Yam Yaka, 150

Zogan, Louis de, 131 n., 132, 135, 136, 303

CAMBRIDGE: PRINTED BY JOHN CLAY, M.A. AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY

OF LONDON.

VOL. II.

NEW SERIES.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED FOR THE ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY,
BY
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1863.

[Title Page]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

XXVI.—*An Account of the Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon: their Habits, Customs, and Superstitions.* By JOHN BAILEY, B.A., Oxon., Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary of Ceylon.

114 "WE shall, in this part, speak of the inhabitants of this Country, with their Religion, and Customs, and other things belonging to them. Of these Natives there be too Sorts—Wild and Tame. I will begin with the former. For, as in these Woods, there are Wild Beasts, so Wild Men also."*

So wrote, nearly two hundred years ago, that truthful old chronicler Robert Knox; and, though he praises God he never saw one of these "wild men," he proceeds, nevertheless, to give us in a couple of pages, by far the best sketch of the Veddahs that has yet appeared, notwithstanding the multitude of pens that have been employed since his time, on Ceylon.

Early in 1854, I was appointed to the charge of the extensive district of Badulla, which comprises, besides the ancient Kandyan province of Ouvah, that portion of the island where the most barbarous Veddah tribes are found. My tastes led me to take every opportunity of studying their habits and customs. My [123] official position gave me the greatest possible facilities for prosecuting my inquiries.

I accumulated much information that was both curious and valuable, but my official duties prevented me from shaping my rough notes into a readable form. For years, my papers lay in my desk, half forgotten, and it is only now that a little unlooked

* An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon, in the East Indies, etc., by Robert Knox, a Captive there near twenty years, folio, London, 1681.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

for leisure enables me to follow the suggestion of a friend, and to endeavour to arrange the materials which I collected with so much care and labour. 114

At a time when the investigation of the origin of uncivilized races is attracting so much attention in England, I trust that the results of my inquiries and observations may not be considered devoid of interest; and, in this hope, I venture to present them, such as they are, to the Ethnological Society. 121

The following sketch of the Veddahs is the result of personal and often-repeated investigation among the people themselves: it is founded only on direct evidence; I have admitted nothing on hearsay. Indeed, so difficult is it to elicit anything from people in such a state of barbarism, that I have accepted even the most direct testimony with caution and have only adopted it after careful cross-examination had satisfied me of its trustworthiness. I have tested again and again the truth of every statement I have made, sometimes reluctantly abandoning a link here and there which would have made my case more complete, only from a *doubt* of the perfect accuracy of my information.* 124 114

The facts I state are, so far as I can judge, beyond dispute, if honest and patient inquiry be of any value. The deductions I draw from them are my own, and must go for what they are worth. 114

I limit my observations to the wildest tribes, for it is amongst

---

* It may be said that it is a work of mere supererogation, if not presumption, on my part, to attempt to describe the Veddahs, seeing that Sir J. E. Tennent has so recently devoted several chapters of his work on Ceylon to this subject. But, interesting as these chapters are—perhaps the most interesting in the book—they contain little else than a comparison of the habits of the people of the island, as observed by the ancient voyagers in the fourth and fifth centuries, with the traditional but now long-exploded customs of the Veddahs as reported by Knox. The accomplished author throws no new light on the wild tribes of the Veddahs as they are. On the contrary, his account of them is in some important particulars defective, and even inaccurate. He glances casually at those tribes which are in the wildest state, touching with precision none of their peculiarities, and dwells in detail upon those only which, from long association with the Singalese and Tamil races, have lost much of their originality. Of the ancient aborigines he has compiled much that is curious. Of the existing Veddahs he has given us little besides an epitome of former notices.

An account of the aboriginal races of Ceylon, published under the authority of a late colonial secretary of the island, would naturally be accepted and quoted as accurate and authentic. Sir J. E. Tennent's chapters on the Veddahs, therefore, render it more incumbent on me to lay before the Society the results of my own inquiries. For, though the habits and customs of wild tribes are important aids in determining their origin, a description of them is worse than useless, unless it be made by a person competent of his own knowledge to describe them. I pretend to no competency beyond this.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 those only who are the most barbarous, who have preserved in all essentials their isolation from other races intact, that we must expect to find the most marked peculiarities.

101 The term Veddah—or Weddah—in itself, indicates no particular race. It simply means "a hunter", and is, in India, applied to aboriginal or barbarous tribes generally.*

In this sense, a great portion of the population of the eastern parts of Ceylon appears, at some period or another, to have been so called. There are still extensive districts known as "Weddirata", or the country of the Veddahs, the inhabitants of which, although they are, owing to the remoteness of their situation, less civilized than the bulk of the people of the island, are not Veddahs, but Singhalese, in kindred, religion, and customs.

101 It is highly probable that the people of these remote districts and of others, where Veddah descent is still claimed, are more 174 directly derived from the race which originally stocked the island than those who inhabit such parts of it as were more accessible to the settlers from Continental India, who, in process of time superseded the aborigines.†

But the people distinguished in Ceylon, by the name of Vedda 131 hs—wholly distinct, as I have said, even from those who, though now Singhalese, yet describe themselves as descended from Veddah ancestors, are to be found in the districts of Batti-

---

* Weddà (Singhalese) an archer; some trace it to Bedda (Jungle). Introduction to Alwis' Sidath Sangarawa.

Vedàn (Tamil), a hunter—one who lives in the woods; a name given to rude tribes, aborigines in the Indian peninsula. Vedan (Tamil), corruptly Vaidan, Veddah, also Beddah, or Weden—a hunter, a fowler; a name given to wild tribes, inhabiting the hills and forests of the south of India almost in a state of nature—probably the aboriginal race of the peninsula. Prof. Wilson's *Glossary of Revenue and Judicial Terms.* The word Veddah is still used in Ceylon as a hunter, and so applied to persons, not "Veddah" in the limited sense of the word.

† The Weddirates were, under the native government, exempted from 648 all service save military—the most honourable; and rendered tribute to the king, of beeswax, dried flesh, and honey, which was continued for some time after we obtained possession of the Kandyan provinces. But the inhabitants of these districts marry and associate with those of the adjoining districts, and are apparently the same people. There may exist some eth- 142 nical difference; indeed, I think even an unscientific eye can detect a difference in the appearance, not only of these people, but of the Wanniahs of the northern and central parts of Ceylon, when compared with the ordinary natives. I have tried to obtain skulls of the different races, of which there are many in the island, viz., Tamils, Moors, Singhalese of the low country and of the Kandyan provinces, the people of the Weddirates—Wanniahs of Neweraka-lawiya and Batticaloa—Mookwas of the north-west and east provinces, Malays, Geerowas, Rhodias, etc., but it is most difficult to obtain them. The subject may be worthy of the attention of the Ethnological Society, though beside the object of this paper.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

caloa and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.*

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt.

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in *their* barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other.

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenne. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited.

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singhalese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is reclaimed again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gátó, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticaloa boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

follows, that, till I measured him, I believed him to be not merely comparatively a tall man, was only five feet three inches in height. He was a Veddah of Bintenne, and much more civilised in his life than the rest of the wild tribes there. The shortest man I have measured was four feet one inch. I should say that of men, the ordinary height is from four feet six to five feet one inch, and of women from four feet four to four feet eight inches.* 141

Their features are tolerably regular. The eyes are good, and often full. The nose is generally well shaped, though inclining to be flat; the nostrils wide. The mouth sometimes large, and the lips firm, but rather thick. The beard is short and scant. The hair of the head which is not curly falls in rusty, tangled masses about the face, making the head appear out of all proportion to the lean body, and this leads those who are not close observers to describe the Veddahs as large-headed. Tennent notices this and remarks how perfectly the description of the Besedæ, in the tract *De moribus Brachmanorum*, applies to the Veddahs of the present day. "Pigmies" indeed they are, "stunted and with unshorn dishevelled locks"—but the term μεγαλοκέφαλα is not appropriate to them; for in point of fact, their heads are remarkably small.† One of their skulls, sent to England by me some years ago, through my friend Mr. Thwaites, the able Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens of Ceylon, to be submitted to the Society, was pronounced to be, in general capacity, smaller than the smallest negro, native Australian, or Esquimaux.‡ But their wild shaggy hair gives such an appearance of undue size to the head that it might well mislead the travellers from Thebes in the fifth and Tennent in the nineteenth century. 142 [141]

When quite in repose, the features of the Veddahs wear a vacant and melancholy expression, which is almost painful to look upon. In speaking to them, I have observed, in some, considerable shrewd- 157

* In a list of heights of Veddahs taken lately at my request, I find two Veddahs measuring five feet three inches, and one five feet three inches and four-tenths; but, if these measurements are perfectly accurate, this is much above the average height. Of fourteen Veddahs of Bintenne, lately measured for me, the tallest was five feet three inches and four-tenths, the shortest four feet six inches and a quarter; the average five feet and half an inch. Of twelve women, the tallest was five feet two inches and a half, the shortest four feet four inches and a half; the average four feet nine inches.

† *Vide* the whole passage quoted by Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, note at page 430, 2nd edition, but especially the following: "*εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ* οἱ Βεσέδαι ἀνδρωδέστατοι, σκληροί, μεγαλοκέφαλοι, δασεῖς, καὶ ἀκλόστυχοι."

‡ It was considered to be that of a female between twenty-two and twenty-eight years of age. The skull came from Nilgala, and was the smallest skull ever measured by Mr. Busk.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—
142 both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable.
291 A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments† . Indeed, almost the only difference
[304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have
[301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with
515 their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait,
302 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their
114 crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking
[276] gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smoking is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they
181 huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1867.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*antiaris innoxia*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

element as they are in the midst of a civilized crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear. 181 [481]

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back. 411 [412]

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡ [147] [283]

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made," and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not 439

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonecomadala (*stereospermum chelonoides*), the kekala (*cyathocalyx zeylanicus*), a creeper called kobbówel, or the pandòro tree. [824]

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zeylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the areloowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

439 now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough with the Singhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests.

224 411 They have the reputation of being expert with bow and arrow, and as it is only the larger game, such as elk, deer, etc., which they pursue, it is very probable that with their remarkable power of creeping stealthily through the jungle, they may be able to come upon their prey unawares and do execution. But they are miserable shots at a mark. I never saw more than two 411 decent hits made at several small "archery meetings," which I have, from time to time, got up for my own amusement and their pecuniary advantage. And with regard to the latter, I must con- [177] fess that I never saw that contempt for money which Tennent supposes is still existing.*

The practice of drawing the bow with the feet to which Tennent also alludes as still in use, has so long ceased, that in all my inquiries—and I was very particular on this point—I could not find a single Veddah who ever witnessed it, but it is undoubted that such a mode of archery once existed, as is traditional among them.†

224 231 They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued. Knox tells us, that dogs were given "for portions with their daughters in marriage;"‡ and Percival relates, that "before the last war broke out between us and Holland, a Dutch officer sold a couple of Weddah dogs at Surat, for 400 rix dollars, about £30."§

---

them not, they will do him a mischief one time or another by shooting in the night. If the smith make the arrows, he leaves them in the same place where the Veddahs hung the flesh." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 62. *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, and note; also vol. i, part. v, chap. ii, p. 568, 2nd edition.

* "Money to them is worthless." *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, 2nd edit. I had been told that they would refuse silver, not knowing what it was, and would accept copper. But I never had a rupee refused when I tendered it; and the word "rupee" is by no means unintelligible to them. A good many years ago, I can well believe money was worthless to them, but that was long before Tennent's time.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part iv, chap. iii, p. 439. Some wild Veddahs of the Batticaloa district shewed Mr. Birch, when making some inquiries among them at my request, how the bow was drawn with the foot, but said it was never so drawn now.

‡ Knox, part iii, chap. i. § Percival, chap. xiii.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 422 [685]

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days. 648 685 [754]

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in goal, he might carry back with him some little civilization to his own people. 648

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist. [801]

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguano, and pengolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, 262

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Samba deer (*rusa Aristotelis*). [136]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 bears, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.*

They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of those beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries, I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross-examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh.

They do not scruple to eat animals which have died a natural death, and have (in common with the Kandyans) a decided preference for their game "high"—if so mild a term can describe the exceedingly advanced condition, in which venison should be to suit the palate of a Veddah (or Kandyan) epicure.

226 They are fond of fish, which they catch by mixing with the water the juice of particular fruits and barks of trees, which stupify them. A similar practice is common among the Singhalese.

224 Their arrows procure for them the flesh of the animals they eat, and I can find no trace of pit-falls or traps being in use among
231 them. In Bintenne, some of them employ the hunting buffalo to enable them to approach their game unseen.† Their dogs track out the wounded animals, and are also trained to catch the iguano,

223 Tennent is wrong in saying that they procure birds with the bow. They are not good enough shots for that. They catch them with bird-lime, made from the juice of the bo-tree (*ficus*
[824] *religiosa*)—and also watch them to their nests, and take them at night. Their skill as marksmen is most indifferent, and they never exercise it at small objects.

224 The most choice food, in their estimation, is, of land animals, the flesh of the pengolin, or of the iguano; and, of fish, the eel.
[262] Though they eat no part of the elephant, yet he is the object of their pursuit, both for their own protection and on account of
[439] the ivory, so valuable to them as an article of barter. They will steal up to an elephant, and, as he is in the act of stepping for-

---

* It is curious that, while in the Batticaloa district Veddahs are said to eat bats, those of the Badulla district—certainly of Nilgala—reject them.

† The use of the hunting buffalo is common all over the island. The manner in which the animal is trained is curious. When its horns are young and tender, a string is tied tightly round the base of one of them. The pain thus produced is so acute, that the poor animal is easily guided by the cord, and answers to the slightest touch. The ligature is gradually relaxed; and, when the buffalo is full grown, the recollection of the pain is occasioned is so vivid that he will answer readily to a thin string tied loosely to his horn. With an animal so trained, the hunter can easily approach the deer unseen at night. The buffalo feeds; the hunter crouches under his lee; a touch will guide him, and the hunter advances under cover.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

ward, shoot their long-bladed arrows in the soft fleshy part under the forearm, and so disable him.* 224

They have a great dread of meeting elephants at night, and have charms to protect them from them—not only to turn them from their path, but to render innoxious the bear, the leopard, and the wild boar. And I must here record, that they are the only charms I have entire faith in. 825 789

I never shall forget the first time one of these Veddah charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation. The moon had not quite risen, and the stems of the trees and the gigantic pendent creepers were flickering in the uncertain light cast by the torches, which my Veddah guides, gliding through the forest, bore before me. I was chatting to an intelligent Veddah by my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms, having been till then, like Tennent, ignorant of the fact.† I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant "behegang! wirooowee! wiroowah!" which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success.‡

Honey, and the grub in the comb, before it becomes the bee, are both staple food with the Veddahs, and their acuteness in discovering hives, when bee-hunting, is very remarkable. I have seen a Veddah stealing through the forest, suddenly stop—listen for an instant with uplifted hand—dart off into the jungle and return in an incredibly short space of time with a fresh honey-comb; while I have been in vain endeavouring 222 [262]

* This fact I established beyond a doubt. I questioned many Veddahs on that practice, which Knox treats as a fable, p. 63, viz., striking an axe into the sole of an elephant's foot; and I was assured by several that, though they never practise it themselves, the Veddahs of Batticaloa do, and that they even hamstring elephants. To those who know the pluck and dexterity of the professed elephant catchers in the north of the island, there is nothing extraordinary or incredible in a Veddah approaching sufficiently close to an elephant to wound his foot or to hamstring him. But I have inquired, and cannot satisfactorily establish the truth of the statement; and I confess that I am inclined to doubt their physical power to do either.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 448, 2nd edit.

‡ Tennent, vol. i, part ii, chap. i, p. 139, gives a lamentable account of the inefficacy of a charm for bears. I dare say the unhappy moorman there mentioned would have been more fortunate had he known the Veddah charm. The Singhalese have charms for the same purpose; but they differ from those of the Veddahs. [171]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 to catch the hum of bees, which so instantaneously struck his ear. Their forest life naturally quickens their powers both of seeing and hearing, and renders them, in these respects, far superior to those whose more civilized lives do not compel them to rely on those faculties for their daily food.

They take honey in the manner common to the Singhalese. The bee-hunter enlarges with his small axe the hole in the tree at which the bee enters, and putting his mouth to the aperture, blows into it. This has generally the effect of making the bees fly out; or, at least, of making them vacate the comb, and retire into the innermost recesses of the hollow tree, when the honey can be taken with the hand. If this do not succeed, however, a second puff, after the bee-hunter has chewed some aromatic substance, has the desired effect.

Taking the honey of the bambera (*apis Indica*), a large and
222 very venomous bee, is a much more serious affair. This bee hives
283 on very lofty trees, or in clefts of precipitous rocks. If on a
481 tree, the hunter ties tendrils to it, and armed with a bundle of blazing faggots, climbs to the vicinity of the comb and smokes the bees out, being often severely stung during the operation. If in a cleft of rock, he will, if he cannot otherwise approach it, lower himself with ropes made of creepers, and take the honey by the same process.

To the Veddahs, honey is not only favourite food, but valuable
439 as an object of barter, for the Kandyans prize it greatly for medicinal purposes. They use it, too, as Knox tells us, for pre-
251 serving flesh. "They cut a hollow tree and put honey in it, and then fill it with flesh, and stop it with clay, which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want."* And when they are short of food, they mix honey with decayed wood, and so eat it. It
261 satisfies their craving more readily than plain honey. Davy properly describes the practice, as "not so much for nourishment as to distend the empty stomach and to allay the distressing feelings of emptiness and the pains of hunger." It is curious that Tennent should have entirely omitted all allusion to this remarkable custom. "Romba" is the term used by the Veddahs, for this decayed wood, and the practice I have described may have given rise to the epithet, which Knox applies to the "wild sort" called "Ramba Veddahs," who, he says, "never shew themselves" —but no "sort" is so called now, nor is the name remembered.†

---

* Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63.

† Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63. The wood so used is chiefly that of the
[324] riminia creeper (*zizyphus œnophlia*, Mill.), the ettamba—wild mango (*mangifera Indica*, Quin.), the weera (*hemicyclia sepiaria*, W. and A.), the rina, the noora, a species of fig; any wood, indeed, not poisonous, is used. They reject the wood of the kaduru (*cerbera odallum*, Gærtn.), the goda

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

v 237 very careful in my inquiries on the subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Singhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it. Tennent's remarks on this subject are wholly inapplicable to the wild Veddahs of Bintenne or Nilgala, though they may apply to those Veddahs of whom he writes.*

v [582] They never marry out of their race, and, with the very smallest cause, the men are exceedingly jealous of their most unattractive wives. They are very careful to keep them apart from their v 592 companions. Their huts contain but one family each, and when they live in caves, each dwelling-place is carefully screened off. There are as many as seventeen separate huts and caves among the seventy-two Veddahs of Nilgala; hardly more than four individuals to each habitation.

v 595 Polyandry is unknown among them. The practice is alluded to with genuine disgust. I asked a Veddah once, what the consequence would be if one of their women were to live with two husbands, and the unaffected vehemence with which he raised his axe, and said, "a blow would settle it," showed conclusively to my mind, the natural repugnance with which they regard this national custom of their Kandyan neighbours. Their abstinence from a practice, which, till 1859, was recognized by the laws of the land, is remarkable. So sensitive are they on these subjects, that I know an instance of a Veddah—and he was by no means one of the wildest—drawing his knife, and being with difficulty restrained from using it, at a remark made in jest which he considered a reflection on the honour of their women.†

s 586 It is notorious that the Kandyans have no scruples with regard to divorce. Among them, husbands desert their wives, and wives their husbands, for any or no reason. Sickness is perhaps the most common cause. The heartless desertion of a sick wife is, I think, the worst trait in the Kandyan character, and the cool and unconcerned manner in which they themselves allude to it, shows that it is as common as it is cruel.‡

---

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 444, 2nd edit.

† Tennent says, "The community is too poor to afford polygamy," but I am convinced that is not the cause of its non-existence. We find it in smaller communities than these.

‡ In a civil suit in the District Court some years ago, a witness said in reply to a question from me—"How can I tell how many wives he had? A woman is married to-day, and leaves her husband to-morrow. If the wife gets sick, the husband deserts her; if the husband, the wife deserts him." A young girl of sixteen or so once coolly confessed before me to having had five husbands, three of whom were living, and two present in court, of whom one had just attempted suicide for her sake! I met with an instance of a man who had been married fifteen times; and I have heard of a woman who had had thirteen husbands.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

But the Veddahs have not yet arrived at such a pitch of civilization. Divorce is unknown among them. They are kind and constant to their wives, and few of their Kandyan neighbours could say as I have heard a Veddah say, "Death alone separates husband and wife." The idea of such constancy was quite too much for one of the bystanders, an intelligent Kandyan chief, on one occasion when I was talking on these subjects to some Veddahs. "Oh, sir," he exclaimed, apologetically, "they are just like Wanderoos."* He was perfectly scandalized at the utter barbarism of living with only one wife, and never parting till separated by death.† V 586

Tennent says they have no marriage rites; this is true; but I am surprised that no one should have told him of what very nearly approaches a marriage ceremony, and one which is curious in itself, and so far as I know, unlike any custom among other barbarous tribes. The bachelor Veddah, who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgment to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest "delicacies of the season", for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguano, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a thin cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and V 585 [584] V 291 585

* The Wanderoo is a large monkey common throughout the island, one of the three species of Presbytes, probably the P. Ursinus.

† I have spoken of polygamy and indiscriminate divorce among the Kandyans in the present tense. I should have used the past, for in 1859 they were abolished by law. It fell to the lot of the late Sir Henry Ward, whose name will be gratefully cherished in Ceylon as long as Ceylon exists, and whose loss is daily becoming more felt and deplored, that this remarkable change in the habits of an Oriental people should have taken place during his rule—a change, originating with the Kandyans themselves, which has given them marriage laws as pure as our own, an extraordinary proof of increasing civilization. In May 1858, a large deputation of influential chiefs waited on Sir Henry Ward, at the Pavilion, in Kandy, to seek the aid of Government to remove what they felt to be a stigma on their race and character, by abolishing polygamy and making the marriage tie a binding obligation. This was followed by a petition, signed by 8,000 chiefs and headmen on behalf of the Kandyan people, repeating their earnest prayer. The result was the enactment of an ordinance "To amend the laws of marriage in the Kandyan country," which will do more to raise the social character of the Kandyans than any other measure can do. They have reason to be proud of having spontaneously wrought this great change, and they fully appreciate Her Majesty's interest in its success, which she graciously desired should be specially made known to them. S 586 595 177

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 585 291 bind it round him. Many a more civilised wife would rejoice if she could forge new fetters for her husband as binding as these. The utility of the string is simply to keep in its place the scanty rag which constitutes the Veddah costume.* Married or single he must wear one; but when he is married he substitutes for his batchelor's string one of the lady's twisting, and besides its use, it is emblematic of the marriage tie; for as he never parts with it, so he clings to his wife through life.†

V 582 835 I have spoken of the monogamy and conjugal fidelity of the Veddahs as favourably contrasting with the opposite practices among the Kandyans. But there was an ancient custom amongst them which has scarcely yet become extinct, a custom most revolting to every civilized mind. It is that which sanctions the marriage of a man with his younger sister. To marry an elder sister or aunt would, in their estimation, be incestuous, a connection in every respect as revolting to them as it would be to us—as much out of the question and inadmissible as the marriage with the younger sister was proper and natural. It was, in fact, *the* proper marriage, as much so as the marriage between the father's sister's son and the mother's brother's daughter is the most proper that a Kandyan can contract.‡

V 582 835 How far this practice has become obsolete it is hard to say. Amongst the Veddahs of Bintenne it has certainly ceased, and they now regard it with disgust.§ Still it has not very long died out, for many amongst them have seen the children of such marriages, and even cited some by name to me. But I question if it has yet disappeared from amongst the wilder Veddahs of Nilgala. For some time I believed that it was invariably practised there, and

---

* It is, in fact, what the Singhalese call the Diya lanoowa, the "water-string," *i. e.*, the string which supports the rag of cloth which natives wear when bathing, and which is "full dress" among the Veddahs.

† The following anecdote is an apt illustration of the value set by a Kandyan on the marriage tie. One of the civil officers of the fort was travelling through his district, explaining the provisions of the new Kandyan marriage ordinance, when a native said to him—"I don't like that ordinance at all." "Why?" he asked. "Why, you tell us we are not to send away our wives, if we like. Now, suppose I bought a piece of rice land, *and afterwards found my wife did not know how to weed!*"

‡ "Every Bedouin has a right to marry his father's brother's daughter before she is given to a stranger; and hence "cousin" (bint' amm), in polite phrase, signifies "wife." Burton's *El Medina Mecca*, vol. iii. A Kandyan would regard such a marriage incestuous, for such first cousins are considered sisters. The term applied to such a female cousin as is V 5 [601] mentioned in the text as the proper bride for a Kandyan is "noona," which in Veddah dialect is the word for "wife." The corresponding word "noora" is the Veddah term for "husband."

§ Mr. Birch informs me that the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district "indignantly deny marrying their sisters."

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

it is only because, after repeated and careful inquiry, I cannot establish the fact of such a marriage now actually existing, that I am inclined to consider that it is becoming obsolete. But I should be almost justified as describing it as an existing custom, for many of the young men are the offspring of such connections. The practice is spoken of by them in the present tense, and alluded to as a matter of course, without the smallest repugnance.* 582 835

Amongst the Bintenne Veddahs, then, it may be said to have been, for perhaps two generations or so, extinct. Amongst those of Nilgala it is, at most, only becoming so. And it has, undoubtedly, been the custom among both from time immemorial. Utterly revolting as it is to us, we must remember that with them it was a custom sanctioned by the practice of ages. It is not the consequence of a "poor community," nor the growth of mere barbarism. If it were, the elder sister would be equally sought after; if it were, polygamy in all its forms would be found among them. There would, in fact, be no restraint.†

I have before described the short stature of the Veddahs—their weak and vacant expression, their striking resemblance to each other, characteristics much more marked upon the Veddahs of Nilgala than those of Bintenne. The practice I have just noticed is quite sufficient to account for these. 142 143

It might naturally be supposed that such marriages would produce, besides a stunted growth, insanity, idiocy, and epilepsy. But I find few traces of these maladies. Madness rarely occurs, idiocy still less frequently; though dogged stupidity is not at all uncommon amongst them.‡ But in other respects the injurious effects of this custom would seem to be plainly discernible. The 143 158 000

* I am not surprised that Tennent should be ignorant of this custom. It is a most difficult task to obtain intelligible answers to the commonest questions from those ignorant creatures; and unless a clue to some subject is accidentally found, the inquirer would learn little. There are practices as revolting, though not so peculiar, among some of the Indian tribes.

† It is curious that the only trace I can find of anything approaching to a belief in retributive justice is a tradition of a man, whose name even has been preserved, and whose family still exists, who, they say, was eaten by worms for having exceeded the authorized limit, and formed connections with his elder sisters and aunts. By whom this punishment was inflicted they do not pretend to say; but the painful death they regard as the direct consequence of his incest.

‡ Madness is by no means common among them. They believe if one man curse another, the man who is cursed becomes mad. This is evidently the same superstition as is common among the Singhalese, and known as the "Kata waha," "the evil mouth," or "poison of the mouth," equivalent to the prevalent faith in the "Ess waha," "the evil eye," or "poison of the eye." Burton, in his *El Medinah Mecca*, says, "the national type has been preserved by systematic intermarriages. No evil results are anticipated from the union of first cousins; and the experience of ages and of a nation may be trusted." 754

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

The
162 race is rapidly becoming extinct; large families are all but un-
163 known, and longevity is very rare. I have been at some pains to obtain reliable data to elucidate these points. Out of seventy-two Veddahs in Nilgala, fifty were adults, twenty-two children. In one small sept, or family, there were nine adults and one child; in another, one child and eight adults; and so on. In Bintenne, out of three hundred and eight Veddahs, a hundred and seventy-five were adults, a hundred and thirty-three children. Here the disproportion is not so marked; but in one of the smaller tribes, more isolated than the rest, there were twenty adults and but four children.

The paucity of children, I think, must be ascribed to the degeneracy produced by such close intermarriages, for I have never
[847] heard a suspicion of infanticide existing among them.* Out of fifty adults in Nilgala, only one appeared to have numbered seventy years, and but eight to have exceeded fifty. In Bintenne, of a hundred and seventy-five adults, two only seemed to have reached their seventieth, and but fourteen to have exceeded their fiftieth years. Such statistics seem to show the practical results of such connections. The Nilgala Veddahs, who still maintain an almost total isolation from other people, are rapidly disappearing.† The Veddahs of Bintenne, who have abandoned the pernicious custom which I have described, and still intermarry among themselves, are becoming extinct, though more gradually.

[852] The Veddahs have no ceremonies at the birth of a child, nor
764 when the name is given; and though, in Bintenne, they have long buried and mourned their dead, those of Nilgala have only commenced, in this generation, to do either.

Till very recently the dead man was left where he died. The survivors covered the body with leaves, put a heavy stone upon its chest, and sought some other cave, leaving that in which the death occurred to the spirit of the deceased. They still desert the scene of the death, and the bones, constantly found in good preservation in the caves of Nilgala, prove how recently the practice of leaving the body unburied has been abandoned.

000 Tennent says, truly, that they have "no system of caste among

* It certainly was practised among the Kandyans, but never, I think, to any great extent. I have, however, seen two persons who, when infants, were buried alive by their mothers, and rescued.

† KNOX speaks, page 62, of Veddahs, "who lived about Hourly, the remotest of the king's dominions," who were "pretty tame," and used "to come and buy and sell among the people," who resented "being pressed to serve the king" in some expedition, and so "removed further into the woods and would be seen no more." "Hourly" is evidently the village of "Oera-cola," on the furthest boundary of the Nilgala district, which, though, as tradition has it, it was once peopled by Veddahs, is now exclusively inhabited by Singhalese.

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Tennent says truly, that they have "no system of caste among themselves; but, singular to say, this degraded race is still regarded by the Singhalese as of most honourable extraction, and is recognized by them as belonging to one of the highest castes;"* and he relates a legend, in which he says this belief originates; a legend, however, at which, he tells us, the Veddahs themselves smile, and of which they profess their ignorance. 648 [564]

As I shall afterwards show, I do not think this legend, which is confessedly not a Veddah tradition, has anything to do with the consideration with which, so far as their caste goes, the Singhalese regard them. Were there no better reason, the fact that the legend is by no means universal among the Singhalese residing in their vicinity, would probably be sufficient reason to reject it.

But Tennent has not been correctly informed with regard to their own belief regarding their own origin. For strange as it appears, they claim to be of royal descent. Beyond this vague assertion they profess to know nothing. They do not attempt to trace their descent from any particular king. They know nothing of their history. This is their *one* tradition; and though the neighbouring Singhalese, on whom they affect to look down, smile at their claim to such an illustrious origin, they do "regard them as of most honourable extraction," and in reply to any inquiry respecting it, only repeat the Veddah version of their royal lineage. It is said, too, that in the time of the native government the Veddahs always spoke of the king as "hoora," or "cousin."† 173

The Veddahs have no particular name by which they distinguish themselves, which would aid us in speculating on their origin. They simply call themselves "Weddah," and are so called, while they speak of the ordinary natives of the country as "Singhalese." The term "Habara," or "wild, barbarous," is applied to Veddahs, in books, and also "Vannacharakiya," which means "a hunter." 101

As Knox has told us, they speak the Singhalese language; but they do so with an accent and intonation so strange, that it sounds like some foreign tongue. It seems, as it were, "broken Singhalese," such as a man would speak to whom the language was an acquired one, so much does their pronunciation differ from that of their Kandyan neighbours. Although the identity between the Veddah dialect and Singhalese is evident, when they are compared with each other, it would require a very quick and accurate ear, indeed, to detect the similarity between them when both are spoken. 191 197

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, c. iii.

† It is reported, too, that some Veddahs do not claim royal descent, but that only a portion of them do. The Bicsteau and Nilgala Veddahs certainly, say they, are "Raja-wansiya," of royal lineage.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 As may be supposed, the vocabulary of such a barbarous race is very limited. It only contains such phrases as are required to describe the most striking objects of nature, and those which enter into the daily life of the people themselves. So rude and primitive is their dialect that the most ordinary objects and actions of life are described by quaint periphrasis. As, for example, to walk is "to beat (the ground) with hammers"; a child is "a bud"; the grains of rice are "round things"; an elephant is not inappropriately termed "a beast like a mountain"; while the fallow deer of the island (*Axis maculata*) are, with the strictest accuracy, called "spotted animals"; and wild boars, "long-snouted ones."*

They use none of the honorifics so profusely common in Singhalese, the pronoun "*to*," "thou" being alone used, whether they are addressing each other, or those whose position would entitle them to outward respect. They can neither read nor write, nor 212 can I trace the faintest vestige of their ever having possessed any literature, in the lowest sense in which that word can be used.† 802 They count with difficulty on their fingers, and so little notion 805 have they of time, that it is difficult to make them understand that they are to keep an engagement at a more remote period than the next day.

I have compared the scant and unsatisfactory collection of 197 words, which I have been able to make, with almost all the vocabularies of the aboriginal tribes of India, published in the *Asiatic Society's Journal*, and though in some of them I have found isolated instances of striking resemblance, these are probably merely accidental. The subject is one which requires further investigation: and a careful examination of the dialect, by any one competent to perform the task, would be interesting, although I question if it would elicit more than we at present know of the origin of the Veddahs.

I append to this paper, as a specimen of their patois, a list of some of their words, distinguishing between those which probably

* It is very curious that the Veddah term for the Ceylon elk, the Samba deer of India (*Rusa Aristotelis*), is "gawra," *vide* Tennent's remarks in his *Natural History of Ceylon*, p. 49, on the tradition of the former existence in Ceylon of the "Bos gaurus" of Hindustan. I have myself heard the "gaur" described by old Kandyans, who have seen it in the mountain forests, as an animal with, as it were, the body of a buffalo and the legs of an elk. And there are many places still bearing the name "gaura," as, for example, besides gaura elica, mentioned by Tennent, gaura kelle—the forest of the gaur—gaura kanda; and there is a kind of grass called gaura mannie. It is curious that the elk should be called gaura by the Veddahs, and by no one else.

† About ten years ago, the Government established a school for the Veddahs of Bintenne, but it proved a failure.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

differ from the Singhalese, and those which, though Singhalese, are, in the sense here used, peculiar to the Veddahs. It has been suggested to me that some of the former are derived directly from the Sanskrit, but as I am incompetent to judge of the accuracy of these suggestions, I do not venture to give the conjectural derivations which I have received. 197

I have, myself, noted down, and caused to be noted down from dictation, several Veddah charms, which are not, I am informed, known to the Singhalese, though in some there is a certain resemblance to charms in use by the latter. Whether corrupted during the many ages in which they have been unintelligently repeated, or whether they are in a form of Singhalese now obsolete, or both, they are not easily translated. They are charms used in illness, and for protection against elephants, leopards, bears, and wild boars. 789 [755]

The Veddahs are at present chiefly known by names similar to those in use among the neighbouring Singhalese, and it is curious to observe how oddly they are jumbled together. In one family are to be found names which would only be appropriate to Kandyans of the highest caste, and names which could only be borne by the lowest. Some of their names, too, belong to Hindoos, and not to Singhalese. Some are not proper names at all; while, most strange of all, others, though utterly unknown in Ceylon, either to Tamils or Singhalese, are in common use in Bengal, and refer directly to Hindoo deities, or personages mentioned in the Purânas. 551 171

The names of the preceding generation appear to have differed in a very marked manner from the Singhalese names by which the Veddahs now are for the most part known; and those in the list appended to this paper are chiefly the names of the fathers and mothers of the present Veddahs. Most of these I was able, by the kindness of Colonel Vincent Eyre, C.B., R.A., to submit to the inspection of Professor Lees, of Bengal, and they are pronounced by him to have a decided Sanskrit affinity. [197]

It is a singular and significant fact, that not only are many of their names unknown in Ceylon, but their meaning is utterly unintelligible to the Veddahs themselves, among whom they were family designations which have descended to them from father to son for ages.

It is strange that so many have written of the Veddahs, and have been contented with information at once scanty and inaccurate. Davy believed that they had no names.* Tennent affirms that they have no charms—no "instinct of worship"—and doubts 114

* Davy, *Account of the Veddahs*, p. 115 of his work.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 If they have even any language. "Some," he says, "are so degraded that it has appeared doubtful whether they possess any language whatever; and not only is their dialect incomprehensible to a Singhalese, but even their communications with each other are made by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which bear little or no resemblance to distinct words or systematized language."* I can only say that I have been repeatedly among the very wildest of the race—indeed the "wretched outcasts," here so summarily deprived of the power of speech, are those whom I have been endeavouring to describe, and I never knew one of them at a loss for words sufficiently intelligible to convey his meaning, not to his fellows only, but to the Singhalese of the neighbourhood, who are all, more or less, acquainted with the Veddah patois.

775 [681] The Veddahs have no idea of a future state of rewards and punishments; for the vague vestige of a belief in retributive justice, which I have before mentioned, cannot be said to show any faith in the punishment by a Superior Power of sinners in this world.

114 It has been most truly said that it is a matter of almost insuperable difficulty to arrive at a proper understanding of the creed of barbarous tribes through the medium of direct questioning, and that nothing can be more vague than all their statements on this most important subject.†

771 It is not to be wondered at that a people so barbarous as the Veddahs are—without literature of any kind—who have lived in the depth of the forests in almost complete seclusion for centuries on centuries, should be incapable themselves of giving any definite or intelligent account of what they do believe. They are unable to express in language their ideas on subjects, which, even in their own minds, have never assumed any distinct form; and though they are ready enough to answer the questions put to them, it is no easy task so to frame them as to make their object intelligible to such rude and unlettered savages. The result 776 of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than for evil. Still, vague as this belief is, not even the

* Tennent, vol. ii, pt. ix, c. iii, p. 441, 2nd ed. This is stated on the authority of "a gentleman who resided long in their vicinity, G. R. Mercer, Esq., of the Civil Service, who held office at Badulla." Those who remember that gentleman's love of a practical joke, will smile at seeing this "joke" gravely recorded in the *Physical, Historical, and Topographical Account of the Island of Ceylon*, by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, K.C.S., LL.D., etc.; and my able predecessor, Mr. Mercer, must have been as much amused at seeing it there, as any one else.

† See Hodgson's "Brief Note on Indian Ethnology," Bengal Asiatic Society's *Journal*, March 1849.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

wildest Veddahs are without an "instinct of worship." They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread. 776

Such appears to be the form which the superstitions of every savage tribe naturally assume,—the necessity for a belief in something more than human, imparting to the commonest objects a supernatural character. But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every near relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their "ndhya yakoon," kindred spirits. They describe them as "ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting." In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, "bilindoo yakkoon," or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke.* 776 775 769

It is a pretty belief, and contrasts favourably with the superstitions of the Kandyans, who have spirits enough in their system, but almost all thoroughly malignant, and needing constant propitiation. But the Veddah spirit-world is singularly free from evil. I can find only one *absolutely* malignant spirit in it whom they really fear;† though, like all savages, they have an undefined awe of the nameless spirits whom they believe to haunt the darkness. The shades of their ancestors and of their children seem to be purely benevolent. The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following. An arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm. 769 776 782

"Mà miya, mà miy, mà deyk'
Tepang kryihetti mittigan yandà'h!" [539]

* They also speak of them as "witera yakkoon," "child-spirits." They seem to prefer their great-grandmother (maha kiri amma) to the rest of their defunct ancestors; but I cannot ascertain any cause for their preference for the old lady. I may, however, be wrong in describing it as a preference. It may be the reverse, for she is invoked chiefly in cases of sickness, when the patient is supposed to be suffering from the malignity of a spirit. [153]

† Awtramada Yakka, who especially injures women, lying wait for them in the forest.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
776
[539]

"My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering!"*

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions when the intervention of the guardian spirits is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.†

[224] Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. "Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come, wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!" And they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.‡

776 782 They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. "Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!" was the only reply I received to repeated questions.§ They have

* I find in my notes another version of this invocation, which slightly alters the first words. It runs thus: "Ma mini, ma mini!—my gem, my gem;" but "miya," which signifies "dead," is the most common. The word in the invocation translated "God" is evidently a corruption of the Sanskrit deva, a god or divinity. EDIT.]

† And they are invoked without any ceremony at all—by a mere mental ejaculation. I once saw a Veddah make a bad shot, and he threw down his bow with a gesture of impatience, saying—"That was because I did not call on my Billindoo Yakkoon." And before making his next shot, he muttered an invocation.

‡ A superstition similar somewhat to this is prevalent among the neighbouring Singhalese. If a man die who has lived a good life, his relatives give alms to the poor, calling on the dead by name to look down on them, and enable them to follow his good example. If he has lived an evil life, alms are also given; but these are propitiatory offerings for his sins, and to avert his evil influence from his survivors. For, in this case, he has become an evil spirit, apt to injure his own family and their cattle unless civilly treated. The degree of malignity depends on the degree of evil in the life led by deceased. If he dies with a hankering after worldly things, he haunts the house in which he lived in a variety of forms—perhaps most commonly that of a toad or a cobra, probably because these frequent houses. It is also, in some parts, a common belief that if a man die, and shortly after one of the family fall sick, and is not cured by the usual medicines and ceremonies, the sickness is attributed to the spirit of the dead, who must be propitiated by a mess of rice, left in the house for him. This, generally, is supposed to effect a cure.

[782] § It is curious that in one of their invocations, "mâ Deyâ", my God! occurs, see before; and that of thunder they say, "a spirit, or a god has cried out".

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the *few* sticks sometimes erected with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings. 782 776 [346]

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medicine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, so universal amongst Buddhists. 755 769 [775]

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded. 771 174

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡ [821]

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Weddo-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Gonapána-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini" who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Gonapána-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddiratte, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-3. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild beasts*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon, 789

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 Almost omnivorous, I have before remarked their scrupulous
171 abstinence from the flesh of cows and fowls, though they can assign no reason for it. Now, though good Buddhists as well as Hindús reject the flesh of cows, yet since the Veddahs have never associated with their Buddhist neighbours, they cannot have acquired this prejudice from them.

And though all over the south-east part of Ceylon, where even the superstitious awe of Skanda extends, the cock, the device on his banner, is to a certain degree respected; yet, since the Veddahs care no more for Skanda than they do for all the other gods in the Hindú Pantheon—the very names of whom, *as gods*, are unknown to them, they would not respect his sacred cock.* In

789 but Pasé-B'uddho—the only single allusion to Buddhism among them; but the very meaning of this and other charms is unknown to the Veddahs. They are repeated by rote; they do not pause to understand them, and could not if they would. It is enough for them, as for most Oriental people, that a particular formula is to serve a particular purpose.

Veddah Charm for Protection against a Wild Boar.

539

Ira deyané ökma.	Boar (!) of the sun-god!
Sanda deyané ökma.	Boar (!) of the moon-god!
Pasé budané ökma.	Boar (!) of the Pasé Buddha!
Sita ökma situ.	Stay, boar, stay!

Singhalese Charm for Tooth ache.

Ira deyané myä!	Worm of the sun-god!
Sanda deyané myä!	Worm of the moon-god!
Pasé Budané myä!	Worm of the Pasé Buddha!
Daté nositoo dat myä!	Stay not in the tooth, thou tooth-worm!

171 These are identical; yet the Veddahs and the Singhalese certainly do not associate so closely as to borrow one another's charms. Have they descended in each race since the time they were one? The term *ökma* I can get no satisfactory explanation of. It is not Singhalese, certainly. I assume it means "wild boar", as this is the charm to arrest a boar in the path; but it is not the term used by the Veddahs for a boar in ordinary conversation. The allusion to the Pasé, or Pachè, Buddha, is curious as occurring in both; the one people being anything but Buddhist, while Buddhism is the religion of the other. As Gotama Buddha visited Ceylon long anterior to the final establishment of Buddhism in Ceylon, and descended in Bintenne, may not this solitary allusion to the religion have been handed down in this form among the Veddahs from a period even before the invasion by Wijaija? In the form of a charm which is repeated by rote, such an allusion would be most naturally retained. So far from having any Buddhist tendencies, they do not even show the slightest outward respect in the presence of a Buddhist priest. The other Veddah charms are, I believe, quite unlike those of the Singhalese, but on that point I am still making inquiries; aided, as I have been throughout, by Mr. De Leyn, the able and intelligent modhar of Beulotta.

* The far-famed Hindu temple of Katragam, which attracts thousands of pilgrims annually from India, and is regarded with awe by the Singhalese, is dedicated to Skanda, the Indian Mars. The temple is built on a spot which, according to tradition (though it is not mentioned in the Skanda Puranas), is the site of Skanda's camp in his wars with the Asuras.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

fact, neither scruple is now a religious one with them. Their 262
aversion to beef and fowls is an hereditary prejudice, now become 171
a custom amongst them.

The names borne by many of them are the designations of 551
Hindú gods and goddesses. It seems clear then, that these 171
Hindú customs and prejudices—these Hindú names, which we find still lingering amongst a people which does not profess that faith, and for twenty centuries have been far removed from those who do, indicate either that the Veddahs once professed it, or [174]
lived in the closest intercourse with those who did.*

The complicated and artificial ceremonial of that religion has naturally died away during the long ages of isolation in which the Veddahs have lived; the vestiges of its former existence among them have been preserved only in some of its strongest prejudices, and in the names derived from the Hindú mythology which have descended as customary family designations to the Veddahs of the present day.†

I should hardly say that the cock is "respected" in the neighbourhood of 171
Katagam; but fowls are rarely eaten by the people there, who, if they eat them, must undergo a course of purification. A fowl curry involves the necessity of an ablution of the head with limes and saffron. Peafowls, too, are rejected as an article of food in that part of the island, for a peacock is represented as the vehicle of the gods: of all this, however, and of the existence of Skanda or of Katragam, the Veddahs are profoundly ignorant. The names of Skanda are common appellations among Veddah men, and that of Valli, Skanda's consort, a common name for Veddah women.

* Let it be remembered that the Veddahs, of whom I am writing, have never had any communicatian with the Tamil-speaking Veddahs who inhabit the seacoast of the Batticaloa district, who are in direct contiguity with Hindúa. [The inference drawn is not warranted by the fact referred to. The Hindús occasionally have names taken from those of foreign languages. Thus the Regent of Nepal, a pure and high-caste Hindú, bore a name consisting of two Persian words. EDIT.]

† It was not for years after I had collected this information regarding the superstitions of the Veddahs, that I read the Laws of Menu. It is impossible not to be struck with the similarity, if not identity, of their rude worship and its precepts; *e.g.*

"72. But whoever cherishes not the five orders of beings—those who demand hospitality—those whom he ought to maintain—*his departed forefathers* and himself—that man lives not, even though he breathes."

The Brahman is ordered to make an oblation every day to the following divinities, viz.:—

"First to Agni, *god of fire*, and to the *lunar god*;" .... to the "*goddess of the day*"; .... the *goddess of the earth and sky*"; to the "*winds*" and "*water gods*"; the "*gods of large trees*"; to the spirits "*that walk in light*", and those "*who walk in darkness.*" The reverence of deceased ancestors is then insisted on. "The Pitris, or great progenitors, are free from all wrath—intent on purity—even exempt from sensual passions—endued with exalted qualities."

"The divine Manes are always pleased with an oblation in *empty glades*,

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

171 But what is Hindú is, so to speak, the *dead* part of their religious belief. What is in daily practice, bears the closest resemblance to the Nát worship of the aboriginal tribes of India.*

I have, in the preceding pages, faithfully recorded the habits, customs, and superstitions of the "wilder sort" of the Veddahs. 194 To have discussed the "tamer sort," or those who, for a considerable period, have maintained intercourse with the Singhalese or people of the country, would have been a mere waste of time; or to have considered them in connection with their more barbarous brethren would have been to have fallen into the very error, which has marred the exceedingly interesting notice of the aboriginal race of Ceylon, which Tennent has given us. It would have been like weaving a woof of bleached and unbleached threads, so intermingled and complicated that a clear perception of either were impossible. I have confined myself, therefore, exclusively to the most barbarous specimens of the race, for wild as the wildest of the Batticaloa district are, they are less barbarous than these.

I now propose to consider the evidence I have collected, with a 174 view to fixing the ethnical origin of these Veddahs. I have shewn that the term "Veddah" has no distinctive signification—that it may be, and is applied to barbarous races generally, who depend on hunting for their support, and hence, to the wild tribes in India, who are supposed to be the aborigines of the country.

It has always been assumed, that the Veddahs of Ceylon are the descendants of the race which originally peopled the island, or, at any rate, of that which inhabited it prior to its conquest and colonisation by Wijaya and his followers.† Of this, there can be

---

naturally clean, on the banks of rivers, and in solitary spots." Sir William Jones's works.

* A paper "On the Veddahs of Bintenne", by the Rev. J. Gillings, was published in the Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1853. Mr. Gilling's paper treats of the Veddahs inhabiting that portion of Bintenne which is in the district of Batticaloa, and it shews how materially they differ from the Veddahs of Nigala and the Badulla Bintenne, whom I have just described. He states that they have intermarried with the Singhalese, with whom they are "mixed up to a large extent"—that "adultery and polygamy are still common among them"—that "theft and lying are prevalent"; and he speaks of divorce as habitual. The absence of these practices among the Veddahs of the Badulla district is clearly to be accounted for by the greater isolation in which they have lived.

† Nothing can be more charming than that portion of Tennent's work in which he undertakes the proof that they are the descendants of the Yakkhos, as the Buddhistical writers termed the aborigines. And we may well forgive him for giving way to the temptation of reviving exploded customs, and discussing them in the present tense, in order to prove that the habits of the Veddahs, in the year of grace 1860, are identical with those of the Beeds, in A.D. 400; for there can be no doubt that, about a century ago

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

little doubt; and if additional proof were needed, I may add the curious fact, that there is probably at this moment—there certainly was in 1855—in use among the Veddahs, one at least of the few Yakkho names, mentioned in the Mahawanso. For in the name, Pusamittya—unknown among the Singhalese—we have no difficulty in recognizing the designation of that Yakkho princess, whose wedding festivities afforded to Kuweni a fitting opportunity for the execution of her treacherous scheme for the establishment of Wijaya's power, by the slaughter of her own countrymen.* 174

Tennent argues that the aborigines of Ceylon were probably a branch of the same stock which colonized the Dekkan, both on account of the similarity of the demon worship, said to be practised by them, with the superstitions found among the wild tribes, who undoubtedly represent the aboriginal race of the Peninsula; and on account of the affinity of Singhalese with the group of languages still in use in the Dekkan, a fact fully and clearly established by the labours of Mr. Ellis of Madras.

Though the results of my own careful and personal inquiries into the customs and superstitions of the Veddahs, do not disclose actual demon worship, they establish, I think, their identity with those of many of the hill tribes of India, and fully justify the assumption of the common origin of the people. It is true, that the customs of all barbarous races must closely resemble each other, being alike derived in so many instances from the objects of nature, common to all whose home is the forest and the mountain.

But in the worship of their departed ancestors, and the spirits of the dead, the belief in the nameless genii of the rocks and rivers, of the hills and trees and forests; the invocation of the sun and moon; the absence of idolatry; the abhorrence of polygamy; the absence of divorce, or separation; the equality of rank; the value attached to the bow, arrow, and hunting-dog; the offerings to the God of the chase, and the charms to protect them from wild beasts, the Veddahs of Ceylon and many of the

---

perhaps, the peculiarities mentioned by the ancient travellers did exist among the Veddahs of Ceylon.

* "Thereupon she, being desirous of conferring the whole sovereignty on her lord, replied .... In the city Siriwattha, in this island, is a Yakkho sovereign (Kalaseno), and in the Yakkho city (Lankapura) there is another sovereign. Having conducted his daughter (*Pusamitta*) thither, her mother (Kondanamika) is now bestowing that daughter at a marriage festival on the sovereign there..... Such an assemblage will not occur again. Lord! this very day extirpate the Yakkhos." Turnour's *Mahawanso*, chap. viii, p. 47. Vide also Tennent's remarks on the historical value of this ancient chronicle, and Turnour's introduction to his valuable translation of the work.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 wild tribes of India are identical: the points of resemblance are too close to be mere fortuitous coincidences.*

* See the accounts of wild tribes of India in the Journals of the Royal Asiatic Society; of the Bengal Asiatic Society; and of that of Singapore. But especially see the account of the Khonds, one of the Pulindas, or wild tribes of Orissa, by Capt. MacPherson, vol. vii, Journal Royal Asiatic Soc. They worship the sun and moon, the spirits of hills, of stones, and of forests. They propitiate the god of the chase with ceremonies not unlike those of the Veddahs, the weapons of the hunter bearing a prominent part in them. Can the "Bulenda Silenda", classified among their local divinities, of which unfortunately no particulars are given, have any relation to the "Bilinda" or "Bilindoo" of the Veddahs? It is worthy of note that the language of Uriya or Orissa is said to bear a marked resemblance to the Singhalese.

See also an account of the Puttuwas or Juanguas, who inhabit certain of the tributary Mehals of Cuttack, by Mr. Samuels of the Bengal civil service. Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society, 1846. They resemble the Veddahs, apparently, in pursuits, in the absence of distinction of rank, of idolatry, and of priesthood, in their homage to "nameless spirits, which they believe inhabit the woods and mountains", in their worship of deceased ancestors and prayers for protection from wild beasts. See also the notices of the tribes of Northern Cachar. The Meekirs "worship the sun and moon, and large rocks, and trees in the forest, which they consider the abiding places of unknown and invisible deities." Among the Kookies, "a deity exists in every tree", and polygamy is forbidden. See also the *Tamulian* tribes in the valley of Assam, described by Mr. Hodgson in the Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society, 1849. "The Koochs sacrifice to the sun, moon, and stars, to the gods of the rivers, hills, and woods", and "to deceased parents, though they believe not in a future state." The religion of the Bodo and Dhimal is "the natural religion of man, viz. the worship of the most striking and influential of sensible objects, of the starry host, of the terrene elements." They have river gods, forest gods, mountain gods, sun, moon, earth, old gods, and young gods (see a former note on the Veddah's Bilindoo and Witera Yakkoon). Vide also the accounts of the Mechs, and other tribes. In the Tenesserim provinces, adjoining Pegu and Siam, there exists among the aboriginal races the same Nât or spirit-worship. The same worship prevails among the hill tribes between Burmah and Arracan. The Rev. S. Hobbs, formerly a missionary at Tinnevelly, has given me some interesting particulars of a hill tribe, calling themselves, and called by the natives round them, "Mâle arasars", "mountain kings", or simply "arasars", "kings"; among whom he long laboured. They inhabit the hills bordering on the Travancore territory, and in many instances they greatly resemble the Veddahs. See the account of the Hill Arrians residing to the eastward of Cottayam, in the Madras Church Missionary Record, June 1860, who "worship the spirits of their ancestors, and certain local deities supposed to reside in most of the high peaks and rugged rocks." The chastity of their women is another point of resemblance, and their love of truth. See the same publication for January 1862, report by the Rev. J. G. Beüttle. He speaks of "various hill tribes who, though standing in no relationship whatever with the Arrians, yet, like them, call themselves the 'Lords of the Hills'; addressing any one that comes within their reach 'thou'." They subsist on roots, honey, and the produce of the chase. They belong to Travancore. See also the Church Missionary Record for June 1861. The Rev. F. N. Alexander's report on the Koi mission, in which mention is made of the Kois who "worship the spirits of the mountains",

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

The Veddahs, then, are descended from Yakkhos, or aborigines of Ceylon, who were of the same stock, *i. e.* Tamulian, as the aborigines of the Dekkan—a race not Brahminical in faith, nor Sanscrit in speech.* But if, as Tennent believes, the Veddahs are a mere remnant of this ancient race, which fled before the advance of Wijaya and his followers, never blending with the invaders, as the bulk of the aboriginal population undoubtedly did, we should find among them now—for they have never to this day mixed with the people of the country—only such characteristics as would belong to the savage tribes to which they are allied, and as would be indicative of a state of barbarism, from which they had never emerged. 174

Assuredly, we should *not* find marked traces of the Brahminical faith—direct allusions to the Hindú gods and well-known personages in the Puranas—names still in use in Bengal, but unknown in Ceylon, neither Tamil nor Singhalese, but Sanscrit, the language of the Aryans.

All this seems to prove that at some period of their history they were in close and intimate communication with the Sanscrit-speaking Brahminical race of Bengal. Yet we know they are the descendants of the rude Tamulian aborigines.

Whence came these Hindú customs and these Hindú names? Not from contact with, or contiguity to, Hindú races; for the surrounding people, in whose neighbourhood they have lived for centuries, are Buddhist; and there is not even a trace of Buddhism to be found among them.

Whence arose that obstinate love of isolation which has kept them aloof even from those of undoubted Veddah descent? Why do these naked savages affect to look down upon the civilised Singhalese? And, lastly, whence did they derive that remarkable custom which sanctioned the marriage of a man with his younger sister—that strange tradition that they are the descendants of kings?

A glance at the early history of Ceylon will, I think, throw a

---

and call themselves "Doralu", "lords", and their women "Dorasinalu", "ladies", etc. I wish to add here that, at the time I noted down the customs and superstitions of the Veddahs, I had never seen any account of the wild tribes of India. Vide remarks at p. 304, with regard to the names of Skanda and his consort—favourite deities with the Veddahs of India, though unknown to the Veddahs of Ceylon.

* "The Tamulians include the whole of the aborigines of India, whether civilised or uncivilised, from Cape Comorin to the snows, except the inhabitants of the great mountain belt confining the plains of India, towards Thibet, China, and Ava, which are derived from the Thibetan and Indo-Chinese stock." Hodgson on the Aborigines of North Eastern India, Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal, 1849.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 light on this part of the subject. The following is abbreviated from the Mahawanso:—

The King of Wangu* had a beautiful daughter, of whom it was predicted that she should wed a lion, which accordingly came to pass. By her lion-husband she had twins, a son and daughter, named, from their paternal origin, Siha-bahov and Siha-si-wali. The son, when he was sixteen, began to weary of the paternal den, and contrived one day, when his father was out hunting, to escape from it, with his mother on one shoulder, and his sister on the other. The bereaved lion was inconsolable; he neither ate nor drank, and laid waste the country round, in testimony of his grief. The "government" of Wangu (the king appears to have been dead) offered a reward for his death; and Siha-bahov, more patriotic than dutiful, or more mercenary than either, had the satisfaction of presenting the head of his father to the subjects of his grandfather, whose "virtuous ministers, exulting in the exploit, with one accord made him king;" but he preferred the "land of his nativity, the forests of Lala," where he founded the city of Siha-pura, and, marrying his sister, Siha-si-vali, he reigned as king of that country. His wife brought him twins sixteen times! The eldest of the family was Wijaya.

Wijaya appears to have led rather a "fast life," and turned out "a very lawless character," so much so that the people complained to his father. At last, they clamoured for his execution; and the king, first compelling him and each of his seven hundred companions to have half the beard and head shaved, put them on boardship, and turned them adrift without oars or sails.

They drifted to Ceylon, and landed, B.C. 543, on the north-west coast, near Putlaw, where marrying Kuweni, a Yakkho chieftainess, he acquired, by her means, a footing in the island. She betrayed into his hands her own countrymen, the chief of whom he put to death, and, founding the city of Tamana Nuwera,† he assumed the title of king. Having made use of Kuweni to establish his power, he, with a heartlessness worthy of modern times, deserted her for a more advantageous alliance. The repudiated wife protested against being forced to seek a refuge among her own countrymen, but she had served Wijaya's purpose, and he left her to her fate. In despair, she, with the son and daughter

* In the Valley of the Ganges.

† Vide Mr. Cagie Chitty's paper on the "Ruins of Tanana Nuwera," in the sixth volume of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. A local tradition, which represented Wijaya to have landed on a point of land called Tundamuni, a little east of Putlam, was verified by the discovery by the late Mr. Caulfeild, of the Ceylon Civil Service, of the ruins of Tamana Nuwera on the east bank of the Moo-oya, in the forest Kandukalliwail. There is a Tank near still called Tamanavilla.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

she had borne him, Jiwahalto and Disala, sought a home in Lankápura, that city of her own people which she had betrayed into the hands of Wijaya.* 174

But her treachery had not been forgotten; she was instantly put to death, and her children were only saved from a similar fate by the intervention of their maternal uncle, Kumaro, with whom they escaped to "the neighbourhood of the Sumanta mountain," *i.e.*, the country near Adam's peak, and "the elder having grown up married his sister," according to the custom of his father's royal race—a custom afterwards recognized in the Singhalese royal families,† "and settled there, becoming numerous by their sons and daughters, under the protection of the king they resided there, retaining the attributes of the Yakkho," that is relapsing from the more civilized habits of the Hindu invaders, with whom on their father's side they were so closely allied, into the wild life of their maternal ancestors, the untamed aborigines of the island.‡

There, then, amidst the mountains, far removed from the scene of their mother's treachery, brief triumph and death—the children of Wijaya the Indian conqueror and Kuweni the native chieftainess found a refuge, separated from their mother's justly incensed people by upwards of a hundred miles of dense forest, and beyond the reach of their father's followers, now estranged from them, if not hostile too.

There they founded a wild race, condemned as it were from its very origin to barbarism, which was known by the name of Pulindah,§ and there can still be traced the vestiges of their wandering life, and there still exists the tradition that the country once was peopled by Veddahs, who gradually retired towards Bintenne and Wellassé.‖

---

* See a former note.

† Only, however, when no other suitable alliance was procurable. This practice was sanctioned among the ancient Egyptians and Persians. Atopa, daughter of Cyrus, married, first, her own brother Cambyses. The Peruvian Incas married their sisters; but the practice was confined to royalty.

‡ The extracts quoted above are from Turnour's *Mahawanso*. The following is a literal translation of the same passage, in the copy of the *Mahawanso*, in the Asgiria Wihasse in Kandy:—"They repaired to the rock Sumanta kooba; and being permitted by king Wijaya to dwell there, they became man and wife, and had children and grandchildren. Thus, a wansiya (a race) sprung up, called Pulindah."

§ Vide note at page 185 of Wilson's Vishnu Purana. "Pulinda is applied to any wild or barbarous tribe;" and they are met with in the deserts along the Indus, the mountains and forests across Central India. What more natural than that Wijaya's followers and descendants should give the same terms to the wild tribes here? Pulinda, one of the fifty-six countries of the Hindu geography.

‖ Wellassé, in the district of Badulla. Nilgala is a subdivision of Wellassé.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 I have said that the Veddahs have but one tradition of their origin, that they are descended from kings. I have described that peculiar custom which not only sanctions but prescribes, as the most fitting of alliances, the marriage of a brother with his younger sister. This tradition prevails, and this custom obtains, or did obtain, amongst all the tribes of wild Veddahs which I have endeavoured to describe, tribes absolutely illiterate, in the lowest depth of ignorance, utterly unknown to each other, as effectually severed by the intervening hills and forests as if the Atlantic were spread between their hunting grounds.

The bare assertion by a naked savage in the rudest state of barbarism that he is the descendant of kings, seems, at first, a sheer absurdity, though it naturally suggests the inquiry how the claim to so ambitious an origin could have arisen, and having arisen, how it should be so pertinaciously adhered to by tribes unknown to each other.

The custom which sanctions such revolting marriages seems, at first sight, simply a proof of the extreme depth of barbarism to which the race has sunk. But when we consider the tradition in connection with the fact that the Singhalese invariably admit the Veddahs to be of the highest caste, while they in turn affect to look down upon the Singhalese; and when we regard the custom in connection with the story of the marriage of the son and daughter of Wijaya, himself the offspring of a similar connection; when we read the legend of their flight from both father's and mother's kindred to the forests, where, resuming the wild life of their maternal ancestors, they founded a wild race; when we find even yet the district which tradition gives as their refuge, still called by a name indicative of their former existence in it, and still abounding with traces of them—though not a Veddah can be remembered there; and when we can trace among the Veddahs of the present day the remains of Brahmanism—Wijaya's creed—intermingled with the Nât worship, practised by Kuweni's nation; and when there are still in use among them names of Sanskrit affinity, common in India, though, rare among themselves, unknown in Ceylon; it is impossible to resist the conclusion that the wild tribes of the Veddahs are not the "mere remnants of the untamed aborigines," but the descendants of the ill-fated Kuweni and the faithless Wijaya; that they are indeed, as they profess themselves, "the descendants of kings."*

* I arrived at this conclusion by the process I have described, the fact, if it be a fact, gradually dawning on me as I continued my investigations. I was very glad to find my theory corroborated in Mr. De Blur's *Sidath Sangarawa*, which I saw for the first time in May 1860. In the Introduction, p. viii, he says—"Hence, it is by no means improbable, nor therefore

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Why or when they abandoned their sanctuary in the Sumanto mountains* who can tell? Probably, as Tennent says, of "a large section of the natives," they, with too good reason, fled before the advance of the Indian adventurers, at once their kindred and their foes,† and withdrew into the forests and hunting grounds in the south-east of the island."

174

---

unreasonable to suppose, that the limited number of Wijaya's followers, by intermarriage with the more favoured (Yakko) natives, became united into one nation; while the less favoured betook themselves to the utmost recesses of the jungle, where they settled themselves as a distinct tribe of Singhalese, now known as Veddahs. For, *without tracing the Veddahs to the descendants of the natural children of Wijaya*, or to a very small portion of the (Yakko) aborigines of this island, it is difficult to assign to them an origin common with the amalgamated race of Singhalese."

The Kols, a wild tribe in the district of Ellore in Southern India, give an account of their own origin, not unlike that which I attribute to the Veddahs. They say they are descended from Beemadu, brother of Dharma Raja, who had an intrigue with a wild woman of the woods, and that they are sprung from the fruit of this connection (*Madras Church Missionary Record*, June 1861). Beemadu was (in Hindû mythology) one of the five brothers of Dharma Raja, the Hindû Pluto, and (in history) one of the five sons of Pându, king of the Cûrû tribe, near Delhi.

* Percival says, chap. xiii,—"Those bordering on the district of Jaffnapatam" (probably Wannahs are here meant), "and the tribes who inhabit the west and north-west quarters of the island, *between Adam's Peak and the Raygam and Pudwen Korles*, are the only Bedahs who have been seen by Europeans, and are much less wild and ferocious than those who live in the forests of Bintan." I cannot ascertain Percival's authority for Veddahs having been in those districts so recently. I have made careful inquiries, both in these Korles and the district of Saffragam; and though traces of their former existence there are evident and numerous, there is every reason to believe that many centuries have passed since they were there. Fields, villages, and families yet retain the name of Veddahs, as Weddeya pangoo, Wedde coombore, Wedde watte, Wedde ella, Wedde gala, Weddegé, etc., in the district of Saffragam, which is the country at the foot of Adam's Peak, and in the Raygam Korle. Indeed, Saffragam, or Habara gamowa, means the district of Veddahs, or barbarous people; and in this form of the word, the former existence of Veddahs again can be traced, as Habara geddegé, Habera kadowa, etc. It is traditional throughout Saffragam, that once Veddahs predominated over Singhalese in that district, and that, as the latter gained ground, the former withdrew towards Bintenn and Wellassé. But Mr. Macready, of the Civil Service, has given me very important proof of the existence of Veddahs "near the Sumanta mountains." He has given me the translation of some stanzas from a Singhalese poem, written about 400 years ago, called the Pirawi Sandesa, or the Dove's Message. The poem treats of a message sent, by means of a dove, from Cotta (near Colombo) to Vishnu at Dondera, at the extreme south of the island. The dove takes its course exactly over the districts lying below Adam's Peak. The poet addresses the dove, and tells her she will see "the daughters of the Veddahs" clothed in Riti bark, their hair adorned with peacock's plumes. So wild are they that the poet describes the herds of deer as being startled at the sight of them.

† Tennent makes an unaccountable mistake when he says, vol. i, chap.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 That the bulk of the aborigines amalgamated with their conquerors, and became one people with them, there is ample proof; but the race of Kuweni probably held aloof from all. Sha, betraying and betrayed, met her doom on the scene of her treachery.* Her children and immediate kinsfolk, outcasts both from the conquering and conquered races, fled to the forests. A life of isolation was to them not a matter of choice but of necessity. In their seclusion they naturally retained, with the superstition of their mother's people, some remnant of their father's faith, with which they must have been in some degree familiar. They preserved the high-sounding names of India, and, with the pride of rank, adhered to the custom of the marriage of a brother with his younger sister, which was not only the practice of their father's family, but a mark of their royal blood.

Such is the story of the Veddahs. And if my theory be correct it adds a curious chapter to the history of Ceylon.

SPECIMEN OF VEDDAH DIALECT.

(*Vowels to be pronounced as in Italian.*)

192
197

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
The sun	Irra podja	Ira	"Podja", probably a corruption of podiya (Singhalese), a small thing.
The moon	Pāna podja	Handa	Pāna (Singh.), a lamp. Handa pāna (Singh.) moonlight.
The stars	Tarčoka gaija	Tarakāwa	"Gaija", probably a corruption of sodiya (Singh.), anything round. It can hardly be the Sanscrit word gaija, as it would be inappropriate as regards lights apparently so much smaller than the sun and moon.

vii, p. 371,—"Even the children of Wijaya by his first wife, Kuweni, united themselves with their maternal connections, on the repudiation of their mother, and retained the attributes of the Yakkhos." He refers, as his authority, to the seventh chapter of the *Mahawanso*; but this proves the exact contrary. It is there distinctly stated that, so far from doing so, they were compelled to flee with their uncle to avoid their mother's fate, and that Wijaya himself came to their refuge, assigning to them a place of security from their incensed "maternal connections" in "the Sumanta mountain," probably Saffragam, far removed from the scene of their mother's brief triumph and death (the present district of Putlam).

* One copy of the *Mahawanso* describes the scene of her death as near Tamenawille, *i. e.*, Tamenanewera, near Putlam. Her spirit is still supposed to haunt a well in the neighbourhood, whence she issues forth, invisible, and pelts with great stones rash treasure-hunters who invade her solitude in search of the treasure they believe is buried near.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Clouds	Gal pêriya	Walakula	"Gal" is a stone in Singhalese. In Tamil "kâl peria" would signify large stone or rock. 192 197
Thunder	Dewôôla andapi	Hena	"Dewôôla" (Singh.), a spirit, a demon, a god; "andapi" (Singh.), has cried out. [221]
Lightning	Ginna wetunu	Widuliya	"Gini wetunu" (Singh.), fallen fire.
The sky	Pombâna	Ahasa	
The earth	Bimi	Bima	
Water	Diya	Diya	This is also used for rain, for which the Batticalao Veddahs use "wæcha" corruption of "wæssa" (Singh.), rain.
Heat	Ginna	Grisma	"Gini" (Singh.), fire.
Cold	Ehna	Sitala	I find in "Notes on the Languages of Various Tribes in the Valley of Assam" by Mr. Robinson, inspector of schools in Assam, published in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journals, the word "yen" for cold, in the Khamti, Laos, and Siamese; and "aiyang" in the Khari Naga languages.
Man	Minna	Miniha	
Woman	Mehli	Gæni	"Mæhæli" (Singh.), an old woman.
Child	Petji Kekula Bilinda Witera	Lamaya	"Petji", corruption of "pencha" (Sing.), a child; "kakula" (Singh.), a bud; "bilindâ" (Sihgh.), young—a child; and "witera", a bud; are applied only to the child-spirits—Bilindoo-yakkoo; has been explained before.
Boy	Ammi	Kollâ	In the "Notes" before referred to, I find "amie" in the Miri, Abor, and Khari-naga languages, for man.
Girl	Petti	Keli	"Petti" for "penchi" (Singh.), girl.
Father	Appa	Appa	My father, "appa latto"; my mother, "amma latto"; "latto", particle of possession. 192 197 60
Mother	Amma	Amma	
Husband	Hoora	Swamaya	"Hoora" is the Singh. term for that male cousin who is the proper match for a Singhalese girl, viz. her father's sister's, or mother's brother's son. It is traditional that some Veddahs used this term "cousin" when addressing or speaking of the Kandyan kings.
Wife	Nehna	Stri	"Nena" is the Singhalese term for the corresponding female cousin.
Head	Iya, eecha	Isa	192 197
Eye	Eyeyi, echel	Ehhé	
Nose	Naya	Nahé	
Hair	Eecha kola	Isa kaya	"Echa" for "isa", the head; "kola" (Singh.), leaves.
Body	Bopati	Enga	"Pett" (Singh.), the side of the body; "bo" (Singh.), great. "Pet" is stomach in the Punjabi language.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192
197

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Legs	Dannisha-doowiga	Kakoola	"Danahis (Singh.), the knee.
Foot	Patoola	Paya or padiya	
Rice	Watu kuru	Hál	"Watu kuru (Singh), a round thing.
Paddy	Dépotoo-lang	Wee	"Dahayá potu" (Singh.), chaff; "lang", having, *i.e.* rice in the husk—paddy.
Honey	Metchan	Meepenni	"Ména" (Singh.), a bee.
A house	Rukkoola	Gé	"Rukula" (Singh.), a hollow tree.
A tree	Guy	Gaha	
A bow	Doongah	Doona	"Deona" (Singh.), a bow; "gaha" (Singh.), a tree.
Arrow	Morianketti	Iya	
River	Diyagama	Ganga	"Diyagama" (Singh.), a water course.
Dog	Kuko, Ketowa, Balo	Bala	"Kukka" (Singh.), puppies.
Buffalo	Walmánya	Mee ma, or mee hanah	"Wal" (Singh.), wild. I find in Mr. Hodgson's Vocabularies of the Aborigines of the N.E. of Bengal, that "menjek" or "menjeg", is the word for buffalo in the Miri dialect. The Batticalao Veddahs say "mee-botah".
Ceylon elk (*rusa Aristotelis*)	Gawra	Gôna	The Batticalao Veddahs call an elk "gôna-botah".
Deer (*axis maculata*)	Kaberra botah	Meowa	"Kaberra" (Singh.), spotted, "botah" (Singh.), an animal. The Batticalao Veddahs say "meowa-botah".
Pig	Hôta-barria, Okma	Ooré	"Hôta" (Singh.), a snout; "barria", heavy or hanging. Okma is only used by them in charms.
Chetah (Ceylon leopard), *felis pardus*	Poletcha	Diwiya, or kotiyah	The Arasa (or "mountain kings" as they call themselves and are called), a hill tribe in Tuine valley, in South India, call a tiger "poochee". In charms, I find "diwi pulliya", spotted chetah, used; but they always speak of a chetah as "poletcha". The Batticalao Veddahs say "mitá botah"—"mitá", low (in stature).
Bear	Kerri-botah, Kerria, Arachi, Barachi	Walahá	"Arachi" and "barachi" only occur in charms, and it is an evident corruption of the Pali expression "achcha tarachcha"—"achcha" a bear, "tarachcha" a road bear, one which infests roads (tara, a road).*

* I am indebted to Mr. De Zoysa for this interpretation. He adds, "In the Pali Nighandu, 'achcha' is said to mean bear, and 'tarachcha' a bear that bends his neck". According to some, 'tarachcha' is the hyena. Probably the Singhalese writers confused the bear with the hyena, and considered the latter a species of bear.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192
197
[412]

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Elephant	Botah kandah Môlah	Alya, or ota (tusks)	"Kandah" (Singh.), a hill or mountain. "Môlah" (Singh.), the thick heavy black pounder used as a pestle in pounding rice—an allusion, probably, to his trunk. The Batticalao Veddahs say "ut-botah" and "cotah bebéla".
Monkey	Patagahapoceka	Wandura, or rilawa	
Porcupine	Nittawe	Ittawe	
Pengolin (*manis pentadactyla*)	Gal gawra	Kaballiya	
Iguana	Moondé	Talagoya	Called by the Veddahs of Batticalao "goya", "goy-botah", and "hellá".
Lizard	Cat-tombá	Hoona	
Snake	Polongoo	Sarpaya	"Polongo", a very venomous snake. The Batticalao Veddahs call a snake "sarra-botah".
Snail	Tombé	Golu bellá	
A bird	Sappoo Chappoo Sattriaya	Kurulla	In the Assamese and Bengali dialects, birds are called "charal" and "chiriya".
A crow	Kalu eka	Kaká	"Kalu" (Singh.), black, "eka", one.
To walk	Mangwettinawa, mittiganawa	Æwadinawa	"Maga" (Singh.), a road; "wettenawa" (do.), to fall; "mittiya" (do.), a hammer; "gahanawa" (do.), to strike.
To jump	Bota damanawa	Paninawa	"Bota" (Singh.), the neck; "damanawa" (do.), to place.
To shoot (with bow & arrow)	Pennagatcha	Widinawa	
To rain	Diya pompanawa	Wahinawa	
To drink	Diya kanawa	Bônawa	"Diya-kanawa", to eat water—not an uncommon expression among the Kandyans.
To eat	Kapat ennawa	Kanawa	
To speak	Katan kiyanawa, & banawanawa	Kiyanawa and katakaranawa	
To call	Kilápeh	Andagahanawa	
To see	Revîga	Dakenawa	
To die	Miyoona Miya pérâligé	Marenawa	"Miyoona" (Singh.), dead; "miya" (do.), dead; "miya peraliya", dead and gone.
To sleep	Nidenawa	Nidagannawa	
I am hot	Raddagana		
I am cold	Bopati sitaganawa		

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
192 Here	Mobba	Móhi	
197 There	Obba	E'hi	
Far off	Nekat rata	Dura	
Be quick!	To bang	Wigahata	"To", the pronoun thou; in the Bhotia dialect "bangjyap" is, be quick!
Before	Itchétté	Isaraha	
Behind	Patchétté	Pasé	
Exclamation of approbation	Retâ!		
Exclamation of disapprobation	Ise!		

SPECIMENS OF VEDDAH NAMES.

MEN.

551 Lókendra. "Sovereign of the World", from Lóka (Sanscrit), "the world",
171 and Indra; unknown among Singhalese or Tamils of Ceylon, but in use in Bengal.

Kanda. The Singhalese call Skanda, the Indian Mars, to whom the famed temple at Katragam is dedicated, "Kanda Kumaryla"; but the word is unknown as a name.

Weyla. One of the names of Skanda.

Suppa is a corruption of Subhramanya, one of the names of Skanda. Both these are Tamil names in use; and I think I have heard Weyla as a Kandyan name, but it is very uncommon.

Skanda is a favourite of the Veddahs (of India), though unknown to the Veddahs here; and "Valli", one of his consorts (a Veddah female name in use among the Veddahs in Ceylon), was said to have been born of a deer in a forest in Arcot, and found by a Veddah chief Kumâra (Kumâro was Kuweni's uncle, and Kumâ is a Veddah name still in use), and brought up by him.

Kanda, it is true, means, in Singhalese, simply a mountain; but it is more probable that, as a Veddah name, it is a corruption of Skanda, a name descended to them, though they are ignorant of its signification.

Nila. A name in common use in Bengal; also used by Tamils (Hindûs); but entirely unknown as a name among the Singhalese. Nila, a personage mentioned in the Puranas.

Benda. Binda, in common use in Bengal, but unknown in Ceylon, either among Singhalese or Tamils. There is a common appellation, a title rather than a name, Banda, in Ceylon; but Banda does not occur among the Veddahs. Bindawa also is a low-cast name among the Singhalese.

Déwa Denna. Unknown as a name in Ceylon. Equivalent to the Hindû "Deva Dattah", given by the deity—which is its signification in Singhalese.

Millâna. Unknown by Singhalese or Tamils in Ceylon.

Keonchi. From "kuncha" (Sanscrit), to go crookedly—a cripple. In use, with the affix Tamby, among the Tamils, but not in use among the Singhalese.

Kangaria. "Kangana" (Sans.), one of the names of Kandarpa, God of Love. Neither used by Singhalese nor Tamil as a name.

Kowa. No such name among Singhalese or Tamils.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

551
171

Oodira. "Generous, excellent" (Sans.). Not known as a name among either Singhalese or Tamils.

Kuma. "Kurma", the second incarnation of Vishnu. Not a name in Singhalese or Tamil.

Buduwa. A common name in Bengal and Hindústan. Not known among the Singhalese.

Nanga. "Nagna" (Sans.), naked. Not a name in use either by Tamil or Singhalese.

Toota. ! "Tuta" (Hindu), broken, or "tushta" (Sans.), satisfied ! No such name in use among Tamils or Singhalese.

Kombowa. Not known as a name among Singhalese or Tamils.

Kendra. Not a Singhalese or Tamil name; though it forms part of the family titles of some Singhalese families, as Kóuaramudiannó lágé.

Kaira. Neither a Singhalese nor a Tamil name.

Bandena. Neither a Singhalese nor a Tamil name.

Kolu. Neither a Singhalese nor a Tamil name.

Pusamittya. "Pusha", the sun (Sans.); "mitra", friend (Sans.); "pussa" (Singh.), an empty nut; "mittya" (ditto), a bundle. "Pusamitta", a Yakkho name mentioned in the Mahawanso. No such name is known among either Singhalese or Tamils.

Bissa. "Vishwa" (Sans.), the world; "bissa" (Singh.), an oval basket for holding grain. The name occurs among the Veddahs thus: "Koorikhan" (a kind of grain) "bissa". No such name is in use among Singhalese or Tamils.

Paya. A fool or maniac, in Tamil; and "pó" is a spirit, goblin, or *spirit of the dead*, in Singhalese. Not used as a name among the Singhalese.

Kotali. "Kotalé" (Singh.), a vessel with a spout for drinking from. Not a Singhalese nor Tamil name.

Goolia. Not a Singhalese nor Tamil name. "Gooli" (Singh.), anything round.

Heen kenda. Not a Singhalese nor Tamil name. "Heen kenda" is the Singhalese for a kind of tree.

Kanata. Neither a Singhalese not a Tamil name. "Kanata", in Singhalese, is applied to ground which has been cleared, and has partially become covered with brushwood.

WOMEN'S NAMES.

Nili. A heroine in a Tamil drama. A name in use in Bengal, but unknown as a name in Ceylon.

Walli. "Valli", consort of Skanda—see "Kanda" among men's names. "Valli" (Sanscrit), a winding creeper—a term of endearment. Also an honorific affix to names of goddesses and princesses. Not used as a name in Ceylon.

Bâne. Corruption of "Rajni", queen; common name in Bengal. This name is used among low-cast women in the Kandyan country.

Nangi. Not used as a name in Ceylon (vide ante, "Nanga"). It means, in Singhalese, younger sister.

Wyrie. A title of Parvati. A name among Hindús; also Kandyan.

Kumie. See "Kuma". Not a Singhalese name, nor Tamil; but "Kuma" is a Kandyan *female* name, though a Veddah *male* name.

Abendi. "Lounâee" (Sans.), a maiden. A name, I believe, in use among the Singhalese of the maritime provinces.

Abi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

Goberi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

Tehti. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

Tangi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

551 171 Nagi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.
Tandi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.
Kombi. Not a woman's name in Tamil or Singhalese; though "Koombi", with the affix "Hamy", is a man's name in the maritime provinces.
Salon. Neither Singhalese nor Tamil.
Redda. Neither Singhalese nor Tamil.
Pokodi. No such name among the Singhalese or Tamils. "Pookooti", in Singhalese, dwarf-like.

DOGS' NAMES.

552 171 Dimbili. † From "dimba" (Sans.), an egg.
Chirina.
Karita. † From "kelita" (Sans.), playful; or perhaps a diminutive of the Veddah term for a bear, "kerri" or "koria".
Kaddia. † From "kad" (Sans.), to injure. "Kadia" is a venomous ant in Singhalese.
Kina. † From "kunahila" (Singh.), a jackal.
Sangelia. "A chain" in Tamil.
Gora.
Dubera. "Dubera" is, in Singhalese, quarrelsome.
Bakera. Name of a yakha.

3: Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda Propitiation Ceremony.

The Veddas are the remnants of what may for convenience be referred to as the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon. They are found exclusively in that part of the island,—the greater part of it wild jungle country,—which is bounded on the north by the Verugal Aar, on the east by the sea, on the south by the Gal Oya, and on the west by the central mountain *massif* and the middle reaches of the Mahaweliganga. They vary greatly from group to group in the degree to which they have intermarried with their Sinhalese or Tamil neighbours, and have adopted those neigh-

101
131
177
184

[p. 187]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

bours' language, customs, and manner of life. In a few of the remoter forest fastnesses of the interior there are still to be found more or less pure-blooded Veddas who continue to support life by the precarious *chena* cultivation and by hunting: but in addition to these pure-blooded Veddas, who are a very feeble folk indeed in point of numbers, the inhabitants of many of what are generally recognized as Sinhalese villages, and the so-called "coast Veddas," who have their settlements in a few places along the eastern coast to the north of Batticaloa, are to a greater or less extent of Vedda origin. The Veddas as a race have been visited and described by C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann [1] and more recently by Dr. R. L. Spittel [2] of Colombo. Of the coast Veddas the Seligmanns say,—"although these coast Veddas, or Verdas as they call themselves, have intermarried with the Tamils and have adopted many Tamil customs, they still have remains of the old clan system of the Veddas, and although they usually speak Tamil, the majority of them say they have a language of their own which they consider to be the old Vedda language, and which was found to be Sinhalese. They have roughly-built temples, and we were told independently in two settlements that the chief agency worshipped was called Kapalpe or Kabalpe, *i.e.*, "ship spirit." At first we feared some misunderstanding, but when one of us was shown within one of their temples, into which after some trouble he was allowed to penetrate, a small model of a ship partly square rigged was seen, and it was stated that at a special ceremony this was hoisted to the top of a pole some thirty feet tall which stood outside the temple." [3] The ceremony to be described in what follows appears to be in fact that conducted for the propitiation of this "ship spirit" and of the goddess Ammal, and, if so, it is that which the Seligmanns saw rehearsed, in part at any rate, at Vakarai.[4] The description, therefore, imperfect and perhaps inaccurate in some details as it may be, being

[1] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *The Veddas*. See also *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 133 *et seq.*

[2] R. L. Spittel, *Wild Ceylon*.

[3] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 136, 137.

[4] *The Veddas*, pp. 333-9.

3;Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

written from memory aided by not very adequate notes made shortly after the ceremony, helps to fill up a lacuna in the hitherto published records of Vedda customs and ritual. 121 796

In June of 1925 I was engaged, as a junior administrative officer, in dealing with an outbreak of cholera among the Muslim tobacco cultivators in the neighbourhood of a remote coast Vedda village, about forty-four miles north of Batticaloa on the Batticaloa-Trincomalee coast road. Investigation by the medical officer with whom I was associated soon revealed the fact that the focus of the infection was a yet more remote inland district lying behind that part of the coast, and that to grapple effectively with the disease it would be necessary to evacuate the population of that area and to concentrate it, for the treatment of the actually sick and for the segregation of the "contacts," in the comparatively accessible locality where we had already established ourselves, not far from the spot where the first cases to be brought to our notice had occurred. I therefore found myself obliged, at short notice, to enlarge the camp of which I had already begun the construction, and in particular to begin the building of a new hospital hut on a more grandiose scale than that originally contemplated. For the work of construction, which consisted of the erection of a framework of jungle sticks and the covering of it with *cadjans*,—dried and plaited palm branches,—according to the familiar village method, it was necessary to enlist the services of the coast Veddas of the adjoining settlement. The villagers were naturally reluctant to engage in work which they not unreasonably supposed would expose them to the infection, and it called for much tact and persuasiveness on the part of the Chief Headman of the *pattu* to get them to do so. Fully realising that, apart from all other considerations, the occurrence of even one case of cholera among them would effectively put a stop to all co-operation, the Chief Headman and I took, successfully as the event showed, every possible precaution to prevent such a catastrophe. Everything seemed to be going on without let or hindrance when the Chief Headman upset my calculations by announcing that the work must cease for twelve hours on the 8th of June, to enable the villagers to perform a ceremony in honour of the *Pariya Devi* 123 [131 361] [996 997]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 (Great Goddess).[8] It was in vain that I pointed out the urgency
[796 of the work and protested against any delay, even going the
776] length of suggesting that the ceremony should be postponed.
After a good deal of futile argument I was obliged to resign myself to the inevitable.

My chagrin was to some extent lessened when the Chief Headman approached me with an invitation from the people to be present at the ceremony. The invitation was welcome, for it offered an alternative to an evening spent in the company only of a book and of my own thoughts in the solitude of the one-roomed "rest house" where I had my temporary quarters. It was accordingly arranged that the Chief Headman should come to fetch me after my dinner.

The moon,—full two days before,—had already risen when the Chief Headman and his following of village notables emerged from the shadows of the jungle bordering the high road. I got up from the long chair in which I had been sitting on the verandah and joined them, and we set off northwards along the road. After walking along it for about half a mile we turned off to the right through alternate thick jungle and open spaces overgrown with *illuk*-grass, and with here and there a solitary tree casting a deep black shadow under the white light of the moon, in the direction of the mouth of the river which crossed the high road about three and a half miles to the north of our camp. We had
[534] gone in this way perhaps a mile in all when I began to be aware of the rhythmical throbbing of a tom-tom, at first only faint in the distance, somewhere ahead in the jungle. I recollect well the feeling of growing excitement as the sound grew gradually louder and more insistent with our advance. Another mile, and the path which our party was following, at that point through thick
123 jungle, took a sharp turn to the right, and we suddenly found
796 ourselves in a large circular clearing, surrounded by high timber. To our right as we entered were the spectators, squatted upon the ground in rows and facing towards that part of the enclosure which lay to our left. Even the fringes of the jungle seemed to be

[8] This goddess is presumably the goddess Amma, "who sends small-pox and skin diseases": see *The Veddas*, p. 232.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

full of people. To our left was a shrine set up against the jungle wall in that quarter. In a space left clear in front of the shrine stood what can best be described as a sort of "maypole," and between the "maypole" and the spectators was a small area enclosed by lengths of coloured cloth stretched between upright sticks. Within this area could be seen a small temporary booth, with human figures moving about a fire, over which, the Chief Headman informed me, rice was being cooked to be offered to the goddess. 123 796

When we reached the clearing the ceremony had not yet begun. I was conducted to a seat of honour in the front row of the spectators, and sat there for some minutes looking round with interest on the scene, which was lighted here and there by the flare of torches, and listening to the monotonous throb of the tom-tom, which was apparently being played somewhere close by in the jungle. Suddenly the tom-tom took on a more staccato note. Excitement rose among the spectators; and presently, from a gap in the jungle wall on my right and rather behind me as I sat facing the shrine, there defiled into the clearing a procession which slowly threaded its way through the ranks of the spectators to the clear space in front of the shrine. In this procession there were carried two wooden ceremonial swords,[6] which were to be prominent in the dances which followed. In front of the shrine the procession stopped, and a ritual of some sort, the exact nature of which it was impossible to gather in the semi-darkness, was gone through. [373]

At the conclusion of the ritual at the shrine a red flag, bearing embroidered upon it the sun and moon and two human figures, and another device the details of which I was unable to distinguish, but which was possibly the figure of a ship, the emblem of Kapalpe, was hoisted upon the "maypole." This was, perhaps, the formal beginning of the ceremony, for after the hoisting of the flag flowers were brought in baskets, as a mark of respect, to the Chief Headman and myself. Under the Chief Headman's [576]

[6] These swords resembled the ceremonial swords (*ran hadawa*) seen by the Seligmanns only in the ceremony of the invocation of Rahu Yaku at Sitala Wanniya, (fifty miles from the place at which the ceremony here described was performed), and illustrated on p. 256 of *The Veddas*.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 796 guidance I touched the flowers in acknowledgement. After this the rice which had meanwhile been cooked in the enclosure in front of the shrine was offered to the goddess at the shrine, and the enclosure itself was removed.

The offering of the rice appeared to mark the conclusion of the first stage of the ceremony, for it was followed by a procession of those who were to take part in the subsequent dancing,—apparently accompanied by the image of the goddess,—out of the clearing and, as I was informed, down to the river about half a mile away for the sacred bath.

Time dragged by. The moonlight flooded the clearing, showing the ranks of the spectators sitting in their places with oriental patience and talking in undertones. At last the procession of dancers re-entered the clearing and advanced to the open space in front of the shrine. Here a ritual was gone through which seemed to be intended to induce in the dancers a state of "possession,"[7] and after the performance of this ritual the dances began.

First of all two principal dancers, wearing what were evidently ceremonial jackets of red cloth, took, each of them, in one hand one of the wooden swords previously mentioned and in the other [535] a bunch of leaves, and went in and out among the people with a queer shuffling step and a curious rhythmic brandishing of the swords and leaves. Once or twice the leader stopped, and laying his sword upon the head of some person in the crowd began to [787] prophesy.[8] One prophecy, as interpreted to me by the Chief Headman, concerned the outbreak of cholera, and was in the form

[7] The Seligmanns, on pp. 134-5 of *The Veddas*, discuss at some length the nature of "possession" in the Vedda ritual dances.

[8] My impression at the time was that in uttering these prophecies the [114 197] leader of the dance used the Vedda language. Certainly the language used did not appear to me to be either Sinhalese or Tamil. It is true that the Seligmanns say, in the passage quoted in the text, that the "old Vedda language" as spoken by the coast Veddas was found to be Sinhalese; but (i) it seems at least possible that the Vedda language may remain to some extent in ritual use among them; and (ii) I am inclined to think that in the ceremony here described the invocation of Rahu Yaku, described by the Seligmanns on pp. 234-9 of *The Veddas*, was combined with the worship of Amanal and Kapaipo, described by

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a prophecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *choregos*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wach! wach! wach!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announcement was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[9]

them on pp. 335-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were not coast Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one of some interest; but as, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[9] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 It was now two o'clock in the morning, and, though the ceremony was by no means concluded, I had seen enough of it to appreciate its general nature and it behoved me to get a little sleep in preparation for the day's work before me. Accompanied by the Chief Headman I made my way back along the jungle paths and across the open spaces, still white in the moonlight,—with the throb of the tom-tom behind me becoming fainter and fainter as I pursued my way,—to the quiet of my lodging.

R. B. NAISH.

[79b 78] dancers lay upon the ground and certainly appeared to be genuinely and completely unconscious for about ten minutes, *i.e.*, up to the time at which I left the clearing.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

SPOLIA ZEYLANICA.

ISSUED FROM

THE COLOMBO MUSEUM,

CEYLON.

VOLUME X.

[title page]

COLOMBO:
H. R. COTTLE, ACTING GOVERNMENT PRINTER, CEYLON.

1919.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

NOTES ON ANIMAL AND PLANT LIFE IN THE VEDDA COUNTRY.

By FREDERICK LEWIS, F.L.S.

(*With one map.*)

THE locality to which these notes apply represents the whole of the Maha Wedirata, the eastern half of the Buttala-Wedirata, and the southern half of the Panawa Pattu of the Eastern Province. 131

This large extent of country falls within part of Uva from the Monaragala range eastwards, and, as indicated above, part of the Eastern Province, or more specifically within the following rough boundaries. Starting from the conspicuous needle-pointed mountain called Wadinagala on the north, it follows the provincial limits of the Eastern Province to the point where it crosses the Government cart road from Potuvil to Muppane. From that point the road to Muppane is adopted as far at Potuvil, from thence following the sea-coast to Kumuna on the banks of the Kumbukkan river.

Next the Kumbukkan river is followed to a point called Kebilitte, at the foot of the imposing mass of rock shown on the Admiralty charts as "Chimney Hill." From here, a line drawn to Sirigala and thence to Wadinagala encloses the whole.

Within this area there is only one perennial river—the Kumbukkan-aar, which forms the southern limit of the region in question. The next largest stream is the Heda-oya, which in the north-east monsoon is a wide and formidable river. To the north the Lankiya-oya is an important stream, which is supplemented by several considerable branches that after uniting with it form a great branch of the Namal-oya. 133

The Govindu-oya, rising on the east flank of the "Westminster Abbey," forms a useful branch of the Karandi-oya that drains the eastern half of the Maha Wedirata country,

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 while the Wila-oya and Kulapan-oya convey the waters from the eastern limits of the Buttala-Wedirata to the sea through the Panawa Pattu.

The chief mountains are Wadinagala (2,414 ft.), "Westminster Abbey" (1,830 ft.), Degalhella, Nilgala, Hibitalanagala, Kiripokunagala, "Chimney Hill," and Obbekota in the Monaragala range.

Most of these mountains rise abruptly from the plains below, and terminate in high masses of rock. There are, in some cases—particularly on the summit of "Westminster Abbey"—small patches of vegetation, but in the majority the summits of the more conspicuous hills are bare. The country described, therefore, may, broadly speaking, be considered as flat, broken by a few low undulations, the whole being dotted over irregularly with abrupt mountainous masses of rock.

132 The rainfall of this area is comparatively low, and probably does not exceed an average of 60 inches for the year, nearly the whole of which falls in the north-east monsoon, thus involving a period of extreme drought during the south-west monsoon, when for months there is not a drop of rain, followed by torrential showers of variable intensity and uneven distribution.

I am indebted to Mr. Balfour, the Director of Irrigation, for the details of rainfall at Ampari and Rotawewa,* well outside the area I refer to, and to the Surveyor-General† for the same particulars at Monaragala, these being given in tabular form in the Appendix.

137 As might be anticipated from such variation and extreme, it would follow that the vegetation of the country embraced must be, for the most part, what is called dry-zone flora, but other influences have to be considered in relation to distribution. These may be considered as being affected—

(a) By influence of streams rising in high altitudes, or in moister regions;
(b) By the operations of human beings;
(c) By animal transport of seed;
(d) By wind action.

* Appendix A. † Appendix B.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

175

Before passing to a brief detailed investigation of the influences roughly classified as above, it may not be out of place to examine the historical records that apply to the area at the moment under consideration. Thus, we find Arugam Bay corresponds to Mardi, or Morduli Portus, in the time of Ptolemy. Okanda Bay is the same as Bocana—as the sound nearly implies; Kumuna, according to the Sanskrit, is the same as Gonagramuka; while the Kumbukkan river appears in Ptolemy's time to have been called Baracus fluvius.

From this it may be inferred that at least two bays on our eastern coast, south of Batticaloa, were known to the Romans, in addition to the perennial Kumbukkan-aar, and it may be deduced with probable certainty that these bays were ports of call, while the Kumbukkan river was more than likely to have been well known as being the one spot on the east coast where fresh water could always be obtained in both monsoons, for trading boats of light draught.

From this circumstance alone it is probable that the traders of the Roman period had dealings at Kumuna, while Okanda and Arugam Bays both offered a safe anchorage to the traders' vessels.

The whole of the Panawa Pattu from a point south of Komari was included in the region called in Sanskrit times Lambakarna, which, according to Pliny and Ptolemy's map, covered Bocani, of which Bocana (= Okanda) was the port.

Passing to more modern maps, we find about 1681 Knox gives Pottin for Pottuvil; Coemena for Kumuna; and Konokan-aar for the Kumbukkan, showing that these places had, up to that time, sufficient importance to find their recognition in maps of the day. Knox, moreover, distinctly shows Pannoa or Panova Regnum, implying that that part of the country was under a sovereign at that time, insignificant though he may have been.

This evidence, however, which might be elaborated but for pressure on the space of this Paper, points to the definite conclusion that for a considerable period a large extent of our eastern coast was well known, even to the traders of the western world, and we must anticipate, therefore, that in the course of that trade there would be an exchange of

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 commodities which would produce both directly and indirectly its effect upon local plant life, either by the introduction of species of economic value, or by the direct export of woods found at hand.

137 In support of this it is noticeable that to the north-west of Pottuvil, Palu (*Mimusops luxandra*) and Satinwood (*Chloroxylon swietenia*) are comparatively abundant, as contrasted with the scarcity of the same species on the banks of the Kumbukkan river. Again, while Mi (*Bassia longifolia*) is abundant on the Kumbukkan, it may be called rare west of Pottuvil. As this last-named is an introduction of great value, it was spared where it existed near towns, but was neglected in those localities where the population had no permanent settlement, as we find is the case with the majority of the Maha Wedirata "villages" of the present day, and it is only in some places of old establishment that we find the Mi tree now.

361 The present population is very much scattered, its distribution being undoubtedly governed by the presence or absence of water; hence it will be found that the so-called villages are at considerable distances apart, and only where a supply of water can be got, however small or impure, all the year round. On the other hand, one finds the example of an unpopulated area bounded by a perennial stream, as in the case of the valley of the Kumbukkan river for the last thirty miles of its course. Here, however, we have the instance of a stream that rises to an enormous flood that inundates the country to a depth of many feet on both its banks, thus drowning out, in the wet season, any annual cultivation, and leaving the place parched and dry during the periods of drought—two factors sufficient to keep back a people unprepared to establish strong measures to secure permanent occupation.

Nor is this all. The Kumbukkan river, after it passes the foot of the isolated mass of the Monaragala hills, enters a country that afforded the Veddas their best hunting ground, and the Veddas appear in their early history to have been a race of people who depended almost entirely on the chase, using for their dwellings the rudest shelters of caves and temporary branch huts. They had no inducement to build

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

houses of lasting character, as neither their instincts nor habits necessitated such procedure. 361

At Kumuna alone we find a modification of these conditions, in that the greater part of the land where the village stood is above flood level, and possessed of constant fresh water all the year round, besides being at a spot where there was a prospect of trade.

It should be added that all the many anicuts on this river between Kumuna and Kebilitte bear silent testimony to the violence of the floods on the river, and to the once existence of a large population, that probably vanished as soon as these engineering works were destroyed—a population who could enjoy the benefit of the river's floodings by diverting the water into immense tanks, that now are but park-like pieces of jungle. 172

The present inhabitants of the region embraced within the boundaries recorded here are unquestionably of mixed origin, as it is easy to trace on the western limits the pure Sinhalese type of feature, these fading again to a more specific type through the Maha Wedirata, and again changing markedly on the north-east of that country, till it is practically replaced by Tamils in the Panawa Pattu. Thus, it would seem that the Vedda type lay between the Uvan Sinhalese on the west and the Tamil on the east, with the result that frequently one would hear men, while asserting that they were pure Sinhalese, conversing with each other in Tamil. This I found to be actually the case at Bowela, where the villagers insisted that they were of the Goigama caste. 101 162

I was completely baffled in my attempts to secure a vocabulary of Vedda words, though I offered liberal payment for a few lessons in that language. I was pointed out men who were able to speak Vedda, and it was arranged that we should meet, in secret, at a definite time, and at a fixed spot, but when the time came I was told the men had gone away to find stray cattle, or some other equally trumped-up story. 197 198

One night I camped close to some huts in the village of Wattegama, and after my lamp had been put out and I was supposed to be asleep, I heard an animated discussion in the nearest hut, but though I could hear every word, I did not

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[563] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
993 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for 276
I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that [651]
was paid usually in these particular commodities.

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, 231
and special names were given to these pets. 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron 411
for the manufacture of their particular implements, which 412
consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, 326
or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; 439
the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head.

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take [628]
the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda.

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunu- 411
madala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. [824]
It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only.

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a 372
vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on [824]
a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase [redacted] at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and 423
steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title 428
deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 According to my authority the Veddas indulged in no games, unless, indeed, the custom of tossing dry leaves in the air and speculating on their position when they fell back upon the ground could be called a game. This, I am told, was only an occasional recreation, and indulged in by boys alone.

423 614 628 The limits of the hunting ground were jealously guarded by the Veddas, and anything like poaching by the members of one clan in the area recognized as belonging to another was punishable by death. Should a hunter lose his way and fall into the hands of a neighbouring clan, he would be closely watched, remaining for the time being in a sort of captivity. If the man's conduct during that time was such as to disarm suspicion he was permitted to go, and might even be accompanied to the confines of the clan's hunting ground, but he would have to proceed at once without looking back, or his conduct might lead to the belief that he was a spy, with fatal consequences.

226 The method of fishing was to hem in a piece of water by closely fencing in both ends of the stream. People would then enter the enclosed piece of water, armed with slender sticks, thrashing the water therewith till a fish was actually struck, when it would be captured. I saw this actually done in one pool on the Kumbukkan.

173 My informant told me that the Veddas were at one time harassed by a race of pygmy people, called the Nittawo, who lived in the country known as Lenama, that extended from Bagura in the Panawa Pattu in the east to the confines of the Kattaragama hills on the west.

According to him, these people lived in small troops of from 10 to 40, inhabiting caves, hollow trees, and crevices of precipices. They were about 3 feet or a little more in height, exactly like normal human beings, only in miniature. Their legs were hairy like those of the Wanduroo; they walked erect, and had no tails.

Their arms were short and very powerful, with strong hands, and talon-like finger-nails with which they tore and disembowelled whatever they captured. These generally were small animals, such as hare, mouse-deer, monkeys, iguanas, and tortoises. Their method of attack was by surrounding

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

the prey, especially if it was sleeping. In this way the Veddas 173
occasionally fell victims, and in consequence they revenged themselves by exterminating the Pygmies. According to my authority, the Nittawo existed at the time of his grandfather, who, he asserted, took an active part with the other members of his clan in burning out one of their encampments.

The Nittawo were an entirely naked race; the females were shorter than the males. Their language appears to have been understood by the Veddas, and was described to me as like the twittering of birds.

My informant knew nothing of their customs, or if they made use of fire. They were, however, unarmed, and appear to have been finally exterminated by the Veddas about three or four generations ago.

I may here mention that as I was sceptical as to the story about this race, I took particular care to make inquiries at the distant village of Warandeniyawa (the furthest inhabited spot on the south of the Buttala-Wedirata) if the oldest inhabitant of that place could give me any confirmation of it. This inquiry was made when Disaan Hamy was not present, and it would have been impossible for my questions to have been anticipated. To my surprise, a very old man of the village completely confirmed in detail Disaan Hamy's description.

I also made further inquiry at another village from a headman, and he repeated the same story, adding that the Nittawo were destroyed by the Veddas out of fear.

It is difficult to reject as false a story, told devoid of the usual fantastic embellishments that characterise the history of mythical creatures such as Yakko, when it is completely confirmed by parties ignorant of what the others have said. Even though tangible evidence is not forthcoming, and it would be difficult to find any, of a people so primitive as these creatures appear to have been, I see no valid reason for disbelieving the statements made to me.

It would appear that the early Vedda and the Nittawo to 174
some extent lived side by side, and both were primitive. In time the Nittawo were destroyed by a race who were armed, and these in turn were disintegrated and absorbed by forces they were powerless to overcome. The clan system was

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 effectual so long as there were no influences to weaken it, but when once a preponderating force came to surround these clans, their chance of survival was small, and to prevent individual extinction amalgamation presented the path of minimum resistance.

The effect of this amalgamation was to break down the primitive methods, and concurrently to infuse new blood, and with it to stay, or lessen, the forces that were weakening an already over-inbred stock.

101 If we refer to certain statistics, as recently as 1840 we find
161 that a rough enumeration of the so-called Rock-Veddas disclosed that only thirty families in Bintenna then existed.

Since then the increase of civilised races pressed with yearly greater insistence, till we are forced to conclude that the primitive Vedda is now no more, or nearly so.

142 In my Paper read at the meeting of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society on September 19, 1914, I have described the features of the Vedda family I found at Setawa, but I venture here to repeat it for easy reference.

The man Dissan Hamy is about 5 ft. 10 in. in height, thin, small round the chest, with rather short arms, slender legs, with hardly any calf development. He does not know his age. His head is small, with small dark-brown beady eyes
[302] set far back in their sockets. His hair is short, not tied in a knot, staring, and frizzy. His younger brother is shorter in stature, but with the same character of hair on the head. The elder has short, scanty, and bristly moustaches, but in both brothers there is a marked scarcity of hair on the face and body. Dissan Hamy's two sisters are both of normal height, and dress like the other women of the country. They are about 5 ft. 3 in. in height, with slender limbs. Both women are mothers, and both indicated the small breast development that appears to be characteristic of women residing
[302 in the arid parts of the country I explored. In both women
154] the hair is short and frizzy. Their infants had shaved heads.

I remarked that the skin of Dissan Hamy's body is darker than that of the other members of the family. The nose is strongly formed, with thin dilated nostrils. The mouth is rather wide, with lips of no unusual thickness.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

I remarked that while walking through the jungle, though 481
provided with a knife, Dinan Hamy rarely used it to cut away any intercepting branch or creeper, these being invariably bent to one side by the hand.

I observed this custom many years ago when travelling through a distant village called Uda Wellawey at the foot of the Habbumuwalla hills, and I understand it is to prevent persons from finding a hunter's trail.

I made inquiry, in addition to direct observation while 164
exploring the Vedda country, as to the prevailing diseases among the inhabitants, and what was done as regards remedies. The result of my investigation led me to conclude that the commonest disease among adults was fever, but I could get no statistics on which I could rely to form an opinion as to the percentage this particular disease afforded as compared with others.

It was, however, difficult to discriminate in what proportion of fevers typhoid was to be regarded, as I found in many cases the people did not know the difference. Dysentery appears to be well known, and is locally called "Le-pachchaan," but I was told that it was not nearly so common as fever. Fever is not common as compared with the prevalence of that disease in the Tamankaduwa District.

Venereal, I am told, is unknown, and probably for reasons I gave earlier in this Paper. It occurs, however, more in the neighbourhood of civilised centres. I did not see a single instance of goitre, or of elephantiasis, though I cannot suppose the latter is unknown. I found numerous cases of sores on the feet and legs of both adults and children, but these were explained as being in all cases due to accidental injuries. Bronchitis, however, is common, more especially in children, who also appear to be commonly troubled with anæmia, which may or may not be directly due to intestinal parasites.

As regards treatment, I found that the remedy was invari- 753
ably based on the theory that diseases may be divided into 757
two great classes—heating or inflammatory, and the opposite —therefore the cure was to be found in those specifics which were opposed to these two kinds of causation. For example, if a man had a violent cold, the "milk" of the coconut could

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were believed to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Eucleobus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Mucuna pruriens* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
924 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centrathera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as purchasable commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

than in densely populated areas, where the individuality of the creature is lost in environmental immensity. In the one case he and his are known, in the other he and they are but a fraction.

Considerations of space preclude my enlarging on this subject, or describing in detail the individual conditions of the different villages that I explored, but I venture to think that a careful examination of local factors would throw much light on the evolution of the race from its early stages of primitive existence to its present state of partial civilisation.

Domestic Animals.—These consist of cattle, buffaloes, goats, dogs, cats, and fowls.

Black cattle are abundant in all the inhabited parts of the country I explored, and naturally more so where the opportunities for trade in them exists than in very isolated places. Milk is nearly always procurable, but I heard of no instance of children being exclusively reared upon cow milk. Buffaloes are, where possible, reared for agricultural purposes, and also for the supply of milk, which is often turned into a form of ghee that is in much demand.

In one village in the Panawa Pattu I found a Tamil man owning a large herd of buffaloes, and to my surprise I found that he called them by individual names, the animals responding to his call.

I was informed that quite a large proportion of the domesticated buffaloes were half-breeds between the wild and the tame. This may explain why the Vedda-country animal is so much larger than the buffalo of, say, the Western Province.

Goats are rare, and only occur where there are Tamil or Moorish people. I met with them occasionally, but nowhere away from the influences above mentioned. Pigs, except wild, I never met with. Dogs are plentiful, and of a much superior build and type to the village pariah of the civilised country. This is doubtless due to the care the real Vedda has bestowed upon this animal from the earliest time. In point of size the dogs of the Vedda country are large, powerfully built, and bold. Black and white, or brown and white, are the usual colours of these animals. Cats are, generally speaking, scarce, though I remarked at Kumana that while I only saw one dog, I found six cats in that little village.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

235 Of fowls, I observed a remarkable diversity of breed. They may be classed as—

(a) The Bantam type, with the medium length of saddle and conspicuous *erect* tail.

(b) The wild type, with long saddle and large *drooping* tail.

(c) The Cochin-China type, with feathered tarsi.

In the first of these the crow of the cocks is quite distinct, it being what I call a shrill falsetto. In (b), what I call the wild type, the plumage of the males approximates that of our jungle fowl, both in its beauty of colouring and in the disposition of the tail feathers. The hens, too, were more commonly brown than in the Bantam type, where white is the prevailing colour of this sex. In (c) the feathered leg is the outstanding characteristic. Here the size of bird is larger than in the first group, but shorter in the back than in what I call the wild type. In no case did I find birds with yellow combs, though the early presence of the comb in cock chickens is particularly noticeable. It would appear, therefore, that the domestic fowl has here developed characteristics that would imply crossing from three stocks, one of which is analogous to, if not identical with, the wild bird. On the other hand, the unmistakable crow of the wild bird is different from that of any of the village races.

Of wild animals, the following is a brief list of observed
136 mammalia:—

(1) *The Gray Wanduroo.*—Scarce in the Maha Wedirata, plentiful towards the sea coast in the Panawa Pattu and in the valley of the Kumbukkan river. Probably this species was common all through the Vedda country, but as its flesh was eaten it became exterminated, except in uninhabited places.

(2) *The "Red Monkey" or Rilawa* (Macacus pileatus).—Not common. I found a few in the valley of the Heda-oya and near Lahugala.

(3) *The Loris* (Loris gracilis).—Very rare. I did not see a single example, but I was told by the people that it was known near the "Westminster Abbey" range of hills, and again near Monaragala.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

(4) *Leopard* (Felis pardus).—Common. I constantly came upon the tracks of the leopard in all parts of the Vedda country, except very far away from water. 136

(5) *Indian Civet* (Viverricula malaccensis).—Occasional.

(6) *Mungoose* (Herpestes mungo).—Very common, usually pale coloured.

(7) *Jackal* (Canis aureus).—Very common all through the Vedda country, and probably crosses with the domestic dog. It is commonly believed that the jackal conveys rinderpest, owing to its devouring cattle that have died of that disease. I secured a jackal pup out of a hollow scraped at the foot of a Mustard tree (*Salvadora persica*). The little creature at first showed considerable timidity, but rapidly got over this shyness. Finding a difficulty in providing it with food I had it put back at the place where it was captured. It soon ran off, apparently led by its mother, as I found the spot afterwards to be completely unoccupied.

(8) *Indian Otter* (Lutra nair).—I found the marks of this animal on the Kumbukkan river, but nowhere else. It is well known by the name of Diya-balla, so that I cannot suppose it is rare.

(9) *Bear* (Melursinus ursinus).—Common. I found footprints of bear in the driest parts of the country that I explored, and in places where I could find but few other traces of animals. The fruits of the Palu (*Mimusops hexandra*) and Wira (*Hemicyclia sepiaria*) are readily devoured by bears, who in this way to some extent spread the growth of these plants. I am informed by the people that direct attacks upon human beings by bears are uncommon, and that when injuries have occurred the animal has invariably been startled. Thus, I was told that hollow trees should be approached with caution, as a bear roused suddenly from its sleep within might with equal likelihood spring upon, as away from, its disturber.

Near Nahmaluwahela, on a rocky mass, I found a dead bear. He appeared to have fallen from the rock above on to a ledge below which there was a still larger drop, and being maimed was unable to get up or down from the spot where I found the body.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 (10) *Musk Rat* (Crocidura cœrulea).—Very uncommon. I found it at Potuvil only.

(11) *Flying Fox* (Pteropus medius).—I can only remember seeing this bat once in the Buttala-Wedirata.

(12) *Bats.*—I did not shoot any, so am unable to specifically name those that I saw, which included—

(a) The cave bat;
(b) The house bat;
(c) A small brown bat, locally called "Kiri-wawula"—a most active species; and
(d) A gray bat—probably the Indian Vampire.

The first of these is found in great abundance in caves, but I did not find them as widely distributed as the last three.

I noticed when lying on my camp bed at night under trees that the brown bat would hover quite close to my face. I tried the experiment of lying still with my feet uncovered, to see if they would attack the exposed limb, but beyond hovering within a few inches of me they did no harm.

(13) *The Rock Squirrel* (Sciurus macrurus).—Common, away from habitations, as it has been shot down for food. On the Kumbukkan I found it plentiful, while at Bowela, Danakirigama, and Manawela it is distinctly rare. The black variety is perhaps a little more rare than the gray.

(14) *Palm Squirrel* (Sc. palmarum).—Not generally common, and appears to follow human distribution. It is more plentiful near Muppane than at Bowela.

(15) A *Jungle Squirrel*, probably Sc. tristriatus, was seen by me at the base of the "Westminster Abbey" hills. It is readily distinguishable from the last by being a dark slate-coloured animal, with bright chestnut stripes. It is usually solitary.

(16) *Rats* are not very plentiful from my observations, except at Kumuna.

(17) *Bandicoot* (Nesocia bandicota).—I repeatedly heard of this animal as being very destructive to chena crops, but I did not actually see one. It is said to be eaten as freely as the mouse deer.

(18) *Porcupine* (Hystrix leucura).—Uncommon. I found traces of it on the banks of the Kumbukkan river and at

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Siyambala-anduwa, but the people do not speak of it as common. 136

(19) *Hare* (Lepus nigricollis).—Common.

(20) *Elephant* (Eliphas maximus).—I came on elephants frequently, but as regards their abundance or the reverse, it appears to be a matter of water distribution; thus, near the Kumbukkan river, the Heda-oya, and Kurapan-oya one would find abundant traces, or, as I did, the animals themselves. As soon as the country gets dried up in the south-west monsoon the distribution ceases to be general, and the places where elephants will be found is only within reach of water. Directly the rains begin and the fresh grass springs up—as it does do with remarkable rapidity—elephants may be found in all parts, so that it might be said that there is a distinct symptom of migration. I entirely disagree with the opinion, frequently expressed, that "elephants are on the increase"; on the contrary, I believe the opposite to be the case. The elephant has to-day a much more restricted area to wander in than it had a hundred years ago. This area, by the cultural operations of man, is yearly being shrunk up, while shooting for "sport" and kraaling still further lessen the numbers of these magnificent animals. The ease with which one can get an elephant proclaimed a "rogue" adds another to the many causes of its destruction, not to mention the facilities that have in the last twenty years been offered to certain Chiefs to have kraals, the few survivors of which do not breed in captivity. It is only a matter of time for the elephant to be completely exterminated in Ceylon, unless steps are taken, with the aid of suitable sanctuaries, in addition to the complete prohibition of kraaling, except at intervals of, say, twenty years, to prevent this disaster. The actual damage done by elephants is not to be compared with their value as transport animals, and nothing can be more deplorable than allowing such valuable creatures to be shot in the cause of so-called "sport."

(21) *Buffalo* (Bos bubalus).—I found these to be generally distributed in the country I traversed, but not nearly in the same numbers as I found them in 1906. I found many skeletons—usually much devoured—of buffaloes, all pointing

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 to the fact that rinderpest had destroyed numbers of these creatures. I am informed that in the Panawa Pattu alone that disease killed the wild and tame buffalo alike, and that thousands died in a few months. I found one herd on the Kumbukkan in which I counted some thirty individuals, while in 1906, on the Gajabahu plain, I counted in a single herd over one hundred.

(22) *Sambur* (Cervus unicolor).—Moderately common.

(23) *Spotted Deer* (C. axis).—Common, especially in the valley of the Kumbukkan river. I repeatedly came on herds in this river, in one case finding over 200 drinking in the stream at noon.

(24) *Mouse Deer* (Tragulus meminna).—Moderately common, but more so in the south.

(25) *Wild Pig* (Sus cristatus).—Fairly common, but much less abundant than in 1906, owing to their having been killed out by rinderpest.

(26) *Pangolin* (Manis pentadactyla).—I found traces of this animal occasionally, and by inquiry I heard frequently of its occurrence. It is, however, not common near the coast.

Of reptiles, the crocodile is plentiful where there is water, either in tanks, rivers, or backwaters towards the sea, as, for instance, at Setawe, and all up the Kumbukkan river I found these creatures in abundance.

The *Monitor* or *Talla-goya* is fairly plentiful. It is eaten by both Tamils and the Sinhalese of this locality. I am inclined to believe that there is a dark and a pale race of this species, as I remarked that the latter were much more numerous towards the sea coast, and much lighter coloured than examples obtained near Muppane.

The *Kabaragoya* is comparatively rare. I only saw one or two examples near Muppane. This scarcity I attribute entirely to the absence of water all the year round.

On the north bank of the Kumbukkan I found a (?) Ceratophora in considerable abundance. These animals are protectively marked, and usually select trees with dark rugged bark to take up their position upon, their own colouring assimilating precisely with that of the bark. Under sexual stimulus in the males the lips become a rich crimson red, with

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

large rhomboidal dorsal patches of the same bright colour. On the stimulus diminishing, these points of colour become a dull ashen gray, turning to a pale horny gray with death. The females have similar markings, only in a very inconspicuous degree. 136

I failed to find any examples of this reptile in the north or west of the country to which this Paper refers.

The so-called Chameleon I found no examples of. I obtained a green Calotis, and two examples of Gecko, one about seven inches in length.

Of snakes I only saw three species, viz., the Rat Snake (*Zamenis mucosus*), Russell's Viper (*Vipera russelli*), and the Green Whip-snake (*Dryophis mycterizans*). I specially looked for Cobras, but without success. Russell's Viper, on the other hand, is comparatively common.

As regards the bird distribution, I have thought it desirable to supply a list* in which I have detailed the distribution, as it is of interest to note the exact localities for future reference.

Before passing to this list I would draw attention to certain points of special interest that appear to me to be worthy of more than a brief catalogue notice.

The curious distribution of one Fan-tailed Flycatcher (*Rhipidura albifrontata*) is singular. I found it did not occur east of Monaragala or north of Kebilitte, though in 1906 I found it breeding freely at Pottuvil. On my present exploration I observed it at a place called Kobaragoda, south of Okanda in Panawa Pattu, and from thence still further south to Kumuna, on the Kumbukkan river. It was not seen north of Siyambala-anduwa, nor in any part of the country round the "Westminster Abbey" hills, thus indicating a piece of country of limited extent touching the sea south of Okanda and forming a strip running into Monaragala. From here it passes to the Lunagalla hills, and thence right up to Bandarawela and into Haputale, where it may be found up to 4,000 feet.

I have found it resting at Miriabedde estate, at about 3,800 feet altitude. Again I have found it in abundance in the

* Appendix C.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 Wallawe valley below Kaltotta, and from there it spreads into the Tangalla District, and again at Tellijjawella and Henagama in the Matara District, where the rainfall exceeds 100 inches per annum. Briefly, therefore, it is to be found both in the dry and wet zones. It breeds at sea level, and at over 3,500 feet it is common in "park" country as well as in "chena" country. I am not acquainted with a more remarkable distribution—remarkable for its contradictions—of any Ceylon land bird.

Of the Woodpeckers—*Pici*—both *Chrysocolaptes strickland*i and *Brachypternus erythronotus*—are common in the Vedda country, but chiefly in damp forest areas, where owing to the presence of moisture the trees are large. Away from the damp forests the little *Iynxipicus gymnophthalmus* is common right to the coast at Kumuna.

At Galamuna, on the Kumbukkan river, I secured a *Brachypternus* that may prove to be a new species. It resembles *erythronotus*, except that the inner hind toe is only rudimentary, forming only a minute dactyle projection, terminating in an apiculate point that serves as a claw. My example—an adult ♀—measured 10½ in. in length: wing 5¼ in., tail 3½ in., bill (along ridge) 1⅛ in., tarsus 1 in. Unfortunately the skin of this bird got destroyed, so that I have been unable to compare it with Museum examples.

I have already hinted that the presence or absence of water governs the question of human distribution within the area under consideration, and I venture to think that the same applies, in some particulars, to the distribution of birds; thus, for instance, the common Black Crow (*Corvus macrorynchus*) occurs only where there are villages; nowhere did I find it in uninhabited forest areas. It was equally common at Kumuna on the sea coast and at Muppane—far inland—in a hilly country. The same might, with some curious exceptions, be said of our Sparrow, that I noticed was common at Pottuvil, Panawa, and Okanda on the east coast, but was absent at Kumuna, and equally absent from many of the smaller villages in the interior of the Vedda country.

The drying up for several months of the year of most of the streams naturally causes a restricted distribution among the

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Kingfishers, but it is conceivable that this periodical flooding and drying of these streams initiates a form of migration that on a more extended scale, brought about by weather fluctuations in geological times, might indicate the impulse of migration in birds. Thus, reverting to the local migration incident to the drying up of large waterways, I noticed on the Kumbukkan river that *Alcedo iepida*, *Pelargopsis gurial*, and *Halcyon smyrnensis* were plentiful, while not one of these birds could be found on the Heda-oya—a river only a few miles to the north; the explanation being that the former stream is perennial, and the latter dry in the south-west monsoon. For the same reason *Ketupa ceylonensis* occurs at tanks that have water, and is absent where the opposite is the case. *Ketupa* is, therefore, to be found along the valley of the Kumbukkan in both monsoons, but only in the north-east on the Heda-oya. 136

As the time at my disposal was necessarily very limited I could do no more than note what was then to be found, so that a more studied verification of these observations becomes desirable in order to establish proofs of what might be called a local migration law. It is, however, rather striking that species of wide general distribution in the wet zone should show an erratic distribution in the dry, the key to the explanation being possibly found in water distribution. In that direction therefore we may anticipate room for the development of a definite form of migration, though its range may be comparatively limited.

I observed in the immediate vicinity of the Kumbukkan river that at night numbers of insects were attracted by a light, while in the dry country south-east of "Westminster Abbey" there was a comparative scarcity of what I might call *lamp-followers*.

At a spot midway between Kebilitte and Ellebubbura I had a unique opportunity of observing the effect of scarcity of moisture and its influence on insect life. I had seated myself under a tree for a few minutes, to rest after a hot march of about 15 miles. The jungle all round me appeared to be utterly faint with the drought, and I may add that I felt much the same myself. I was in a considerable state of perspiration, when I noticed a couple of butterflies hovering

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 quite close to me. Presently one of them lit on my wrist, and began sipping the moisture as it came from my skin. The second insect quickly followed exactly the same procedure on my slowly extending my arm.

At a small puddle, measuring about 2 ft. by 18 in., I found the whole of the damp ground covered with wasps sipping the moisture.

Some idea of the dryness of the locality can be judged from these instances, and I submit that animal distribution must be affected thereby.

137 The distribution of plants, not of direct value to man, moreover shows certain erratic conditions. The most striking instance of this is in the distribution of the Dipterocarps. At Monaragala, and a little to the eastward, our common Hora (*Dipterocarpus zeylanicus*) is moderately plentiful. From Liyangalla onwards towards the east it is absent, but to the north-east of Siyambala-anduwa, near the village of Newgalla, one finds fringes of *Vatica obscura* on the banks of the dry streams; in other words, there is an enormous belt of country the opposite sides of which have representations of this important order of trees, with no examples in the intermediate area.

On the other hand I found no examples of *Vatica obscura* to the south of Siyambala-anduwa on any of the streams I crossed.

Of the Dilleniaceæ, I found *Dillenia indica* on the higher reaches of the Heda-oya, and a few individual examples—probably introduced—towards Waragoda in the north and at Kumuna in the south-east.

Of the Anonaceæ, the usual dry-zone *Polyalthias* are very abundant. Both *Anamirta paniculata* and *Tinospora cordifolia* are abundant representations of the Menispermaceæ.

In the tanks where there was water, both *Nymphæa lotus* and *Nelumbium speciosum* are common Lotuses. Both roots [227] and bulbs of these plants are eaten.

In some of the chenas I found *Brassica juncea* grown with the other crops, but I could get no definite explanation why it was cultivated.

Of the Capparideæ, the typical *Capparis zeylanica* is plentiful. [262] Its fruits are eaten by the Veddas as well as the Tamils. I

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

found that towards the coast *Crataeva roxburghii* occurs, but it is by no means plentiful, as in the Hambantota country. 137

Of the Bixaceæ, I found a few examples of *Cochlospermum gossypium*, but clearly these were introductions connected with Buddhistic places of worship. It may be safely assumed that where an "escape" of this species is found, one may look for temple "remains," and the same may be said of Ironwood, *Hibiscus ficulneus*, or *Balsamodendrum caudatum*.

Scolopia gærtneri is a wild and plentiful representation of this order, and abundant round "Westminster Abbey" and Degalhela. *Hydnocarpus venenata* occurs in abundance by stream sides, and is probably more plentiful than *H. alpina*, which is confined to the dry low-country, notwithstanding its inappropriate specific name.

Passing over unimportant orders to the Guttiferæ the following claim notice: *Garcinia spicata* is very common and widely distributed; *Calophyllum burmanni* is occasional; *C. tomentosum* occurs at "Westminster Abbey" and near Degalhela; *C. inophyllum* is practically confined to the coast, though not entirely so, while a further example of this genus (the identity of which has yet to be determined) I have referred to already in an earlier Paper, published in the Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, as being a probable foreigner.

Ironwood—*Mesua ferrea*—occurs in quite a forest form round the base of Himitillanegala, where, I suspect, it was introduced. It occurs at all the old temples, but is otherwise scarce.

Of the Malvaceæ, *Sidas* and *Abutilons* are exceedingly common. *Urenas*, on the other hand, are to be looked for in damp waste places, where they attain to considerable size. *Thespesia populnea* is an introduction, and not particularly common. *Hibiscus tiliaceus* occurs near backwaters, but it is not generally plentiful. *Bombax malabaricum* occurs in the form of immense individuals, but it is certainly not plentiful; while *Eriodendron anfractuosum*, on the other hand, is a plentifully introduced garden plant.

Among the Sterculiæ prominence should be given to *S. fœtida*, well known to the Tamils as the Katu-tengai or forest cocoanut, *S. colorata*, and *S. thwaitesii*. I obtained a

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 few solitary examples of *S. urens*, but I feel confident that this last is an introduction. *Pterospermum suberifolium*—the Welanga of the Sinhalese—is very abundant.

[824 372 411] The young straight shoots of this plant supplied the Vedda arrow, while the wood was employed by them for the manufacture of "fire drills."

The distribution of *Helicteres isora* is curiously restricted to what might be turned "patches," the largest of which I found at Etmole. *Heritiera littoralis*—the Chomanturai of the Tamils—is scarce, but occurs near Panawa and Pottuvil.

Of the Tiliaceæ, I noticed that the distribution of Halmilla (*Berrya ammonilla*) was not very general, while its abundance or scarcity appeared to be a matter of its easy access or the reverse. This is to be expected of so valuable a timber tree.

"*Vidpani*" (Tamil) (*Pityranthe verrucosa*), so plentiful in the Trincomalee District, is comparatively scarce in the Vedda country. Of the Grewias, *G. tiliæfolia*, *G. microcos*, and *G. polygama* are the commonest, but the first of these is not so abundant here as in the dry zone of the Ratnapura District.

As representing the Linaciæ, *Erythroxylon monogynum* may be taken as an abundant typical example. It is alleged in the Panawa Pattu that meat hung in the smoke from burning wood of this plant, if eaten produces a purgative action.

Both *Hiptage madablota* and *H. parvifolia* of the Malpighiaceæ occur in the Vedda country, but in no abundance.

The bright, but pestiferous, *Tribulus terrestris*, is to be found near Pottuvil and at Panawa, in places where the soil is not too dry, but its distribution does not spread far inland.

Of the Geraniaceæ I found very few examples. In some slightly moist spots, west of "Westminster Abbey," I observed *Biophytum sensitivum*, and in some of the tanks I got *Hydrocera triflora*, but in other respects, except the introduced *Averrhoa bilimbi* and *A. carambola*—common in gardens—this order is poorly represented. The Rutaceæ is not well represented in wild species, if we except the well-known *Feronia elephantum*, *Murraya kœnigii*, and *Toddalia aculeata*. In the gardens oranges, lime, and pummalo have been introduced, but with no marked success either in the matter of quality or quantity

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137

of fruit, an insipid fibrous product being the usual type of Vedda-country orange.

In dry rocky ground *Ochna wightiana* is to be found in some abundance, as exemplifying the small order of the Ochnaceæ.

Of the Burseraceæ, I have already pointed out that *Balsamodendrum cordatum* may be taken as indicating some place of veneration. I found in many cases where there were ruins, or abandoned monastic caves, this plant would be sure to occur. [172] On the summit of "Westminster Abbey" it is comparatively abundant, as also at Nuwaragala—another ancient fort. Doubtless the fragrant smell of the wood led to its use as an incense, and, thus, to its cultivation. *Canarium zeylanicum* occurs very sparingly west of Bowela, and *Filicium decipiens* may be found in the forest valleys, though it does not attain any striking proportions.

The Meliaceæ is very well represented. The Margosa, however, as typical of this order, is an introduction, and where it is found under semi-wild conditions the inference is that that particular spot was once inhabited. This beautiful tree, however, is afflicted with a disease that kills back the young twigs, and I remarked that this sickness is very widespread. *Melia dubia*, often called Wal-kohomba, occurs in the western part of the Vedda country, but in no great abundance. *Walsura piscidia* and *Dysoxylum binectariferum* are both common, while the famous Satinwood is, of course, very fairly abundant, except in what might be called wet forest. The abundance of Satinwood has, as I have hinted, doubtless from very early times been influenced by human operations, as the value and quality of this excellent wood is widely known. That being so, its spread has been materially governed, with the result that in a great deal of the country where it once must have been plentiful there are now only isolated examples.

Mimusops pumila occurs in tolerable abundance round Bowela, Waragama, and Dunakiria. It is medicinal.

Of Celastraceous plants, *Elæodendron glaucum* is very common near the coast, and attains a large size. A *Kurrimia*, probably a variety of *K. zeylanica*, is found occasionally in the northern half of the country I explored, but does not appear to attract native attention.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 It is almost superfluous to remark that the Rhamnaceæ are abundantly represented by various forms of *Zizyphus*, both as an abominable thorny climbing bush, or in the more elegant *Z. jujuba*. *Scutia indica* is plentiful near damp spots, while *Ventilago maderaspatana* is most abundant.

Vitis quadrangularis is, perhaps, the most common example of the Ampilideæ, while *Leea sambucina* is specially noticeable in the vicinity of large streams.

The Sapindaceæ afford plentiful examples in *Allophylus cobbe*, *Sapindus emarginatus*, or soap-nut, *Nephelium longana* (*Mora*, Sinhalese), *Schleichera trijuga* (*Kon*, Sinhalese), and *Glenia zeylanica*, all of which are about equally distributed.

[924 278] In waste ground the creeping *Cardiospermum halicacabum* is plentiful; its use as a tonic appears to have been known to the Veddas.

I also observed *Dodonæa viscosa* in a few isolated places, particularly near Wattegama, but to my surprise its use as an embrocation was apparently unknown.

Of the Anacardiaceæ, if we except cultivated species, few occur. The wild mango (*Mangifera zeylanica*) is to be found near or in the Heda-oya valley, but not in great profusion. *Odina wordier* is to some extent cultivated, as it is frequently to be found preserved where there are fields. *Nothopegia colebrookiana* is seemingly unknown to the people, though I found it frequently. *Spondias mangifera* I believe to have been introduced.

Passing to the Calyciflorae, the small order of Connaraceæ finds as its best representative the widely distributed *Connarus monocarpus*, that appears to thrive equally well in the wet [924] and dry zones. I found it in abundance in some of the driest situations. It is said to be of use for buffalo ropes.

Of the Leguminosæ, space considerations oblige me to make but the briefest reference to the better known examples in a list form :—

Crotalaria retusa. In open waste places.
C. striata. Occasional, in dry fields.
Indigofera pauciflora. In abandoned fields.
I. hirsuta. In waste places and road sides.
Æschynomene aspera. In damp places or puddles.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137

Abrus precatorius. Very common in scrub jungle.
Mucuna (?) pruriens. Moderately common (in fruit).
Erythrina indica. In gardens—occasional.
E. ovalifolia. Near streams and tanks—uncommon.
Butea frondosa. In the park country near Etmole.
Clitoria ternatea. Common; not seen in forest.
Flemingia strobilifera. Near streams and cool spots.
Pterocarpus marsupium. In park country—common.
Pongamia glabra. Common near water.
Dalbergia lanceolaria. Moderately common; of large size.
Derris scandens. Common all over the country.
Cæsalpinia bonduk. Occasional; possibly introduced.
Cassia fistula. Moderately common.
C. marginata. Common, even close to the sea.
C. auriculata. Commoner near the coast than inland.
Dialium ovoideum. Common on the summit of "Westminster Abbey."
Saraca indica. Occasional in damp forests.
Tamarindus indica. In gardens, abandoned or otherwise. An introduction.
Bauhinia tomentosa. Plentiful.
Entada scandens. Generally near streams.
Dichrostachys cinerea. Moderately common in bush land.
Mimosa pudica. Occasional.
A. leucophlœa. Comparatively rare.
A. eburnea. Common near the coast.
A. cæsia. Very common, especially near damp forests.
A. pennata. Less common, generally locally plentiful.
Albizzia odoratissima. Moderately abundant in the west.
A. stipulata. Occasional.
Pithecolobium geminatum. Locally abundant.

Of the Rosaceæ, I noticed a Pygeum near Bowela, in a valley, but procured no examples for identification. On the banks of the Heda-oya I also secured another, probably an escape from higher altitudes.

Bryophyllum calycinum, as representing the Crassulaceæ, is probably an introduction. It infests places where the soil is not deep, as, for example, near slab rocks, but generally in these cases near habitations or places once inhabited.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 Of the Droseraceæ, *Drosera burmanni* is to be found on the edges of tanks where the soil is damp, and again I have found it on thin soil on rocks. This plant appears to be equally at home at all altitudes in Ceylon, both in the wet as well as the dry zone. I failed to find it near the sea, though it occurs at no great distance inland.

The Rhizophoraceæ are well represented by Mangroves that occur in tidal estuaries. Of these, *Rhizophora mucronata* is by far the most common. *M. candaria*, with its large leaves, is also often found along with the last, and with *Bruguiera gymnorhiza*. I also observed a *Ceriops*, but not in flower. In a valley south of "Westminster Abbey" I saw *Anisophyllea zeylanica*, but this plant appears to belong to a higher altitude. *Carallia integerrima* is to be met with in the Kumbukkan valley.

The Combretaceæ afford magnificent examples of Kumbuk (*Terminalia glabra*), that are to be found on the banks of all the streams in the Vedda country. The "Aralu" (*Terminalia chebula*) is also common in the "park country" near Etmole, while its close ally, *T. belerica*, is frequently to be met with right through the Maha Wedirata. Again, in the "park country" *Anogeissus latifolia* is fairly common. *Combretum ovalifolium* occurs in rocky places in some abundance. The gaunt *Gyrocarpus jacquini* is very common; it forms a characteristic tree in this dry locality.

Of the Myrtaceæ, I found the most abundant examples in *Eugenia jambolana*, that occur in tank beds, while *E. bracteata* occurs in all the dry forests. By the sides of backwaters, or where the soil is damp, *E. corymbosa* forms a common bush.

I noticed a few examples of our common Guava (*Psidium guajava*) in some of the old gardens, but nobody could tell me how it came to be introduced. *Barringtonia acutangula* is moderately common in and about tanks, where it attains a considerable size. On the banks of the larger streams I obtained *B. racemosa*, but it is not plentiful. *Careya arborea*, however, is moderately common in the northern part of the country I am treating of.

Of Melastomaceæ plants, I found very stunted forms of *Osbeckia* (?) *aspera* growing in most impossible places. Near

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bowela I found, in a damp valley, a *Sonerila* growing in a rocky crevice. *Memecylon umbellatum*, *M. grande*, and *M. capitellatum* are all very common in the forest areas. 137

Of the Lythraceæ, I found *Lagerstrœmia flos-reginæ* not uncommon on the banks of the larger streams, where it frequently occurs as a large tree. *Lawsonia alba* is cultivated at Panawa. In the "park country" I found a few examples of *Woodfordia floribunda*, but this is far more common near Passara and Bandarawela.

The poisonous *Modecca palmata* is often to be met with, but is not common. I was surprised to notice that it was little known to the people. *Passiflora fœtida*, however, appears to be well known, though its distribution is probably more restricted. The Papaw has been introduced here, and is to be found in some of the gardens, but sparingly.

Of the Cucurbitaceæ, I found *Trichosanthes integrifolia* to be fairly common, its brilliant red billiard-ball-like fruits being very conspicuous. I suspect that it is eaten by monkeys, as I frequently found fragments of the fruit. *Cephalandra indica* is often to be seen in damplsh forests. In all the [241] chenas Cucumbers of sorts are grown, and appear to find a considerable market demand.

Possibly these may have originated in the well-known cucumber, but owing to degeneration and environment have changed their form, for certainly the average shape of Vedda-country "Kekiri" is more round in outline than ovate. The "rind" is remarkably bitter to the taste.

Of the Begonias, I found a few examples of what I take to be *B. malabarica* not far from the base of Westminster Abbey, but it may have been an "escape."

Our monotypic *Tetramelas undiflora* occurs but sparingly in the north of the Maha Wedirata, while the individual trees are immense.

Of the Cactaceæ, *Opuntia* (?) *dillenii* is frequently to be met with, both in a semi-wild state and in hedges. I found it growing in profusion at Okanda, and all down the coast where there were, or had been, gardens. I am unable to say if the Veddas knew it, though the name Katu-patuk is well known. I am inclined to suppose that it was spread by the Tamils.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 Considerations of space oblige me to avoid more than a passing reference to the larger Gamopetalous plants, hence my having unnoticed several of botanical interest. I therefore select of the Rubiaceæ the following :—

Sarcocephalus cordatus. Moderately common in beds of tanks and by river sides.

Anthocephalus cadamba. Rather rare, but occurs towards Muppane.

Adina cordifolia. Locally plentiful.

Stephegyne parvifora. Rather common, and valued for its timber.

Wendlandia notoniana. Occasional, towards the Monaragala hills.

Mussænda frondosa. Not uncommon near streams.

Gardenia latifolia. Plentiful in rocky ground.

Canthium didymum. Common, especially near rocks.

Ixora parviflora. Common.

Morinda tinctoria. Common, especially near the coast, and often found in gardens.

Webera corymbosa. Exceedingly common.

Of the Compositæ :—

Vernonia cinerea. Exceedingly common.

Elephantopus scaber. Plentiful in the whole country, but avoids deep shade.

Ageratum conyzoides. Everywhere an abundant introduction.

Sphæranthus indicus. Common in fields.

Bidens ? Not uncommon near abandoned villages, and occasionally on river banks.

Of the Gentianeæ, I found *Slevoia lobelia* common at Okanda on the sea coast, the only place I have found it in Ceylon.

Of the Plumbaginaceæ, our only Plumbago is occasionally found in most unexpected places, but nowhere in abundance.

Of the Myrsinaceæ, I found an *Ardisia* in many of the forests near rivers, but I am uncertain of its identity. The leaves are large and grow in verticils.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Of the Sapotaceæ, by far the most important is the Palu (*Mimusops hexandra*), but its distribution is erratic. It is plentiful between Lahugala and Pottuvil, but the individual trees are not large. Towards the Heda-oya, and in the arid country west of Panaw, it also occurs plentifully, but towards the Kumbukkan valley it again ceases to be abundant. This erratic distribution in a country that favours the growth of Palu is probably, as suggested earlier in this Paper, the outcome of early trade in this valuable timber. 137

Munamal (*Mimusops elengi*) occurs very frequently, but does not become very large. *Bassia longifolia* I have already referred to. It is very plentiful up the Kumbukkan river, the tops there attaining an enormous size; elsewhere it is practically rare.

Of the Ebenaceæ, perhaps the most common is *Diospyros embryopteris*, that occurs where there is moisture near at hand. The Veddas eat its fruit. [262]

D. ebenum, like "Palu," appears to have been largely exploited, with the result that it is only in remote spots that it is to be found in any abundance. *D. ovalifolia* occasional, growing in patches.

Both *Salvadora persica* and *Azima tetracantha* are abundant, the former being common near the coast, but neither in real forests.

Of the Apocynaceæ, the most distressingly common is undoubtedly *Carissa spinarum*, that occurs always where tree forest has been cleared. *Carbera odollam* is fairly plentiful in the Panaw Pattu, and is regarded as useful for fencing fields.

Plumeria acutifolia is always associated with temples, abandoned or otherwise, but I failed to obtain any information regarding its introduction.

Alstonia scholaris is not uncommon, and attains enormous proportions.

Tabernaemontana dichotoma is also to be found sparingly, but generally in damp spots.

Of Asclepiads, *Hemidesmus indicus* is very plentiful in waste land.

Calotropis gigantea is very abundant, especially near the sea.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

[37] *Strychnos brunoianum* occurs frequently, especially in the bush country.

Drepanostachyum is also fairly abundant near to Liyangolla and Muppane.

Of the Loganiaceæ, the well known *Strychnos nux-vomica* is most abundant. It is remarkable, in view of its being so common, that cases of children poisoning themselves by eating the seed are rarely heard of.

S. potatorum occurs, but is not abundant. I looked out for cases where the seeds were used for precipitating muddy water, but failed to find an instance of its use in this direction.

Of the Gentianaceæ, *Exacum sylvaticum* occurs in fields, but the flowers are much paler than in wet-country examples.

Of the Boraginaceæ, *Cordia myxa* is fairly common. *Tournefortia argentea* occurs on the seashore, but is not plentiful. *Heliotropium indicum* is very common in waste ground.

Of the Solanaceæ, mention need only be made of *Datura fastuosa*, which appears in nearly all the more established gardens. The various "Battus" I can pass over, as being common all over the Ceylon low-country, and as probably introduced.

Of the Scrophulariaceæ I desire to draw attention to only one, *Centranthera procumbens*, owing to its presence in a dry country being remarkable. I found it on two occasions only, first between Nangalla and Dunkiriya, and the second time about five miles south of Liyangolla. On both these occasions I asked the villagers if they could name it, but without success. Its presence is singular, as it is generally to be found only in the wet zone, or in a country where extremes of drought are not experienced.

Of the Bignoniaceæ, *Oroxylum indicum* is moderately common, but I think there is little doubt that it was introduced for the sake of its medicinal value. *Dolichandrone rheedii* occurs near the coast, near standing water. *Stereospermum chelonoides* is fairly common. Its wood was used by the Veddas for bows.

[411 [2]] Of the Pedaliaceæ, *Pedalium murex* is common near the coast, and is used by both the Sinhalese and Tamils for a demulcent. *Martynia diandra* occurs on the fringes of villages

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

in waste ground, as if introduced. *Sesamum indicum* is 137
sparingly cultivated.

The Verbenaceæ afford, among many others, the valuable Milla (*Vitex altissima*), which is generally plentiful. I am inclined to doubt if var. *alata* can be sustained, as I repeatedly obtained examples of "broadly-winged" petiolated leaves on the same tree that bore normally petiolated leaves. This "winging" of the leaf stalk appears to be a matter of maturity, as in very young shoots the "wings" are often markedly pronounced. *V. leucoxylon* is common about tanks. *Gmelina asiatica* is moderately common in waste ground near habitations. *Premna tomentosa* and *P. serratifolia* are both abundant, the leaves of the latter being eaten. *Avicennia officinalis* is common in wet ground near the coast.

Passing to the Lauraceæ, the most useful is the well known "Rasai" (*Persea semecarpifolia*), fairly common in the forest areas, especially south of Kalle Obba and below Degalhela.

Of the Thymelaeaceæ, I repeatedly obtained *Gyrinops walla*, its value as a cordage being known to the Sinhalese Veddas.

With a rapid glance at the Euphorbiaceæ and the Urticaceæ I must conclude my notes on the plants of the Vedda country :—

Euphorbia antiquorum is frequently to be met with, but it does not attain the proportions so marked in the Hambantota District.

E. tortilis, if I may accept a 4-winged branch as indicating this species, I observed near Badulana.

E. tirucalli is common as a hedge plant, especially near the coast.

Bridelia retusa. Rather common.

Phyllanthus emblica. Occasional, more common towards Monaragala.

Phyllanthus longifolius. Very common in land that has been cleared.

Nauclea cordata. Exceedingly abundant. Its fruits 162
are much relished by the Veddas, and, I might also add, by bears and monkeys.

Mitchelia nilagirica occurs sparingly by the rivers, but is not generally distributed.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 *Aleurites triloba* is to be found in a few village gardens towards the west, but is nowhere cultivated in much quantity. It is an introduction.

Dimorphocalyx glabellus. Exceedingly common, except near the sea shore.

Mallotus albus. Tolerably plentiful, especially in the west.

Macaranga tomentosa. Occasional. There is reason to suppose this has been to some extent introduced merely for the sake of the large peltate leaves, that afford a useful substitute for plates. By tracing a group of these trees I was able to find one of the most important of the caves on the east flank of "Westminster Abbey."

Claoxylon castaneocarpus. Occasional.

Sapium insigne. Common, especially near rocks.

Holopelea integrifolia, representing the Urticaceæ, is very common up to within a short distance of the coast. It occurs right up the Kumbukkan valley to the foot of the Uva hills, after which it becomes scarce.

Trema orientalis I found to be locally plentiful, but more so towards the hills.

Streblus asper. Very common, and with much variation in the size of the leaf.

Ficus benghalensis (the Banyan of Europeans) is very abundant right down to the coast. It appears in all the old established villages, which leads one to the idea that it was introduced. I have, however, found it in localities where it may have been introduced by birds transporting the seed from the (?) cultivated trees, as the fruits are readily devoured by Barbets and Pigeons.

F. racemosa. Very common.

F. urostigma. Occasional, especially in rocky places.

F. tsjakela. Occasional, and appears to be singularly partial to old ruins.

F. hispida. Not uncommon near rivers and in damp forests.

F. religiosa. Common near any temple. At Kurunegala I found some enormous examples, as also at Wattegama.

[824 2/12] *Antiaris toxicaria*. Rare. I am informed, as stated early in this Paper, that the Veddas use it for making "loin clothes" to be worn on ceremonial occasions.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Artocarpus nobilis. Quite rare, and only seen up the Hedaoyá valley. 137

A. integrifolia. Cultivated, but not usually attaining any very large size, unless water is within reach.

A. incisa. At Buddama I was shown a solitary example of our well known Breadfruit tree, and I was informed that it was the only one of its kind to be found in the Vedda country. While this may not be strictly correct, I may mention that I found Breadfruit trees became exceedingly rare east of Monaragala.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

APPENDIX A.

Amparai Rainfall.

	1904.		1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.		1913.	
	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.
January ..	—	—	12·23	7	4·97	8	4·32	7	10·36	15	4·85	9	17·70	13	8·82	11	2·24	6	50·06	28
February ..	—	—	2·75	3	0·09	1	1·58	4	7·59	6	7·00	8	4·01	11	2·71	6	0·81	2	7·73	12
March ..	—	—	0·00	0	1·21	4	5·40	5	8·53	8	2·64	4	0·00	0	1·45	2	4·77	6	2·02	5
April ..	—	—	7·41	19	0·53	3	4·72	8	4·37	6	1·77	6	1·07	5	0·00	0	2·52	7	2·90	7
May ..	—	—	5·63	8	1·13	2	1·09	3	1·31	3	0·86	5	1·09	6	1·90	2	1·44	5	0·53	3
June ..	—	—	2·48	7	2·00	3	4·49	4	0·00	0	0·89	1	0·20	3	1·33	4	6·93	4	0·05	1
July ..	—	—	0·10	1	5·66	7	0·23	2	2·55	3	0·00	0	3·18	9	1·69	1	0·03	2	0·76	4
August ..	—	—	3·03	6	8·24	9	3·38	5	2·20	7	5·31	8	5·38	13	7·35	5	2·82	4	1·35	4
September .	—	—	2·85	4	3·51	5	1·27	5	3·20	9	2·70	6	5·78	9	9·30	10	6·74	5	1·36	3
October ..	—	—	2·02	8	10·84	10	6·52	13	7·11	17	9·56	16	14·66	17	10·41	17	7·32	19	12·17	15
November .	—	—	23·15	19	10·82	22	9·61	12	9·06	11	4·24	12	11·58	12	23·90	24	12·15	16	11·90	19
December ..	—	—	5·08	10	9·30	9	3·50	5	24·92	25	7·79	10	21·95	19	32·91	24	14·72	19	33·99	19
Total ..	—	—	66·74	92	58·30	84	46·09	74	81·20	110	47·61	94	86·60	117	101·77	106	62·49	95	124·72	120

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

132

Rotawewa Rainfall.

	1904.		1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.		1913.	
	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.
January ..	—	—	4·00	7	2·71	6	6·57	8	8·85	14	6·03	7	22·93	12	5·92	9	5·27	4	38·55	24
February ..	—	—	3·94	5	0·52	1	0·45	4	9·77	7	3·09	4	0·82	2	0·43	2	0·89	2	11·43	8
March ..	—	—	0·00	0	2·17	3	4·28	8	8·82	9	3·81	4	1·98	2	0·32	2	3·15	7	6·49	5
April ..	—	—	10·66	13	1·42	3	6·82	9	1·22	3	0·86	5	1·68	5	0·00	0	2·75	5	0·20	1
May ..	—	—	1·20	4	6·63	4	0·51	2	5·95	3	2·49	4	0·95	2	0·33	1	4·89	7	0·00	0
June ..	—	—	1·67	2	0·00	0	1·28	2	0·00	0	0·00	0	0·23	1	0·15	1	1·20	3	0·00	0
July ..	—	—	0·00	0	1·79	4	0·28	1	0·54	2	1·33	3	0·00	0	0·64	2	0·00	0	0·79	3
August ..	—	—	0·27	2	3·78	7	1·99	5	1·08	2	6·11	9	1·40	2	1·24	5	0·63	2	0·61	3
September .	—	—	0·17	1	0·60	1	0·47	1	6·25	6	0·00	0	2·38	5	4·56	7	4·29	2	0·29	1
October ..	—	—	6·80	9	6·18	8	6·32	10	4·10	9	3·17	6	6·92	6	2·99	7	5·48	14	8·29	8
November .	—	—	24·52	17	11·06	16	11·68	13	3·21	11	4·74	8	3·80	9	20·83	23	6·61	15	6·47	12
December ..	—	—	6·49	11	6·84	8	4·39	6	19·24	15	3·86	10	20·47	14	23·73	22	15·44	16	28·52	15
Total ..	—	—	59·91	76	43·67	61	45·59	69	69·01	91	35·49	58	78·53	60	61·14	81	50·60	77	121·64	80

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 191
AX5 Vedda AX5

APPENDIX B.

132

	Monaragala Hospital, 700 ft. altitude. Inches.	Mean for 11 Years. Inches.
January	3·13	7·51
February	·26	3·51
March	3·20	3·78
April	15·07	7·02
May	7·64	3·48
June	1·23	1·72
July	·70	3·09
August	3·33	3·72
September	2·47	4·41
October	4·88	8·72
November	8·74	9·80
December	10·33	9·18
Total	60·99*	70·91†

* 110 days for 1912. † 101 days

APPENDIX C.

136

List of Birds observed in the Vedda Country during July, 1914, giving Local Distribution.

1. *Astur badius.* One seen at Guruhela.

2. *Accipiter* sp. (?). The Museum Collector obtained a ♀ Accipiter, which I am inclined to think is a new species to Ceylon. It was one of a pair that were engaged in building at the time it was shot. It possesses the characteristic long central toe, but in size it is much smaller than *A. nisus* or *A. virgatus*, with the breast boldly marked with dark smoke-brown streaks and blotches, and not barred. The second and third primaries also differ from the last mentioned, while the tarsus is also markedly stouter. My example was obtained at Newgala.

3. *Pernis cristatus.* Observed at Panawa and Bargura

4. *Spilornis cheela.* Observed at the base of the Monaragala hills, at Guruhela, Etmole, Panawa, and near Kebilitta.

5. *Haliastus leucogaster.* Observed at Panawa, Okanda, Lahugala, and Kumuna.

6. *Haliastur indus.* Common at Panawa and at Bargura.

7. *Falco peregrinus.* Nesting in the eastern cliff of "Westminster Abbey."

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136

8. *Ketupa zeylonensis.* Heard at Muppane, Liyangolla, but only near places where there was water.

9. *Huhua nepalensis.* At Panawa I heard the cry of what I believe to be this, but I include it doubtfully.

10. *Scops gia.* Heard at Siyambala-anduwa.

11. *S. bakkamuna.* Heard at Danakirigalla, Ellebubbura, Muduwa, and Kumuna. I think there is no doubt about this being *bakkamuna*, though I did not actually obtain one.

12. *Glaucidium.* I heard these owls repeatedly at Panawa, Bargura, Danakirigalla, Ellebubbura, Muduwa, and Meragalpokuna, but unfortunately obtained none so as to determine the species, but judging by the note I believe the birds I heard were *Castanonotum*.

13. *Palæornis eupatria.* Distinctly scarce. Occur in the valley of the Kumbukkan.

14. *P. torquatus.* Kumbukkan valley, Uva boundary, Siyambala-anduwa, Manawela, Ellebubbura, and Liyangolla.

15. *P. calthropæ.* Common at Danakirigalla, some at Liyangolla, Muduwa, and Panawa.

16. *Loriculus indicus.* Seen at the Uva boundary near Siyambala-anduwa, and heard in the Kumbukkan valley.

17. *Iynx pipiens gymnophthalmus.* I obtained two at Siyambala-anduwa. Common at Ellebubbura, Ampitiya, Kitulana, Kumuna, and east of Panawa. My examples are both ♀, and measure:—

(a) Length 4·75 in., tail 1·50 in., wing 3 in., bill ·54 in., tarsus ·50 in.

(b) Length 5·00 in., tail 1·50 in., wing 3 in., bill ·50 in., tarsus ·50 in.

18. *Chrysocolaptes stricklandi.* Plentiful at Lahugala. Occurs at Kurapan-oya, in Kumbukkan valley, Heda-oya valley, Danakirigalla, Ellebubbura, Ampitiya, and Etmole.

19. *Brachypternus.* I obtained, while going up the valley of the Kumbukkan river, what I have referred to in the text as possibly a new species belonging to this genus. The short, or, I should say rudimentary, inner hind toe is particularly striking.

20. *B. erythronotus.* Valley of the Kumbukkan, Panawa, and Bargura.

21. *Thereiceryx zeylonicus.* Occurs at Lahugala, Panawa, Kurapan-oya, Okanda, Kumuna, valley of the Kumbukkan, Bowela, and round "Westminster Abbey."

22. *Cyanops flavifrons.* Not particularly common. Found near Degalhela, Ellebubbura, Lahugala, Panawa, Okanda, Kumuna. Plentiful near Monaragala.

23. *Xantholæma rubricapilla.* Common all over the Vedda country.

24. *Cuculus sonnerati.* Observed in the valley of the Kumbukkan river.

25. *Coccystes jacobinus.* Not seen east of Muppane, where it is plentiful.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 26. Without having actually seen the bird, I venture to include a Cuckoo that may be identified by its monotonous and melancholy note, that represents the words "Captain Philpotts." It is common in the dry forests and plentiful near Maha-oya. I have spent considerable time and trouble in trying to obtain it, and while getting to within a few yards of the creature, I have always failed. I found it to occur at Etmole and the dry country towards Chimney Hill. Its exact identity is unknown to me.

27. *Eudynomis honorata.* Heard at Panawa.

28. *Phænicophæs pyrrhocephalus.* Seen at the Uva-Eastern Province boundary, Kumbukkan valley, Siyambala-anduwa, but not near the sea.

29. *Rhopodytes viridirostris.* Scarce; only near Monaragala.

30. *Centropus sinensis.* Abundant right down to the coast.

31. *Harpactes fasciatus.* Common at Siyambala-anduwa; seen in the valleys of the Kurupan-oya and Kumbukkan river; not elsewhere.

32. *Anthracoceros coronatus.* Common in the valley of the Kumbukkan. Seen at Panawa and Bargura, at which last place I obtained two measuring:—

♂ Length 35·50 in., wing 12·85 in., tail 14 in., bill 7 in., tarsus 2·25 in.

♀ Length 33·50 in., wing 12·25 in., tail 12·25 in., bill 6 in., tarsus 2·30 in.

33. *Tockus singalensis.* At Lahugala, Kurupan-oya, Kumbukkan river. Comparatively a scarce bird.

34. *Ceryle varia.* Occurs at Panawa and the lower reaches of the Kumbukkan river.

35. *Alcedo ispida.* Common at Lahugala, Panawa, Kumbukkan river, Kurapan-oya, and near all the wet paddy fields round Monaragala.

36. *Pelargopsis gurial.* Common on the Kumbukkan river, at Lahugala, Panawa, Okanda, Kumuna, and lower reaches of Heda-oya.

37. *Halcyon smyrnensis.* Common at Pottuvil and down the coast to Kumuna, and in all places where flowing water is present.

38. *Merops philippinus.* These migrants had already arrived, and were plentiful at Lahugala, Kumuna, and at Muduwa. In the early part of August they had reached Muppane.

39. *M. viridis.* Occurs at Ullapola, Bargura, Lahugala, Panawa, Okanda, but is scarce towards the centre of the area involved.

40. *Tachornis batassiensis.* At Pottuvil, Okanda, and Kumuna.

41. *Collocalia fuciphaga.* Abundant, and nesting at Monaragala.

42. *Macropteryx coronata.* Common at Panawa and all down the coast to the Kumbukkan. I also found it sparingly at Siyambala-anduwa.

43. *Caprimulgus kelaarti.* Heard in the Kumbukkan valley.

44. *C. asiaticus.* Common down the coast from Pottuvil to Kumuna.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136

45. *C. indicus*. Common down the coast from Pottuvil to Kumuna.

46. *Corvus macrorhynchus*. Common where there are inhabited villages only.

47. *Oriolus melanocephalus*. Common right to the coast.

48. *Graucalus macii*. Found at Ampitiya.

49. *Pericrocotus flammeus*. Common in the Heda-oya valley.

50. *Lalage sykesi*. Found at Muduwa, Kumuna, and plentiful up the Kumbukkan valley.

51. *Tephrodornis pondicerianus*. Heard at Pottuvil and at Lahugala.

52. *Dicrurus leucophaeus*. I suspect that this bird occurs, but not having actually shot one I include it doubtfully from Kumbukkan valley.

53. *D. paradiseus* (locally called Kudamahawaraliya) is very plentiful all through the Vedda country forest area. Unlike its relations in the Sabaragamuwa Province it does not associate with numbers of the *Malacocerci*. The following measurements of examples were obtained:—

♂ Length 17 in., tail 12 in.; wing 5·87 in., bill 1·37 in., tarsus 1 in.

♀ Length 13½ in., tail 8 in., wing 5·25 in., bill 1 in., tarsus 1 in.

54. *Bucanga leucopygialis*. Plentiful west of Siyambalanduwa.

55. *Terpsiphone paradisi*. Seen at Pottuvil, Panawa, Okanda, and in Kumbukkan valley.

56. *Hypothymis azurea*. Common. I found a nest of this species on the summit of "Westminster Abbey." It occurs comparatively sparingly in the Eastern Province.

57. *Rhipidura albifrontata*. See text.

58. *Cyornis tickelli*. Common at a place south-east of Kotiyagoda, and at Ellebubbura, Liyangolla, Etmole, and the base of "Westminster Abbey."

59. *Copsychus saularis*. Common up to the Heda-oya, but not seen east of "Westminster Abbey." Few at Lahugala, plentiful south of Pottuvil.

60. *Cittocincla macrura*. Abundant right to the coast. The local name is Sudu-waraliya.

61. *Thamnobia fulicata*. Comparatively scarce. Found breeding at Lahugala; occurs down the coast to Kumuna.

62. *Turdus epilopiera*. Heard in the high forest south of Degalhela, but nowhere else.

63. *Hypsipetes ganeesa*. Plentiful at Kotiyagoda, Heda-oya valley, Bowela, Etmole, and towards Monaragala.

64. *Iole icterica*. Common in the Heda-oya and Kurapan-oya valleys, but scarce north and east of Degalhela. Not seen west of Kodiyana.

65. *Pycnonotus luteolus*. Common right to coast.

66. *P. melanicterus*. Common in the river valleys, especially near Kumuna westwards.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 67. *P. hæmorrhus.* Common right to the sea.

68. *Chloropeis jerdoni.* Very scarce; only near Monaragala hills and at Pottuvil.

69. *Ægithina tiphia.* Not very common. Seen near coast line.

70. *Crateropus.* Common down the coast, but comparatively rare towards Siyambala-anduwa. I found a few at Bowela and towards Buddama.

71. *Pomatorhinus melanurus.* Heard at Panawa, Himitillanagalla, round "Westminster Abbey" and Muduwa, but not in the Kumbukkan valley.

72. *Alcippe nigrifrons.* Common at Lahugala, Kumuna. Breeding near Panawa and on summit of "Westminster Abbey," extending south to the Kumbukkan valley.

73. *Pellorneum fuscicapillum.* Common, but the birds from the region under consideration are distinctly paler than those from the wet districts.

74. *Orthotomus sutorius.* Common everywhere right down to the sea-side.

75. *Prinia valida.* Seen at Bowela, and in a piece of grass land at Karane. Heard at Lahugala and Okanda.

76. *Drymœca insularis.* (I am retaining Legge's species and name.) Seen only in the park lands south of Etmole.

77. *Cisticola cursitans.* Only seen at Newgalla in an abandoned field and at Panawa.

78. *Citta frontalis.* Heard at Siyambala-anduwa.

79. *Cinnyris lotenius.* Seen at Wattegama, Siyambala-anduwa, Pottuvil, down the coast to the Kumbukkan.

80. *C. zeylonicus.* Seen all down the coast from Panawa, but few only observed near "Westminster Abbey."

81. *Dicæum erythrorhynchum.* Seen at Lahugala, Ketulana, Pottuvil to Kumuna, but becoming distinctly scarce between the Kumbukkan valley and Monaragala.

82. *Zosterops palpebrosa.* Heard at Siyambala-anduwa.

83. *Hirundo hyperythra.* Common. I found its nest at Kebilitte. It is quite plentiful at Okanda.

84. *Passer domesticus.* Not generally common. I found it at Pottuvil, Panawa, Okanda, but not at Kumuna, on the coast; again at Bowela and Nambanna (few), while it is plentiful at Etmole and Muppane.

85. *Alauda gulgula.* Common.

86. *Ploceus baya.* Near Okanda I found several trees in which the familiar pendulous nests were in abundance, but in all cases these were last year's work. I looked in vain for this bird in the northern part of the Wedirata, where I suspect it occurs when the rice fields are in cultivation, but as that is not of regular occurrence, I assume that a local migration takes place.

87. *P. manyar.* I found this species at Lahugala, where, the tank being full all the year round, both rushes and sedges are available for nesting in.

88. *Uroloncha kelaarti.* Occurs near Monaragala, but I have no notes of it eastward of that place.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

89. *U. malabarica.* Seen at Kumuna.

90. *U. striata.* Common. Plentiful in the Panawa rice fields. Kumbukkan valley, Wattegama, and Muppane. 136

91. *Artamus fuscus.* Common at Barawaya, Ellebubbura, abundant at Pottuvil.

92. *Acridotheres melanosternus.* At Panawa and near coast, and plentiful at Monaragala, Wattegama; not generally common.

93. *Eulabes religiosa.* Common up the Heda-oya valley. Plentiful at Ellebubbura, Liyangolla, and the Kumbukkan valley, down to the coast.

94. *Columba intermedia.* From a description given to me I think this bird occurs at Okanda, but personally I did not observe it.

95. *Turtur suratensis.* Common throughout the whole of the Vedda country where there is any open land; especially common in fields.

96. *Chalcophaps indica.* Common. The variability of the bearing of the tail feathers is striking.

97. *Carpophaga aenea*, locally called Godabowa, is fairly common, especially in the valleys of the larger streams, such as the Heda-oya, the Kurapan-oya, and the Kumbukkan river.

The following measurements I took from examples shot at Newgala and the Kurapan-oya, respectively:—

♂ Length 15 in., tail 5·75 in., wing 8·25 in., bill 1·25 in., tarsus 1·12 in.

♂ Length 15·25 in., tail 6·00 in., wing 8·00 in., bill 1·25 in., tarsus 0·87 in.

98. *Osmotreron bicincta.* Common right down to the coast line, especially where ripe Banyan fruit is plentiful.

99. *O. pompadora.* Common like the last, but, perhaps, more abundant.

100. *Pavo cristatus.* I did not see a single trace of Peafowl in Uva. All down the coast from Pottuvil to the Kumbukkan it is common over a belt of country varying from 6 to 15 miles in width, but these birds appear to exclude themselves from high forests.

Near Lahugala I found cock birds more plentiful than hens, and at Bargura I saw a procession of eleven cock birds walking in single file down to a pool. Hens appear to be either solitary or more shy than the males, hence their seeming rarity.

101. *Gallus lafayetti.* Exceedingly common, and, like the last, the males are seemingly more common than the females.

There is much reason to believe that this species crosses with the village fowl, but evidence as to further intercrossing is obscure, as no definite examples of connected history can be obtained from a people to whom such a subject is of no interest. In the text reference has been made to distinct strains of domestic fowls that, it may be assumed, have developed without any definite human intervention, and it is beyond demonstration to show how these strains came to be established; but whether the variation arose from the cross-breeding of domestic birds with

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 others of their own species, or by crossing an inbred stock with the wild bird, is equally open to question.

I am inclined to believe that the inbreeding of the domestic bird has been an important factor in the forming of specific strains, and these have again been varied by the crossing with the wild bird: hence in one strain we find a distinct difference in the nest, while in another we find a close identity of general "build."

102. *Gallopardix bicalcarata.* I was able to make careful notes of the distribution of our Spur-fowl. I found it to occur at the foot of some low hills west of Siyambala-anduwa; again at the foot of Digalhella, at Danakirigalla, at the base of Westminster Abbey, near Ullapola, Nambana, Monaragala hills, Ampitiya; plentiful at Lahugala and at Kumuna. This last named place is the nearest point to the sea that I have traced this species. It is remarkable that in the plains the Spur-fowl does not appear to occur unless at the base of small hills; thus, while it is common at the foot of the Lahugala hills, it appears to be absent between that point and Siyambala-anduwa, where the country is flat.

103. *Turnix taigoor.* At Kumuna and in park lands near Etmole.

104. *Erythra phœnicura.* Common where there is water. I found it at Newgalla and Wattegama, confining its movements to small tanks in each instance. Plentiful at Monaragala.

105. *Porphyrio poliocephalus.* At Lahugala tank.

106. *Totanus stagnatilis.* Common in small numbers near backwaters and pools right through the country I explored.

107. *Numenius arquata.* I found it in the neighbourhood of the sand dunes near Panawa, where it might be considered plentiful.

108. *Hydrophasianus chirurgus.* On the tank at Lahugala.

109. *Himantopus candidus.* Very numerous round shallow lagoons at Okanda and near Panawa.

110. *Lobivanellus indicus.* Common, especially in flat damp ground.

111. *Glareola lactea.* I only once met with it at Panawa, where it appeared to be very plentiful.

112. A Tern, which I take to be *Sterna media*, is common along the coast. I found it frequenting both Arugam and Okanda bays.

113. A smaller species than the last, that I presume to be *S. sinensis*, I saw at Panawa only.

114. *Nettapus coromandelianus.* Abundant at Lahugala only.

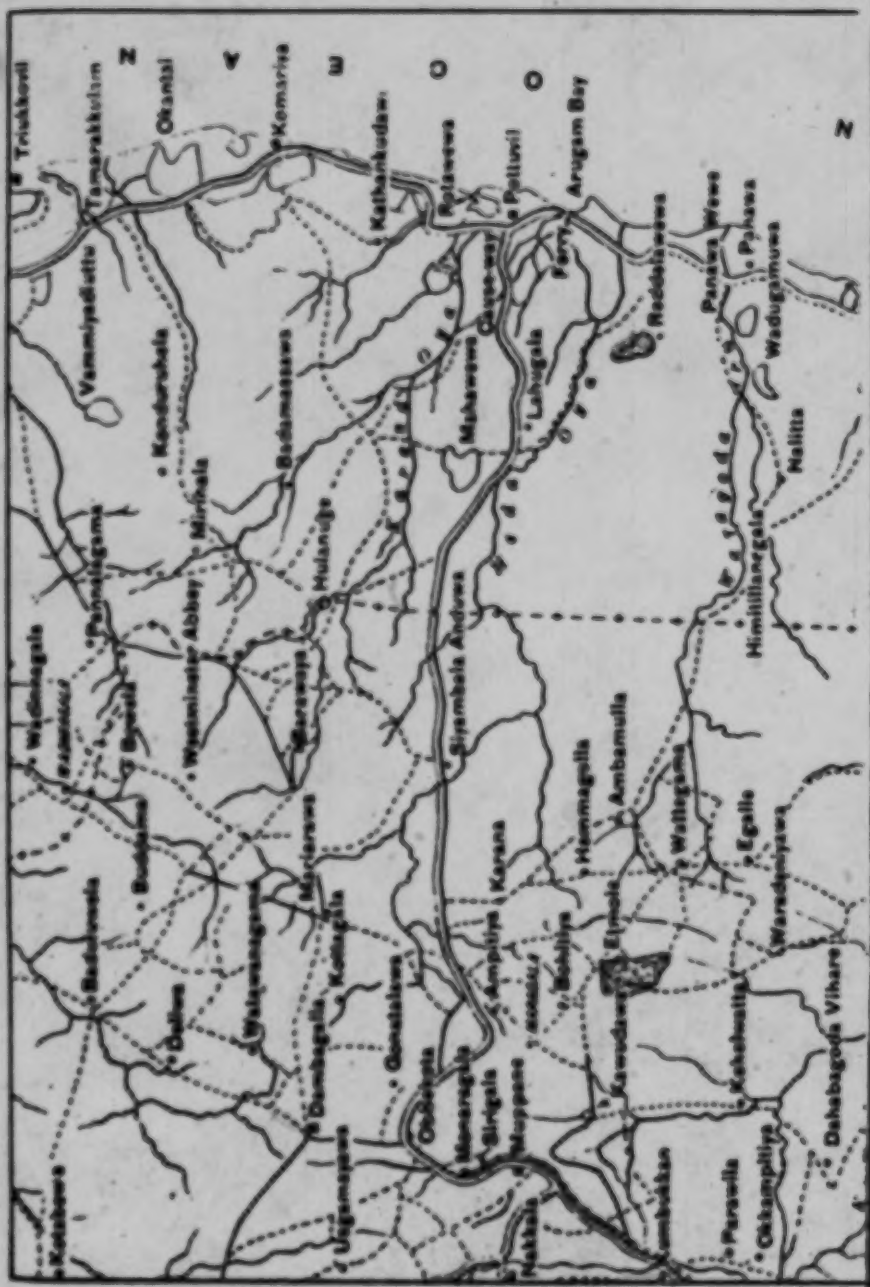
115. *Dendrocygna javanica.* Plentiful at Lahugala and Panawa tanks. Breeding near Kumuna.

116. *Phœnicopterus roseus.* When I was surveying near the coast south of Panawa in March of 1907 I found a large flock of these Flamingos at one of the shallow lagoons, but on the occasion of my present visit in July I did not see a single example.

117. *Platalea leucorodia.* Seen at Okanda.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

102
133
361



[Facing p. 164(A)]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

102
133
361

The Vedda Country.

[facing p. 164 (B)]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136

118. *Tantalus leucocephalus*. Seen at Kumana.

119. *Anastomus oscitans*. Along the coast south of Pottuvil. Local name Gombeli-kokka.

120. *Dissura episcopus*. Seen in numbers at Bargara.

121. A bird locally called "*Mâno-kokka*" was seen by me at Lahugala, but I am uncertain if it is identical with *Leptoptilus javanicus*.

122. *Xenorhynchus asiaticus*. I watched a pair at the mouth of the Kumbukkan river, seemingly feeding on fish, but I was unable to procure an example for more close identification.

123. *Ardea cinerea*. Near Panama and at Bargara.

124. *Herodias alba*. Seen at Panama and at Okanda, but doubtfully included here.

125. *Ardeola grayi*. Plentiful at Nowgala, Wattagama, and in wet fields round Monaragala.

126. *Ardeiralla cinnamomea*. Only seen near wet fields near Monaragala and the margin of the tank at Wattagama.

127. *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Plentiful in Panama and Lahugala tanks.

128. *Plotus melanogaster*. Common; often found in stagnant river pools right in the heart of the forest.

129. *Pelecanus philippinensis*. Only seen in the large "villu" at Kumana, where it is very abundant, and breeds there.

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

WILD CEYLON

Describing in particular the lives of the present day Veddas

by

R. L. SPITTEL

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

[Title Page]
[p. i]

PRINTED BY
THE CEYLON DAILY NEWS
1945
for
GENERAL PUBLISHERS LTD.
20, PARSON'S ROAD
FORT, COLOMBO

5: Spinel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

S., Richard Lionel

TO THE MEMORY
OF
MY FATHER
WHO TAUGHT ME TO LOVE
THE JUNGLE

[p. iii]

[p. ii is blank]

1907(06 & 12)/8 Cambridge

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

First Edition.....1924
Second Edition.....1930
Third Edition.....1945

000

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION

EXCEPT for a few minor alterations this work is presented in the form in which it was originally written.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 . AX5 Vedda AX5

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THERE is little of hunting in these pages, much of the forest-folk and their ways. I have purposely refrained, except in one section, from introducing incidents of sport—of which, truth to tell, I have had small share—into a narrative primarily designed to describe the more human and homely aspects of jungle life, especially where as it concerns the Veddas—the last remnant of Ceylon's aboriginal race. 121

Regarding the origin of the Veddas, I incline to the view that they are an off-shoot of one of the wild, autochthonous tribes of India, who crossed over to Ceylon, in prehistoric times, when the two lands were one, and subsequently got cut off by the inroad of the sea. They appear to be very akin to the Gonds of India. Indeed, the description of a present day Gond might just as well apply to the Vedda :—" A man of small sturdy build, with piercing eyes and a free athletic carriage..... axe hitched on shoulder, bow and arrows in hand ".* 174 [142]

I must acknowledge help I have received from many friends. Apart from those to whom reference is made in foot-notes in the text I am indebted to Mr. F. Lewis for much valuable advice in the planning of some of our journeys ; to him and Mr. C. Drieberg I owe the botanical names of trees. Three of the trips described here were made in the company of Mr. Leigh Smith, to whom, I take this opportunity, of expressing my gratitude for much valuable help in the preparation of my manuscript for the press. 000

The pen and ink illustrations are by Mr. E. F. Van Dort.

R. L. SPITTEL

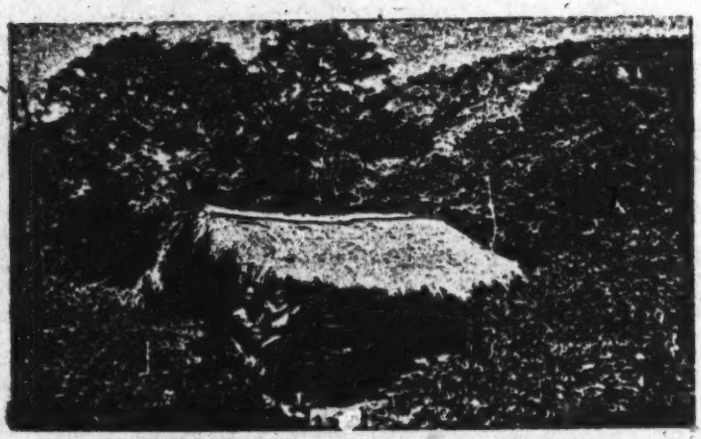
Colombo

[p. v]
[p. vi is blank]

* " Rifle and Romance in the Indian Jungle ", by A. I. R. Glasfurd

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342



Poromola's lonely home

291
411

Vedda bowman of Dambana

[facing p. vi]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CONTENTS

Page 000

I ON A JUNGLE RIVER
1. Life on the Banks ... 1
2. Veddas of Gunner's Quoin ... 7

II THE VEDDAS OF HENEBEDDE
1. Nuwaragala and Beyond ... 11
2. Forest Children ... 16

III THE JUNGLE IN THE DROUGHT
1. Prelude. A Southern Tour ... 21
2. The Chances of Game ... 25
3. At the Water-holes ... 29

IV VILLAGE VEDDAS AND JUNGLE SHRINES
1. The Embrace of the Trees ... 34
2. Yakkure ... 39
3. The Maraweethiya ... 42

V WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND FRIAR'S HOOD
1. Westminster Abbey ... 46
2. Gipsy Haunts ... 52
3. A Vedda of Divulana ... 56
4. Friar's Hood and the Veddas of Galmede ... 59

VI VEDDAS OF BINGODA
1. Bingoda Homes ... 64
2. Vedda Characteristics, Religion and Superstition ... 68
3. Some Vedda Arts and a Dance ... 74
4. Vedda Jungles ... 79
5. Nests and Hives ... 86

VII BINTENNE ... 91
VIII GIPSIES ... 97
IX HOW TO TRAVEL ... 104

[p. vii]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
Poromola's lonely home and Vedda bowman ...	*Frontispiece*
Punting along the river bank	2
Draw-wells on the Mahaweli	2
Of no consequence except to each other	3
Gunner's Quoin across Manampitiya tank	3
A Vedda home of the Ulpotta	8
Veddas of Gunner's Quoin	8
"Their homes, the shelter of the trees"	9
Naida and his family	9
Handuna strings his bow	16
The best of the Henebedde Veddas	16
Handuna's household	17
Henebedde Veddas	17
The iguana hunter	17
"Sedate, wistful children"	36
Kombua of Dambana	37
A Vedda girl of Dolagalwella	38
Yakkure Tank	38
Dastota Falls	39
Sinna, a Vedda of Gunner's Quoin	39
Deserted Bowala	48
Bag made of threshed *riti* bark and monkey skin pouch ...	49
Habbaka, a weighted frame-work for trapping animals... ...	49
The dancers of Bowala	49
A group of gipsies...	55
The gipsy javelin thrower	55
Young gipsy mothers	56
Gipsy chiefs	56
"Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold"	58
Kaurala and his wife	59
A Galmede home	59
Suthu Banda, Gama and their families	64
Wedded children	65
Kaira and his wife	65
Little Handuna	66
The hut of Gama	67
"Too ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness" ...	67
Strike-a-light and flint	74
Vedda axe and audes	74
Fire-making by rubbing sticks	74
Method of measuring length of arrow-shaft	75
Feathering the arrow	75
Stringing bow with aid of the knee	76
Stringing bow by foot-thrust	76
A Vedda archer of Bintenne	77
Boundary tree marked with bow-mark	77

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
Alu-galge—A Vedda cave	86
An ape for dinner	86
" Over the edge "	87
Honey-gatherer with torches and stake, ready to descend ...	87
Cannon once—gate-posts now	92
Mahiyangana-thupa	92
Veddas of Bulugahadena	93
Veddas of Dambana	94
" The finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne "	95
Gipsy women and children	98
The voice of the charmer	99

[p. ix]

[p. x is blank]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

000

In the dim waste lands of the Orient stands
The wreck of a race so old and vast,
That the grayest legend cannot lay hands
On a single fact of its tongueless past.

[p. xi]
[p. xii is blank]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER I

ON A JUNGLE RIVER

1. LIFE ON THE BANKS

And every sky was blue and rain
And sudden rainbows in between,
And every bough was green again
And all the world was gilt and green.

And morning was a flaming brand,
And eve a poppy late and long,
And love-time was upon the land,
And all the world was sick for song.

WE left Colombo in a burdened car which carried everything requisite—food, cook, tent and camp furniture—for an outing that relied for hospitality neither on hostelry nor friend. We were free to make ourselves at home wherever and whenever we pleased and at evening we camped by the jungle road-side.

The next day found us at Trincomalee getting together provisions and arranging for two canoes to take us on a ten-day trip up the Mahaweli. These met us at Nirodumunai the following morning, with three boatmen to each canoe and an old guide—all Moors.

Rowing to the shore of Kiniyai across Tampalakaman bay, famous for window-pane oysters, we were towed some distance and landed by the ferry-house at the mouth of the Mahaweli. On the opposite bank was an encampment of fisherfolk spreading out their catch on the sand, while every now and then watchful hawks swooped down taking toll.

Before us spread the wide estuary of the inviting river, the largest in Ceylon. Its sources cradled in the amphitheatre of splendid hills in the central uplands, it descended in many a beauteous cascade through serried slopes of tea, rubber and palm; and, passing village and town that had grown on its banks, it swept through great stretches of lonely forest to disgorge its waters where we now were.

We entered the river punting along the forest border; only occasionally when crossing mid-stream was it necessary to replace pole with oar. The canoes were unsheltered; the umbrellas the boatmen provided gave poor protection against the fierce sun on the open river. Our servants made shift by heaping on their heads all the oddments of clothing they could lay hands on, and resembled piles of linen more than human beings.

Hugging the banks as we were, it was not surprising that we should have almost run into the sleeping form of a monster crocodile. We pulled up within a few feet of its nose and were wondering at its nonchalance when, with a sudden ungainly leap, it reached the water splashing us and rocking our boat. Crocodiles can evidently see with closed eyes.

Punting along the river bank. (Page 1)

Draw wells on the Mahaweli. (Page 2)

[facing p. 2]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Towards evening we came to certain gibbet-like structures which stood out against the sky in strange contrast to their surroundings. These were the draw-wells of a tobacco plantation many more of which we were to see in the course of our journey. Here our guide proposed we should pass the night; but not before he had secured for himself, as he afterwards did at every opportunity, as much tobacco as a campaign of casual, yet dignified beggary brought him.

Taking possession of one of the huts on the settlement we had emptied our boats and begun to cook when a smart shower descended to continue unceasingly throughout the night. We were in a bad way. The nine of us lay huddled in the narrow open shed at the mercy of the wind-driven rain, our nostrils worried by the narcotic odour of tobacco leaves, in all stages of desiccation, that hung from the roof like great bats.

We had but settled down when three dripping figures rushed in seeking shelter. Our boatmen facetiously remarked that they could see for themselves there was no room. But they lingered awhile enjoying the smells of our cooking and soon melted into the night to a kinder reception, we hoped, elsewhere. They were the owners of the shanty with which we had made so free!

It dawned superbly. The banks were covered with long lush grass that grew in a broad strip between the forest edge and the river. Spacious game trails, gashed out of the steep sides, and capable of accommodating even an elephant, led down to the water at intervals of every few yards. There was a patch of grass trodden by one of these monsters as he fed in the moon-lit rain. Even now, perhaps, he rested in the seclusion of some creeper-covered alcove at hand. Who so happy as he? Why, all:

A brace of teal flew overhead to some outlying reedy pool; a jungle cock crowed in the distance; from a swamp a cormorant cried; monkeys and large squirrels bustled in the branches; crimson-backed wood-peckers darted from tree to tree; swallows circled twittering melodiously; little birds gave music from every bough. The moan of doves, the boom of coucals, the cackle of king-fishers joined the chorus. And then, like the twang from a golden harp, the voice of the gorgeous oriole thrilled the ear.

Those notes of the jungle, so various, so apparently ill-assorted, withal so harmonious. It seemed as though Nature were but tuning her orchestra to some deep diapason of song the full development of which was not for human ears.

In the evening we found ourselves again in a ramshackle shed in a tobacco garden adjoining a rubber estate. Having bathed at a draw-well that took its water from the river, we settled to thoughts of jungle peace. The air, quick awhile with the vespers of roosting birds, was now hushed save for the trolling of a magpie-robin. Soon he too ceased. Cicadas made the forest hum. Then the night-jars, sweet harbingers of the dark, took up the song.

But what was this disquieting hum about us that momentarily grew? Mosquitoes! They assailed us in legions driving us towards the suffocating fumes of the large log fire we had built to keep off elephants. After a fidgety meal I leapt into bed, hurriedly letting down the curtain—butter-muslin no less—and, sparing a thought of commiseration for my more luckless companions, closed placid eyelids in anticipation of sleep. The servants and boatmen, covered from head to foot, crouched as close to the fire as they dared, talking amiably by way of distraction. Only

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

342
516

Of no consequence except to each other (Page 5)

133

Gunner's Quoin across Manampitiya tank. (Page 7)

[facing p. 3]

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

the seasoned old guide found heart for banter. Gradually the talk flagged, and, except for an occasional scratch, slap, or murmur, there was a tentative silence. It was not long before some one essayed a disgruntled remark to test the somnolence of the others. All the answer he got was a rough reprimand from me that he was to stop his twaddle and let others sleep. I assumed for the hundredth time a determined posture of repose; for, truth to tell, I was no better off than any one else. Suffocate myself under the sheets or rearrange my curtains as I might, I was no match for those pests. Oh that detestable hum; that jubilance with which they seared a passage into one that itched and burned for hours! Subterfuge was useless; I resorted to stoical indifference; if the tobacco-growers could stick it, I reasoned, why could not I? If tolerance could be acquired with familiarity why not at a juncture? But philosophy does not reckon with mosquitoes; and it was not long before endurance broke.

Bouncing out of bed I called to the guide and proposed we should take to the river.

"It is dangerous to do that," he said. "The elephants are in the water by now and we shall be in their midst before we know".

"But there's the moon, we have guns, and we can row amid-stream," said I.

"It will be dark at the worst time, towards dawn," he said.

When one gets the worst of an argument thank goodness there is always recrimination as a resort. "What sort of a guide are you," I asked, "to have brought us to a place like this?"

"Had we camped elsewhere we should have fared no better," was the disarming reply.

With true humility I hastened to enquire whether we should be in similar plight every subsequent night. "Higher up," he answered consolingly "there are good places".

I doubt whether any one of us has forgotten that night. But this I must say to the credit of those pestering demons—curtains, clothing, and even canvas were no barriers to them; their most exasperating onslaughts were from under the bed.

While it was yet dark I heard a bird of day. A crow cawed on the wing; a faint light flickered over the trees. Dawn at last; never was it more welcome.

A frowzy fellow from nowhere contemplated us as we got into the canoes.

"How can you sleep in a place like this?" I asked him with an air of contempt I felt I could now afford to assume.

"We sleep all right," he said complacently. "We get into our houses, light a fire outside, close the doors and—there you are."

"But we did all that," I said.

"What sort of house is that?" he answered disdainfully indicating the crumbling shack we had occupied. "Besides you were too near the jungle and not close enough to the water as you should have been. Not mosquitoes only but any animal might have come on you there. *We* slept in that hut yonder."

But the structure he pointed to was very unconvincing, being riddled with breaches. Familiarity not artifice, we concluded, inured the tobacco-growers of the Mahaweli; and we could not but admire a fortitude that braved annoyance so extreme and sickness so sure in the interests of a little gain.

The advice we received, however, we turned to future account; and the next night found us camped amid the trees close to the water's edge, thereby escaping mosquitoes, it is true, but not elephants; for about midnight we were awakened by the snapping of branches around us. With shouting and shooting we drove the intruders away, but not before our chauffeur, muddled with sleep and terrified out of his wits, had slipped over a rope and nearly drowned himself in the swollen river.

136 Traces of elephants were abundant everywhere. As early as four in the afternoon we would see one or more of them standing out in the tall grass by the river border plucking up great trunkfuls of the luscious food.

In the morning bird life was plentiful. Here were five pea-fowl perched on a half-immersed snag; there a lonely egret in a secluded pool. Imperial pigeons, pied horn-bills, and darters, their eel-necks inelegantly bent at bayonet-like angles, flew about in numbers. Racket-tailed drongoes and scimitar-babblers sang entrancingly; barbets contributed a monotonous refrain. White-necked storks were seated on dead trees with the abstraction of philosophers. Little munias carrying streamers of grass flew across from bank to bank. The nests of noisy bayas hung like fruit from favoured trees.

137 No less interesting were the trees that engirt us. The ubiquity of green was only occasionally relieved by some small flower of vivid hue. Many of the trees were creeper-laden and formed arbours that might have homed the troops of Pan. Great *kumbuks** bent to the water, making delightful retreats for forest-lovers. Often the river eddied round an islet formed around some stricken tree. Massive lianas, heavy as the hawsers of a Titan, swung from dizzy pinnacles holding in twisted grip the fragments of strangled saplings. Everywhere were stark dramas of vegetable life:—Tremendous trees in the grip of some epiphytic *ficus* whose tentacles guttered and clung in live pythonic cords and bands. Yet a few years and the parasite would clasp the crumbling carcase of its host and stand itself a forest monarch. Such sights are perhaps less poignant in their *denouement* than at the inception, when a slender cord, an elfin thing, streaks daintily some magnificent giant whose life, incredible as it may seem, it is destined one day surely to claim.

Nor was there lack of human interest here. A group of trees, their dome-shaped contours, suggesting at a distance masses of tree-covered rock, attracted us one noon to rest in their shade. Exotic *ingasaman* or 'rain-trees' they proved to be, sole monuments of a wasted human enterprise; not another sign was there to show that a score of years previously a young coconut plantation had struggled for existence here. Elephants had destroyed the last of the palms years ago.

A sylvan siesta is no smooth affair. Minute ticks swarm in the dry leaves and getting on to you bide their time. At some untoward moment, on the march perhaps or in the dead of night, an agonising pain as from the stab of a red-hot needle will tell you that Mr. Tick has begun to feed. A snake may fall on you, leap towards your face, and wriggle

*Terminalia glabra

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

away more frightened than you. A scratching noise under your pillow may lead to the discovery of a scorpion or a centipede. Beetles, moths, biting ants, and insects of all descriptions investigate and experiment with you. But you soon learn to ignore these little draw-backs and drowse to the lullaby of some wood-land songster.

Tropical Nature is a stern mistress; her favours are never unalloyed. For him who would seek her she holds grievances in store, grievances that enhance the very joy they encumber; toning down ecstasy lest it pall with surfeit; giving to the contemplation of foregone experience that unfettered pleasure the reality denies, prompting us in after years to say, forgetful of all the hardships, "those were happy days we had".

The Verugal where it joined the Mahaweli was at this season an insignificant stream. Quite a colony of tobacco growers flourished here. Very picturesque are these settlements or *thethes* as they are called. Four to six huts stand some distance apart in clearings along the bank, most of them beautifully overspread with melon-creepers. Every hut has its vegetable garden; and standing before them, like sentinels, are the draw-wells, usually in couples, that feed the tobacco plots direct from the river. The lowing of cattle under the superb trees that stud the clearing, the crowing of cocks, the sound of human voices complete the atmosphere of rural domesticity in this wild land and furnish scenes which would rejoice the heart of a painter.

Putting up one evening in a coconut grove owned by a Moor we found an unkempt ill-clad fellow seated on his haunches staring at some simple wares a pedlar was displaying. They told us he was a Vedda from a village some miles away. Becoming restless under our scrutiny he walked off. I followed him to his miserable shelter, where I found his daughter, a puny girl of four, covered with ulcers. Edging up towards her father she stared at us distrustfully with the eyes of a startled doe. A few broken pots were their sole belongings. The bond of tender solicitude that united these human derelicts, of no consequence except to each other, was indeed a touching sight. I asked the man what he did for a living. He said he "earned a rupee for two months work". He knew neither his nor his daughter's age, and when pressed for an answer said irritably, "What do I know of age? Am I a man who knows anything about age?" Blessed mortal!

We gave him a coin which he at first refused, and only accepted with persuasion; he had evidently never handled one like it before, for he looked at it puzzled and suspicious; and when the amount it represented was explained to him he was not enlightened.

"He knows nothing," said the Moor vociferously. "Ask him to count six and see if he can. He's a real bull. What does he know? He's a Vedda. For thirty-six cents he will bring a kerosene-tinful of *bambara** honey, and," he added chuckling with subtle satisfaction, "he does not know what thirty-six cents is!"

The next day we saw in the distance the blue contours of Gunner's Quoin, the goal of our journey. The river had now become considerably shallower with broad stretches of its sandy bed exposed. As we punted along the shady border, we suddenly came upon a most realistic piece of ancient sculpture—the life-sized head of an elephant carved out of a

*Rock-bee, *Apis dorsata*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

172 partially submerged rock. Occupying the position it did in an environment teeming with elephants it seemed designed to give a shock at first glance.

We were now in the precincts of an old civilisation. Polonnaruwa, its ruined capital, was barely ten miles away. We camped on a shoal by the water's edge. Purplish clouds retained awhile the languishing tints of a fast paling sky. Near us was an islet, forest-engloomed and haunted, they said, by tutelary demons. In bygone days these forests were peopled. All was now still save for the plaint of a sand-piper. A buffalo coming to drink stood irresolute awhile watching our fires, then melted into the gloom. A scarcely distinguishable flock of cormorants flew overhead. From afar came the eerie cry of a devil bird.

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDAS OF GUNNER'S QUOIN

THE ferry at Periathurai marked the end of our river journey. Some miles inland was the rock called Gunner's Quoin round which Veddas lived. 131

Under a bo-tree by the river was an image of Ganesha the pot bellied, elephant-headed Hindoo god with offerings of withered lotus flowers before him. In a temple hard by, were massive bells and drums that kept deafening accompaniment on many a ceremonial day when peacock-plumed men, in the self-imposed torture of skewered cheek and pronged back, bounded hither and thither in delirious dance; and here were the implements, prongs and tridents, these frenzied devotees had dedicated to their unhearing god.

At the Tamil village of Manampitiya we were regaled with an old man's tales of the Veddas. He told us of one Patabanda only recently dead, called *waliga**-Patabanda owing to his habit of wearing his loin cloth long behind. It appeared this Vedda was a fine marksman. A *rala-mahatmaya*† once wishing to test his skill pointed to a small jak fruit on a tall tree and asked him to shoot. The arrow flew true and stuck in the fruit; whereupon the Vedda feigning anger said roughly, "Now give me my arrow; it was you who asked me to shoot". The timid chief proffered money which was disdainfully refused. The Vedda then taking another arrow hit the stem of the fruit so that it fell and enabled him to recover both arrow and fruit. Thus do men pass into fable. 114 173

We were told many another tale of Veddas and their ways, and of matters connected with the ancient ruins to be found on the rock; of an anchorite who had lived in a cave there unharmed by the bears; and of ancient Vedda kings captured by stratagem and fraud.

A walk of five miles the next morning brought us to the foot of Gunner's Quoin. I was now brimming with expectancy; for I was about to see for the first time the Veddas in their homes; that aboriginal people who had time and again attracted the scholars of Europe, and in whose veins flowed the oldest blood of the inhabitants of Ceylon. They were here when Wijeya came from India in 543 B.C. and founded the Sinhalese dynasty; long earlier, when that Buddha came who preached to his followers at Mahiyangana after having put to flight the Yakkhas (Veddas?); to an even still older beginning their ancestry went, to a time in the stone age when man vied for existence with prehistoric forms. 114

To-day hardly a Vedda true to the old traditions survives; not one that uses beaten bark for apparel, or depends for sustenance solely on the jungle. The inroads of civilisation and the effects of miscegenation with the neighbouring Sinhalese or Tamils are tending surely towards the extinction of the race. Yet, for all that, many of the old Vedda traits still survive in their degenerate descendants and these are still a link with an unfathomable past. 144 178

*Tail †Kandyan chief

137
342

A Vedda home of the Ulpotta. (Page 8)

142
291
412

Veddas at Gunner's Quoin. The two to the left (Vela and Sinna) are the most typical. (Page 8)

[facing p. 8]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411] carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412 were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of [342] these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the âne Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukkan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee reihee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

804 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
301
415
516

"Their homes, the shelter of the trees." (Page 9)

142
291
622

Xoide and his family. (Page 9)

[facing p. 9]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as as leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

000 The next noon we were on the river making easy passage with the current all in our favour, and travelling at ten times the speed we had laboured up. The boatmen who had spent the night on the bank looked as if they were afflicted with measles, so remorselessly had the mosquitoes handled them; and already one of them was shivering with malaria.

The heat of noon on the river was intense; and the splash of the oars or the sight of boys bathing at the draw-wells gave little appeasement. No bird had the heart to sing. As we passed, king-fishers flashed out of their cool retreats, coveys of stove-curlew ran up the shoals, and submerged wild buffaloes floundered up the bank. Clusters of yellow butterflies sipped moisture from the wet sand. A brahminy kite, its feet immersed in the shallows, whistled a warning to its mate that answered from afar.

621 At Kandakadu, where we met the first Vedda and his child, we spent the night; and, having two hours daylight to spare, decided to visit his village, in spite of being advised against it at that hour, as elephants were plentiful. The place was disappointing as regards Veddas; for, [342] instead of the crude huts we hoped to see, we found well built houses with cattle and fowls in plenty; and the inhabitants, though they called themselves Vedda, were Tamils to all appearance. Nevertheless, we 136 saw here a sight we would not have missed. In a field in full view of the village, and bordering a pool where women went for water, were three elephants belly-deep in the tall grass feeding with the indifference of cattle. The forest between this village and the river veritably teemed with traces of elephants.

000 At the Verugal junction we were greeted by a fine old Arab in baggy breeches and skull-cap. His house, a stout three-storied structure, was designed to stand the stress of floods. When the lower floors were submerged he would remain islanded on the upper which had mud floors to permit of cooking. On the rich silt left in his garden when the waters ebbed, he planted tobacco and the luxuriant vegetables he was now selling our boatmen. A stern man was Mohamed Sultan as he was called. When one of our party cut more sugar-cane than he intended taking, he was brought to his senses quickly enough with a single sentence. The aggrieved one afterwards confided to me that Mohamed was once a notorious robber of Kiniyai where he lived killing and eating other people's cattle!

We rapidly drifted toward the end of our journey, having done in a day and half downstream what we had taken seven days upstream to accomplish. As we reached the river-mouth the mosquito hosts were abroad, a storm threatened, but the fishers of the estuary were unconcernedly hauling their nets to a song.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER II

THE VEDDAS OF HENEBEDDE

1. NUWARAGALA AND BEYOND

Talk not of temples, there is one
Built without hands, to mankind given;
Its lamps are the meridian sun
And all the stars of heaven,
Its walls are the cerulean sky,
Its floor the earth so green and fair,
The dome its vast immensity;
All Nature worships there.

VEDDER

FOR months we had nursed the prospect of a ramble in the Vedda country. Professor Seligmann, writing some nine years previously of the parts we hoped to visit, had said: 114

"We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgalla but among the Nuwaragala hills.....After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sittala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to have a surplus to barter with the Moormen or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, pots and occasional rice and coconuts."*

Thus it was that the Nuwaragala and Sittala Wanniya terrain came to be the object of our search. But reaching Maha Oya we received a rude awakening at the outset. We were questioning our guides regarding the route when to our surprise they told us that no Veddas now remained in Sittala Wanniya; that some few who had been at Galmede had either [131] died or gone eastward: and that, not certainly for two generations had Veddas been known to inhabit the Nuwaragala caves. To see Veddas, they said, we would have to go to Henebedde and Danigala, places within easier access of Bibile farther south. We had no choice but to change our plans and commit ourselves to the larger undertaking of working down through Henebedde to the high road at Bibile, after a journey of some sixty miles through the forest.

The jungle is as a home to some; they are never so happy as when they are amidst its delight and mystery. The bird songs, the sun glimmering

*The Veddas by C. G. and B. Z. Seligman [p. 11]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

through faery arbours, the embosoming trees, and they feel wrapped in homely influences. But with my companion it was otherwise. Recently out from England he was not bred to conditions such as these. When I bade him give ear to the song of the grackle and the chattering of parrots, and indicated the glossy drongoes on the charred tree-skeletons of sunnied *chenas*, he shared none of my enthusiasm; to him the sounds and sights were strange. He bethought him, "The melodies of my beechen groves, are they here, or the joy of my breezy rolling downs?" Fostered in ampler horizons, his yearnings were for vistas beyond the thronging trees.

Six miles of dark, virginal forest separated the hamlet of Pollebedde on the banks of the Rambukkan from the hill of Nuwaragala which, though out of our way, possessed features of sufficient interest to decoy us. Though the sun was at its worst we walked in the cool shade. Sparse shafts of light penetrated the strata of leaf overhead, working with subtle artistry on the russet carpet of fallen foliage intricate and chance designs, where the spur-fowl scratched for food, and the resting sambur wagged a languid ear. By many a runnel was the spoor of leopard, and deep holes exposing lacerated roots testified to the foraging of a boar or bear. A melodious cry of pain told of a jungle tragedy, some little bird in the talons of a hawk.

As we neared the hidden rock large blocks of granite were frequently seen and we had begun to realise that we were making a gradual ascent, when our guide, pointing to a more or less orderly arrangement of stones, said, "That is the old-time road".

We proceeded up this buttressed way, wide enough in its time to have allowed six men to walk abreast. It wound along the face of the hill, and then, turning sharply on itself, led upwards again. Between the roadway and the rock was what seemed a shallow moat; and here, leaning as if for support against a great boulder, was a sight that gave us pause—an old jak tree; a mere shell of a tree, tattered, creviced, and sparse of leaf; to it clung one puny fruit, the ill-nourished offspring of its withered age. This symbol of human occupation was a living link that connected us with the ancient people of the rock.

Higher up, the stone was grooved with steps apparently designed to short-circuit the doubled way. The ranged boulders now gave place to a rocky outcrop socketed and grooved for the stanchions of some structure, a block-house perhaps, in the event of assault. Here were the scattered bones of a boar ambushed and eaten by a leopard lurking in a rift: The clatter of nearing hoofs; tautened thews and a swinging tail: a lightning leap, a snarl, and a fell to-do: the splash and trickle of gore, the glutted feast, and the return to the putrid fragments till every bone was clean. The drama was complete.

Traces of animals were plentiful all the way up the rock, even of elephants; how these could clamber here, was a wonder, and why, a mystery. Was there not sufficient food in the lower forests that they must take this arduous way? For even we were short-breathed and weary-kneed as we laboured up and up along a path that became rougher, steeper, and narrower with every step. A welcome breeze told us we were nearing the top; and though the path still wound between boulders and trees the going was easier. At length we were on the summit;

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

there far below us stretched an unbroken panorama of sky and hilled horizon. And lo! at our feet was the solution of the enigma as to what had attracted the elephants to this eminence of over a thousand feet—a placid pool. Here the forest lords had come in the parched July nights when the lower streams were waterless.

Closer observation revealed that here was a great cistern (*pokuna*)* cut out of the living rock by human hands; one of the finest examples of stone carving in Ceylon. From this the hill sloped upwards to a wooded terrace studded with the ruins of a massive stone building, probably a fortress as strong as it was difficult of access.

We spent the night on the summit. Around us rose the bastions of encircling hills clothed in forest which concealed a vast wealth of animal life; beyond these was a second range; and behind them a third; and so range beyond range, until finally fuliginous contours billowed against a crimson sky seeming to belong more to cloud-land than to earth. The sunset flared like a beacon scattering smoky flocculi. The dark crept to the whispering of cool night winds, the gemmed sky canopied the sleep of those solitudes, and the cold and comfortless moon looked down. Into our hearts crept a quiet, old as earth.

The cry of a leopard challenged the dawn resonant with the twittering of waking birds. We had left for the morning the investigation of another feature the hill possessed. By way of a ledge on the western face we gained a spacious cavern overlooking a sheer drop of perhaps eight hundred feet. Drip-ledges ran in three parallel rows along the brow of the cave which was engraved with an ancient inscription telling of "Mahatissa beloved of the gods." Shallow grooves and sockets at the lip of the cave marked the foundations of a former enclosing wall.

Interesting as was the cave in itself we had but to turn towards the vast scene it overlooked to be greeted, from the sunnied slopes and dells below, by peal upon peal from the silver throats of spur-fowl; as the notes of one rising in staccato scale began to decline, another took on the swell in a cannon of music. It was a paen proportioned to the noble amphitheatre in which it was set, a hymn to the rising day. These sounds greeted us now in this derelict land of the Veddas. Such songs those men, captains and kings perchance, had heard in an older day, when, on such a dawn as this, they strained hand-sheltered eyes in gaze across the forest watchful of advancing foes.

*It measures some 77 feet by 58 and about 5 feet deep.

Regarding Nuwaragala, Mr. Frederick Lewis, to whom I believe belongs the credit of first having called attention to the rock, says:—

"Nowhere did I see traces of Buddhistic import; the place looked grimly fortification-like. The commanding position, the solidity of structure, the natural difficulties of approach, combined with the elaborate design for the conservation of water supply, leave a convincing impression that this could be no place of pious retreat only. The water-supply would probably serve a thousand people. This could hardly be necessary for a handful of priests; especially when Nature had planted a fort that could guard a great arterial path (the old military road from Tissamaharama to Pollanaruwa by way of Kalloda) creeping along the outskirts of a probably unsubdued country, that at that time was possibly inhabited by the *yakhus* or Veddas that the Sinhalese never really subdued.

The ubiquity of Buddhist monasteries in remote rocks similar to Nuwaragala must, however, make us accept such a theory with reserve, until further evidence is forthcoming.

5: Spittel II-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

115 On our return journey, passing the ruins of a remarkable aqueduct of stone—the Watawala Kandiya—beside the remains of a crumbling 173 bund, we arrived at Kurunduwina where we met a doddering ancient who claimed to have been alive when the British took Ceylon a hundred 439 years ago. It is not often one meets old folk in these unhealthy lands. Here, I thought, was one who could tell us something about Veddas of a type we could not hope to see; for within view of his hut were the Sittala Wanniya hills, the immemorial homes of the Veddas. But his decrepit mind needed much jogging.

"Are there Veddas here?" I shouted twice into his deaf old ears.

"Now none," he said.

"Did they live on the rocks yonder?" I asked. He nodded affirmatively.

"Did they come here to barter?" I persisted. His tired lack-lustre eyes flashed to a memory as he answered with surprising alacrity, "Yes they came. When they had no food they came to exchange honey and hides for food. The Vedda would sit there, place his bow there, his arrows there, and his axe there, and he would ask for betel. If any one stepped over his weapons by chance, he would leap up in anger, bite the piece of human liver he carried in his betel-bag, and ask, 'Who's this that dares to defy me?' The gleam faded from the old man's eye, his weary look returned and he uttered not another word, question as I might.

The shifting *chenas* scattered about these parts make it very difficult to say where a village begins or ends. We were resting on the banks of the Rambukkan, (a course parallel to which we had so far followed) somewhere on the confines of Payile and Idambowa, when to our surprise we saw a Buddhist priest accompanied by the inevitable *abithaya** and a tall, wild, naked fellow. A Vedda of Bingoda the latter was said to be. [609] We tried to engage him in talk, but he would have none of it; seated on his haunches he stared at us with a hang-dog apathy eloquent of hunger; this melted away in a broad grin as he left us, greedily chewing the handful of muscatels and biscuits we gave him.

The usual route from here to Potuliyadda lay through the village of Mullagama. As this involved a detour we decided on a more direct if less used track; a decision we afterwards regretted as it lost us the interesting Veddas of Bingoda, and incidentally a clue to the discrepancy between Seligmann's statement and local report regarding the Veddas of the "Nuwaragala hills"—a missed opportunity the full significance of which we were only to realise some five years later after miles of arduous and unnecessary travel. For the present we were told that [621] the Veddas of Bingoda consisted of only three families, and that, though they forsook their huts for caves during the honey season, they were, if anything, less of the real Vedda than those of Henebedde.

Our journey was now an uncertainty; for the guides were doubtful both of the route and the likelihood of water. The jungle, hitherto dense, gave place to an occasional glade. Late in the evening we found ourselves in a spacious *talawa*, rank with tall grass that quite obliterated our path. Here we were benighted, just as we found a pool adequate to our needs. It was an interesting place, a veritable sanctuary, hill-encircled; an ideal

*A neophyte, attendant on a priest.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

site for a guarded city. Indeed its entire aspect savoured of such a possibility, with its large granite slabs and disordered pilasters, cairns like crumbling *viharas*,* and clumps of bamboo suggestive of former human occupation. But local tradition gave no colour to our surmise, nor had we the time for a careful scrutiny. If this was no work of man, then Nature must be credited with an amazing piece of artistic mimicry.

Finding a way out of the glade the following morning, we struck a widening path which brought us to a crossing of ways where we found, built into a triple-stemmed tree, a small platform covered with fresh leaves.

"This is a thing the Veddas have done," said our guide, as he saw us puzzling over it.

Our hearts leaped! for we were now in the precincts of the Henebedde Veddas, and what more fitting introduction to them than an altar built to forest gods by men perhaps even now on the trail. We learnt later that this was none of the Veddas' doing but the *gamarala's*,† and was intended to contain a coconut as refreshment for the *ratamahatmaya* he hourly expected; a circumstance to which we also owed the gala trick-out of the shed we were soon to occupy.

*Sacred domes of masonry.
†Minor headman.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
411
251
[412
482
622]

The best of the Hunsebodde Veddas—Porumola and Handuna (Page 16)

Handuna strings his bow (Page 16)

[facing p. 16]

2. FOREST CHILDREN

621 THE village of Potuliyadda lies in the heart of the country of the Henebedde Veddas. We had hoped to take these people unawares in their homes some three miles away; but it was not to be; for a Vedda boy who had witnessed our arrival had forestalled us.

We were at lunch, when my friend, whose seat commanded a view of the jungle, quietly remarked, "Hullo; who are these? Veddas without a doubt."

142 157 [411] [622] Five men, armed with bows, arrows and axes, strode in single file under the leadership of a small one-eyed man, half of whose face was covered by an awful scar which puckered an eyeless socket, giving a touch of pathos to an otherwise harsh expression. Such was Poromola, chief of the Henebedde Veddas also called *Walaha* (bear) for obvious reasons. Then there was Handuna a fine type of wild man; though close on fifty his figure was well-knit, and this combined with his goatee beard and tousy head gave a strength and rugged dignity to his bearing. There were also a tall bearded man of forty, loquacious and sophisticated enough when you knew him; a lanky, slouching, beady-eyed fellow; a robust, curly-haired bumpkin; and lastly, the snub-nosed little mischief-maker to whom we owed the honour of this visit.

123 As the Veddas came up to us, they uttered some fierce jargon we did not understand. It was pretty obvious they were acting; and not caring to encourage them in this, I casually motioned them away. They retired mumbling. We recalled them later to find them in dudgeon, evidently not being used to such treatment. They stared mutely at us affecting not to understand a word of the Sinhalese in which I addressed them. I tried again and again, but not by the flicker of an eyelid did they signify comprehension. Civility and persuasion having failed, I tried the effect of candour, telling them that we were not gullible strangers and knew all about them. This also was without effect.

Opening Seligmann's book, which contained the portraits of these very Veddas taken ten years previously, we suited picture to prototype. They gazed uncritically with stolid intentness showing no surprise or enthusiasm. I asked them whether they remembered the author and his wife who had spent so much time with them and been so kind to them. One nodded, and the others' faces betrayed interest. Thus was the first barrier carried.

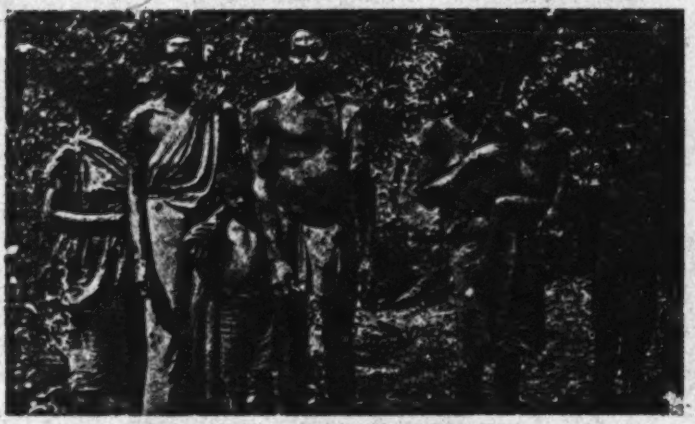
Gradually we won them over one by one; but despite our best efforts the conversation flagged. And we, tired of making all the advances simulated an indifference we far from felt, and took to our books.

"We are hungry," said Handuna after a while. "Will you not give us food?"

We could only offer them money, an almost useless thing to the Vedda. We had made the serious mistake of coming unprovided with a surplus of rice, betel, arecanut and tobacco; for the surest way to the heart of the Vedda is through his stomach. We

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854



Handuna's household. (Page 18)

142
291
224
411
482

Hennebedde Veddas (Page 16)

The iguana hunter. (Page 17)

[facing p. 17]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

were loath to purchase their intimacy with gifts. Time enough for that, when we had won them over by less humiliating means. Besides, these Veddas were evidently spoilt, and we wished to show them they were not the important personages they imagined themselves to be. 123

"We are going then," said Handuna. It was now our turn for dejection. Was it for such an ungracious issue we had travelled so far?

I had a last card, having brought some neosalvarsan, a sovereign remedy for yaws so rife among these people. The offer was received with indifference. There was only one case among them, they said, and the patient was too ill to come. This being just what we wanted, I offered to visit them the next morning. [164]

"You cannot come where we live unless we allow you," said the irrepressible Kaira. "And we won't show you our caves or anything, unless you give us presents."

Sick with exasperation and disgust at the behaviour of these impossible children, I told them they could take our offer or leave it as they chose, and turned to other work. The result was a grudging acquiescence; and, leaving a guide behind, they went away.

A word of explanation regarding the sophistication of a people so remote. They were in fact about the purest-blooded Veddas extant; indeed, it was to this very circumstance they owed their disappointing behaviour; for it had attracted Seligamann among them. What that implied may well be imagined. To obtain the valuable sociological information with which his book abounds, he had gained the confidence of these folk with scrupulous consideration and kindness, showering on them gifts of all kinds. Moreover, the patient investigation of the most intimate details of their lives by such a man, heightened their self-esteem. Of this we had an amusing illustration. I was obliged to admonish a group of Sinhalese that embarrassed us with their attentions. A Vedda sidled up and, tapping me familiarly on the shoulder, whispered, "Those people don't like us, they are jealous of us. We and you gentlemen are one; they are different!" 156 114 [166]

To dismiss these Veddas as spoilt uninteresting folk would imply failure to discern their innate simplicity, beneath the veneer of pose and importunity, for which contact with an indulgent stranger had been responsible. In their homes they still are as artless as their forbears were before ever white man set foot on these shores.

We were out hunting early that afternoon, when a sudden snapping sound arrested our attention. The Vedda we were with listened a few seconds. "Catching *talagoyas*," (monitor-lizards), he said laconically. The excited barking of a dog and rebuking human voices soon confirmed his conjecture. Going up, we found two men, one of whom carried a large quivering monitor just killed; while two dogs, still spirited with the chase, danced round their victim and growled and snapped at us. One of the men now set about to disjoint the quarry's tail at the middle, leaving it connected only by a tag of sinew; then, slitting the submandibular web, he rove the tail through till it locked at the division, making the reptile eat its own tail as it were, and carried it neatly in a loop. The monitor is best hunted at high noon; after four in the afternoon it takes to trees and holes. 224 231

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kuhula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botua-hapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by
[281 his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
362] open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like
[84] structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda,
[171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *hurrukhen* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

000 habit acquired as much through the necessity of directing their teams as from their solicitude to warn off wild beasts. The chief of the gang, as we said, was garrulous. His proclivity for vagrancy sustained a religious fervour, which betrayed itself in the incessant punctuations of his eloquence with such phrases, as "By the grace of Buddha," "If God wills," etc. With his future life he took no risks; for there was not a shrine in two provinces, Buddhistic or Hindoo, he had not visited. He shouldered his pingo impatient of departure, but lingered to honour us with a ingratiating glance; interpreting it rightly I gave him a pittance; but the same look bestowed on my friend (who had no sympathy for even amusing humbugs) was only wasted. He left us with his uproariousness ringing in our ears, and the regret, in my heart at least, that I was not of his company.

177 [131] The Danigalla Veddas were within easy reach of us at Nilgalla, the picturesque frontier of the Vedda country. But, so soon after our experience with the Henebedde Veddas, we were in no mood to repeat all over again the tedious palaver that contact with them would mean. For generations the classic show-Veddas of Ceylon, within easy reach of the Bibile resthouse on the high road, they and their ancestors had often been summoned to satisfy the thirst of scientists, or the curiosity of casual visitors. On such occasions they would appear clad in the scantiest rags, equipped with bows and arrows they seldom used, and, feigning ignorance of Sinhalese, would assume that moroseness and ferocity of expression they knew to be expected of them. What wonder then, that some of the impressions carried away, gave as true a picture of the real Vedda, as a performing animal of his wild brother?

One of the younger Veddas had accompanied us all the way from Henebedde to Bibile. He had been unfortunate enough to sell our cook some bear's grease and leopard oil; and no change being available in the jungle, he had no alternative but to accompany us some twenty-five miles, burdened into the bargain with a forty-pound tent! The look of blank wonderment he bestowed on the miracle of a moving automobile is a memory difficult to efface.

[pp. 21-33 include no information on the Vedda. - Analyst]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

[pp. 21-33 not processed]

CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE VEDDAS AND JUNGLE SHRINES

And here were forests ancient as the hills
Enclosing sunny spots of greenery

COLERIDGE

I. THE EMBRACE OF THE TREES

13 BURIED in the jungle ten miles north-west of Maha Oya lies the old Vedda
131 village of Omuna. Forest, unbroken by the meanest glade, intervenes
361 between. At a pool we flush a brace of bronze-winged pigeons or set a-chirruping a covey of small birds; while every now and then the scurry of unseen feet tells that the woods are live with game. Jungles darken early; by five-thirty a cathedral gloom creeps to the songs of roosting birds: the shama throats a rambling lay, the grubbing pitta sounds a shrill call, the cuckoo wakes, like a curfew, the forest echoes, "while like a long-roll drummer the night-jar thrills the treen."

It is all but dark when, through a break in the trees, the hill of Omuna stands before us; and the clamour of resenting dogs and a welcoming fire tell us we have reached the limit of an arduous walk.

13 Where the Vedda is, there is the inevitable rock. The tie between them
923 is intimate. To the life, animal and tree, on the timbered sides of the hill the Vedda is beholden for sustenance. The boulder-bound stream gives him water, and there lurk demons watchful for his undoing, and tutelary ancestral spirits. Nowhere is the relation between men and rock closer than at Omuna; for from the heart of the hill flows a spring that does not fail in the cruellest drought. Is it a wonder the place has for ages been
144 favoured of the Veddas? But time the iconoclast breaks the oldest bonds; the half-Veddas* there to-day are not of the ancient stock; that died out some fifteen years ago.

000 Besides its association with the wild men, Omuna has other claims to interest. Like many another forest stronghold it is the site of ancient Buddhistic ruins—frescoed caves and headless, chest-battered Buddhas despoiled by treasure-hunters What induced the priests of old-time to seek such sanctuaries as this, it is hard to surmise; religious persecution perhaps, by their inveterate foes the Sivaite Tamils; or merely the claims of austere devotion. Be that as it may, it was in these fastnesses that the light of Buddhism was nursed when it flickered low, till, happening

*There is almost certainly no Vedda living to-day without Sinhalese blood in his veins. The term *half-Vedda* therefore may appear superfluous, but is used to designate Veddas who have intermarried with the Sinhalese and settled down to agricultural pursuits, the word *Vedda* being used for the wilder folk that depend mainly on the jungle for sustenance.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

on serener days, it flamed through the Island making it its permanent home, while in India, the land of its birth, it dwindled away.

We had undertaken this trip with the object of visiting Meminigallagolle where we learned the wildest Veddas of the Eastern province lived; but on coming to Omuna we found that that place, only twelve miles away, was quite unknown to the present folk of Omuna, a pathless barrier of dense jungle intervening. We made the best of a bad job; and, abandoning our original project, struck west for Dolagalwella.

At evening we camped by a desolate pool called *Hevan-kapana-mulle* (rush-cutting nook). There is barely a spot in these jungles, however lone, that has not its name, thanks to the nomadic Veddas. Here was a glade in which they hunted, or a pool at which they drank, there a hole in which an axe was found (*Poro-thutu-walle*).

The only indications of the track we followed were the barely recognisable prunings, fifteen years old, of saplings. The forest was ideal for travel; in the shelter of the great trees the morning air was cool and refreshing. Coming to the Maduru Oya we walked a mile up-stream and climbed the mimosa-covered bank, soon to be lost in a wilderness of trees. A leader monkey yelled a warning to his clan, a surprised sambur belled startlingly close; but after that a silence prevailed unbroken by the song of a single bird. We spent the night by a rocky streamlet close-hugged by dense forest walls. Heavy clouds crept over us to the rumblings of thunder. The blurred crescent of the moon struggled for freedom. Our camp fires crackled in the ghostly gloom, and quiet human voices pervaded the forest's deadly stillness save for the melody of the trickling water.

> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

Deserted Mahaella marked the limit of our westward journey. Here we struck at right angles the northern track to Yakkure, but, before taking it, deviated south to the village of Dolagalwella. For three days we had followed uncertain game trails, and seen no human beings besides those of our company. The path now began to show signs of use: there were chipped trees, polished stones on which axes had been whetted, and fire-places where monitors were roasted. Obviously we were nearing civilisation! Indeed, here it was.

Scaling a strong stockade we found ourselves in a *chena*, some twelve acres in extent, in which nestled the half dozen huts of the closely related families of a Vedda patriarchy. The maize and *kurrukkan* crops had been taken, and the place was now rank with a catch-crop of vegetables and fruit: beans, brinjals, melons, cassava, plantains and papaws. Chillies luxuriated; there was not a compound but had its vermilion heap, not a hut but had a section partitioned off with frame and fire-place for drying them during the rains; chillies were the current coin with which these folk traded with the pedlar Moors.

The males of the settlement were away in quest of food, and only the women and children remained. No folk on earth, perhaps, are shier than Vedda women; in the presence of the stranger they are dumb. Some of them were relatively fair-complexioned, presumably from Kandyan admixture; all wore an abundance of bead ornaments, finger

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedds AX5

142
291
482
854

[Sedate, wistful children.] (Page 36)

[facing p. 36]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

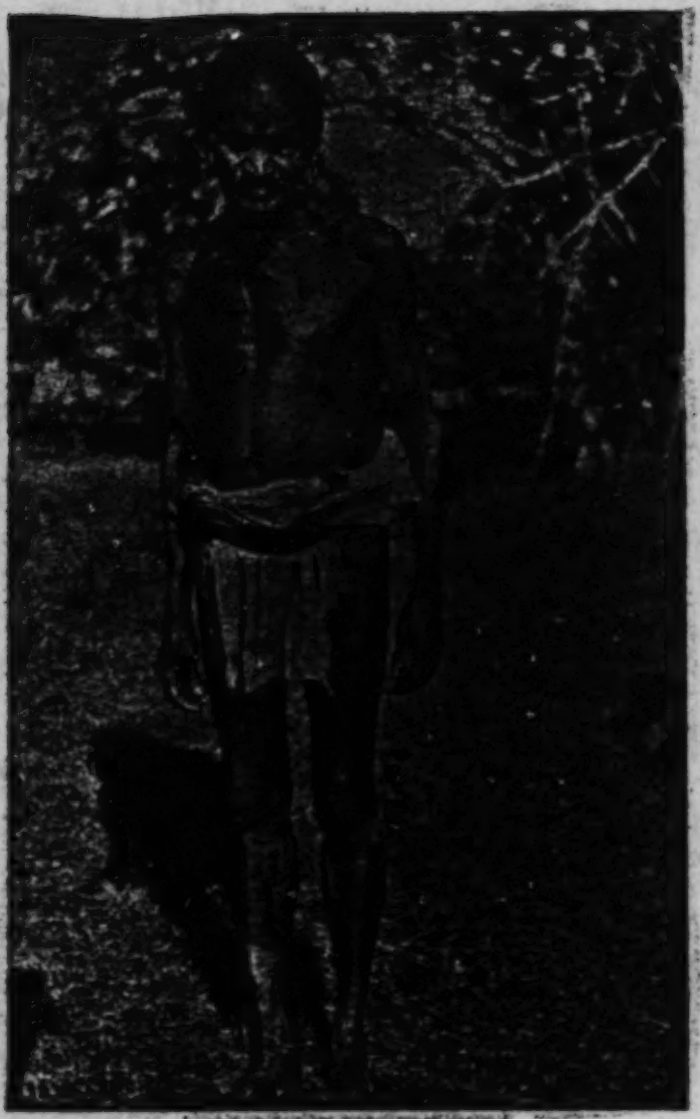
Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
301



[facing p. 37]

5: Spitzel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

with man astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalastic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 [191] 142 301 412

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen flouted away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing 136 825

142
291
301

A Vedda girl of Dolagalwella (Page 35)

312

Yakkure tank (Page 39)

[Facing p. 38]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 136 825 to something; but it was long before I saw the bird, a veritable leaf among the leaves and more motionless than they.

The hilly jungles of central Ceylon echo, during certain seasons of the year, to this bird's incessant cry, the popular onomatopoeic renderings of which are, in English, "Captain Philpotts" and "Bring the tappal" and in Sinhalese "*Botuahappan*." Most people have heard, but very S 539 few seen, the shy author of these dolorous notes. There is a gruesome story associated with the bird:—A Sinhalese king once asked his dhoby, in order to test his marital fidelity, whether he would cut his wife's neck and bring him her head! "Oh! king," said the man falling at the monarch's feet, "even if you behead me I cannot do such a thing." The following day the king called up the dhoby's wife and made a similar request of her. She replied that she would do it. Going home she helped her husband with his bath, rubbed boiled limes on his head, and cooked him a good meal. Like a good wife she asked him to lay his head on her lap where he soon fell asleep. Then, with a knife she had in readiness, she cut his throat; and severing his neck, put the head into a pot, covered it with a cloth and carried it to the king. On the way she met a man who, singing, asked her, "What do you carry in the pot on your head?"

"I am taking *mee amba** to the king," answered the woman.

"Why cover it so carefully?" sang he.

"If I take them uncovered, wayfarers will ask me for them," she replied. "It is on a fine journey I go."

When she brought her gift to the king, he was incensed at her cruelty, and ordered her head to be struck off instantly. Ever after, has she gone about in the form of this bird, crying *botua-happan* (cut the throat), as her one refrain.

While making our way through a tree-studded glade, we surprised two men carrying sacks of dried meat on their shoulders; through rents in the bags peeped unsavoury scraps of sambur, monkey and pig. Their first impulse on seeing us was to escape; for to shoot sambur legitimately, gun and game licences are necessary; and what money have they for these, who have barely the wherewithal to purchase the ammunition for their ramshackle muzzle-loaders.

V When we camped, Kombua regaled us with Vedda songs of questionable 533 taste chanted rapidly in a high nasal monotone, lengthened indefinitely by endless repetition, and accompanied in the last staves with a clapping V of hands. To the suggestion that he should show his skill in archery he 411 responded with alacrity; jumping up, he seized his weapons as if confident of skill. A fragment of paper, six inches square, placed fifteen paces away, was the mark. At the word he loosed his arrow. A clean miss! He walked up to the target and dashed it down in dudgeon, and nothing would induce him to shoot again. Archery is a lost art to the Veddas, though they still have considerable skill in fashioning bows and arrows. Jungles that echo to guns are no places for bowmen.

V Kombua's farewell was as bizarre as his greeting of us. Tossing head 576 and hands in the direction we were taking, and tapping us on the chest, he wished us good going in tones more peremptory than complaisant.

V Quite a number of our carriers were half-Veddas. There was one whose 515 constant occupation was to run his fingers comb-fashion through his upstanding hair scraping out vermin. His expression was of that thoughtful seriousness which is the surest mark of profound vacuity.

*A species of mango.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133

Dastota falls. (Page 39)

291
412
415

Sinna, a Vedda of Gunner's Quoin. (Page 42)

[facing p. 39]

8: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. YAKKURE

This be the verse you grave for me;
Here he lies where belonged to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. STEVENSON

THROUGH a lush meadow studded with fragrant wood-apple, we entered Kalakolu Eba a hamlet of some twenty huts nestling in the picturesque dishabille of a *chena* rank with maize, vegetables and chillies. Here as elsewhere in the Vanni there was much evidence of parangi (framboesia). Fully three-fourths of the people showed active or quiescent traces of the disease. A boy had a necklace of loathsome papules; a woman covered with nodes in practically every bone of her body was boiling a decoction of dry leaves as a salve; another was stewing monitor flesh in chilli-water.

The first sign of our nearness to Yakkure was a cattle-penstamped clean, where half a dozen boys were securing cows and yearlings for the night. Scratching around the stockade with the tameness of domestic fowls were a jungle cock and his dames, and from every side came the jerky cries of wild chanticleers. A cairn of tumbled stones marked the site of an old *vihare*. Blue in the distance, across a wide lagoon bordered with sedge, lotus and dead trees, stood the long rock called Gunner's Quoin, with a bare patch, high on its tree-mantled flank, pointed out to us as the Maraweethiya, a historic cave.

Yakkure itself was a negligently palisaded hamlet nestling ina grove of tamarinds, in full view of a beautiful tank. We were unfortunate in our choice of a camping place. Five days of seclusion in the forest had made us forget that the immediate proximity to a village always meant flies, smells, and embarrassing attentions from forward men and coy but curious women. There were other draw-backs too. At sunset, from a pool near by, came a low, ominous hum auguring ill for our night's rest. We lit fires, bestowed meticulous care on bed curtains, and bedaubed ourselves with mosquitol. The lapwing's desolate cry, the doleful music of water fowl, the booming of great owls, the distant trumpeting of elephants, and more than all, the baffled mosquito murmur around, soon lulled me to sleep. But my companion who had failed to stop up betimes several holes in his curtain, the inside of which was found at dawn to be plastered with a blood-sodden host, tells a different story!

Three miles from Yakkure are the well-known falls of the Mahaweli. At flood-time their thunder is heard at the village. Once in a decade the waters creep up to and submerge the huts, sending the people up trees, and their cattle into the forest to be drowned or killed by leopards. With a *hapua* (priest) for guide, for the place is held eerie, we set out to visit the falls. Skirting an ancient aqueduct (*yoda alla*) which tapped the river a mile above the falls, we came to open jungle bordering the banks, that allowed us free passage through its colonnades of giant

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133 timber. Such places are the favourite resort of sambur, of which on this morning we saw no less than six. From great tree-heights came the whirring of strong wings as gibbous-beaked hornbills took alarm. We were perhaps a half-mile from the falls when we first heard them like a pervasive hum of swarming bees. Soon we lost the noise; and turning to our guide for an explanation, learnt, inconsequently enough, that "the water does not cry after the morning; it cries loudest when the cock crows at dawn!" The sound swelled suddenly again as there opened before us, not the turbulent cascade we expected, but placid murmuring rapids that swirled in a wide sheet around and over a thousand sunnied boulders. Such were the falls as we saw them; but on occasion they could be a roaring power leaping over the granite to a wild cataract melody, surging widely to the outskirts of Yakkure itself, and bestrewing the jungle with great wrack that even now lay stranded high on forked tree-trunks. What wonder the place is held in awe and that men have a care how they journey to it, lest they be lost on the way or fall a prey to beast or demon.

172 A smooth rock on the bank bore the frettings of ancient craft; the
778 tutelary god's *devale* (temple) it was said to be. Here we were irreverently seated, while our guides sat apart whispering at the profanation. The surface of the rock was socketed presumably to hold strong stanchions
[782] which in the old days supported a bridge across the water; while small oval pools, reputed to contain a mint of wealth from the accumulation of years of propitiatory and votive offerings, showed to our pagan vision nothing more than a few potato-like pebbles and sportive water beetles.

000 A few months before our visit, Yakkure was the setting of a gallant episode:—On the bund of the Polonnaruwa tank stands a shanty for forest-officers on circuit. Here one evening a wiry man of forty-five was amusing himself with his rifle. Placing a rupee against a tree fifty yards away he fired, holing it in the centre. He next made his targets a variety of live things that flecked the smooth surface of the tank, such as a cormorant or the barely visible head of a submerged crocodile. Every time his aim was true. The shots attracted a friend. "Testing your nerves as usual before an adventure?" he asked, walking up. "What is it this time? The Yakkure rogue* I'll bet."

"Yes, to-morrow I hope to get him," was the confident response. "You haven't seen *this* before, have you?" said the hunter handling his new rifle.

"You know best," said his friend; "but I should have brought a tried weapon if I were you, especially against such a beast as the Yakkure rogue is said to be. Only yesterday he smashed a boy to pulp. The villagers are too scared to leave their homes."

"This gun is all right. I've tested it. See," said he, indicating his hits, "I've been warned time and again against the use of light arms for elephants, but they have never failed me so far. Once, though," he continued thoughtfully "I had a near shave..... You know, I sometimes wonder whether the villagers appreciate what I do for them."

"They look on you as their greatest benefactor," replied his friend.

"It is good to know that," said the hunter. "For the last fifteen years, whenever I heard of a rogue in my province, I've gone after him; often at great trouble and expense."

*A dangerous elephant ostracised by the herd, and a menace to human life and property.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

At day-break the hunter set out accompanied by the headman of Dastota, the village at which the elephant had last been seen. Here the animal could not be found. Crossing the Mahaweli, they followed the spoor only to lose it at Yakkure, late in the afternoon. The hunter had sat down to his first meal for the day, when a man came with the news that he had just seen the elephant. Gulping down half his food and keeping the rest for the night, for he now determined to stay over and shoot the animal, the hunter hurried to the place accompanied by several villagers. Hardly had they entered a field, than they saw the beast. Stealing to within ten fathoms of him the hunter fired four shots in rapid succession; but the elephant turned into the forest with the hunter at his heels. Two more shots had no effect.

Slipping six new cartridges into the magazine, and accompanied by a single tracker carrying a paradox, he followed the animal into dense scrub. Missing the spoor they turned to trace it, when the tracker spied the elephant within a few paces of them. Before he could give warning the animal charged. The tracker fled. The hunter stepped forward and fired; but the elephant advanced. At five yards he fired again, and failing to stop the brute, got behind a small *chela* tree and put in his last shot. The elephant was now almost on him, with trunk extended; he applied himself closer to the tree. Before the fatal mistake could be retrieved, man and tree were clasped in an iron grip and shaken several times. With amazing *sang froid* the man wriggled free of the hold, and leant against the foreleg of the elephant, which now trumpeted and turned away into the jungle, but in doing so trod on the hunter's leg fracturing it.

How one who invariably killed his elephant with the first shot, failed in this instance to stop one with nine, is a riddle hard to guess. So much for new rifles and trackers with paradoxes!

When the villagers came on the scene they found the hunter on the ground, with his broken cartridge belt beside him. To them he did not seem badly hurt, except for a fractured and bleeding leg.

"Take me away soon," he moaned. "I am feeling very bad; the elephant crushed me against the tree."

A sophisticated individual suggested his making a dying declaration.

"What's the use of that?" he said. "You all can say what happened; only take me away soon to Polonnaruwa."

They carried him on a rough stretcher they improvised. He uttered no word, except to ask for water which they advised him against, saying they could not say what might be wrong inside. When crossing the Mahaweli he repeated his request, and was again dissuaded. They were three miles from Polonnaruwa when, refusing to wait any longer, he insisted on drinking. He drank, and told them to hurry; with a mile of their destination, he was dead.

Thus was T. C. Wiggin slain by his thirty-sixth elephant, which in its turn was afterwards found dead five miles from the scene of the encounter. A more modest sportsman it would be hard to find; he belonged to the aristocracy of great hunters. At Polonnaruwa they buried him. What fitter resting place? His tomb-stones are the ruins of the temples and palaces of a mighty kingdom; his requiem the plaintive songs of pigeons roosting at sundown.

3. THE MARAWEETHIYA

Far or forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear
And one to me are shame and fame.

EMERSON

13 FROM Yakkure to Horiwila is six miles. The first part of the journey is through marsh; here the Mahaweli make a bend which all but encroaches on the path. The place is rank with vegetation. Tall grass thrives amidst sombre trees that stand apart, clothed out of all recognition in stoles of trailing mycania. The air is humid and oppressively still. One is glad to be rid of the swampy luxuriance with its strong suggestion of malaria.

Beyond a pleasant stretch of paddy, closer than we had ever seen it before, stood Gunner's Quoin. Tinkling cow-bells and the mournful cries of peafowl welcomed us to Horiwila.

361 144 The racial types we have passed, will repay review. Omuna, Dolagalwella and Kalukolu Eba were shifting *chena* settlements inhabited by Veddas with a large proportion of Sinhalese blood. Yakkure was a permanent village with the *chenas* apart; here the people called themselve Veddas but showed strong Tamil traits. The folk of Horiwila were not sure whether to call themselves Tamils or Veddas; while Manampitiya, beyond Horiwila, was a purely Tamil village. So does propinquity shape the type of Vedda, and forest penetration by the Sinhalese on the one hand and Tamils on the other, tend to obliterate the aboriginal race.

000 Decoyed by its beauty, we camped on a rock on the bund of the Horiwila tank, soon to learn that a stone exposed all day to the sun, was not the most desirable of camping places even at night. The stored heat radiating from the rock kept us awake till morning, and we rose quite unrefreshed for the good day's work before us, for to-day we would climb the Quoin, which, ever since we saw it across the marsh at Yakkure, beckoned us on. The Tamils of the place could only take us to the base 115 of the hill; from there a Vedda of the Ulpotta must guide us. It was quite an hour before we found him. I recognised him at once as Sinna an old friend; there were the bunions on his shoulder from carrying loads of lizards and yams, and there the hooked finger caused by a snake-bite [N2 when plucking a *kanava* comb from a creviced tree. A dwarf, with 157] frizzly upstanding hair and wild eyes, and shy almost to timidity, Sinna had nothing of the sophisticated Vedda about him. He lived alone with [166] his small family at the end of the rock. The rest of his people had left when the *kurrukhan* crop failed: but Sinna remained to gather a precarious living from the scanty pickings of the field. We came on him searching for food in the forest.

The poor fellow was in great distress that morning, his favourite dog having been taken by a leopard the previous night. Hearing the animal's

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the *goe*-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Maraweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

13 causeway over an abysmal ravine. We had not the stomach to tempt those ways.

Below us stretched a vast forest studded with the tree-clad hills of Omuna, Henanagalla and many another; and over the red-topped *hongs* we caught the glimpse of the Mahaweli as it cleft the wilderness of trees.

173 To this retreat once came an ascetic who lived alone, lost in meditation, for months. His evening chant could be heard at Horiwila three miles away. The bears that came to drink at the pools in the caves did him no harm. In a hidden vault, so the story goes, he found a gold-lettered slab and a phial of oil. He made the wisdom of the script his own, and drank the oil; then descended the rock, and ever after went about as one obsessed.

115 Sinna's droll talk relieved the irksomeness of our descent. Indicating
[301] a wild jasmine, he told us they were the flowers Vedda women strung on creeper-stems for the adornment of their hair. He was for leaving us at the foot of the hill and continuing his search for food for his waiting family. But we took him to camp, fed him abundantly on rice and venison and gave him a heavy hamper besides. It was pleasant to picture the rare joy of his home-coming.

000 At Manampitiya old Kanapan-*vidane* met us with two limes which he graciously presented to us. This charming Tamil custom is often the prelude to a villainous request. Kanapan gave us cordial welcome, eyed solicitously our unkempt figures, and chided us in a kindly, paternal way for undertaking so 'terrible' a journey. "Why wander in the wilderness when you can play about the highways in your car?" he said. His conversation, though varied kept reverting to one theme—the delinquencies of the village school-master, now away on a holiday. Kanapan had a penchant for denunciation; on a previous occasion it was the tyranny of an apothecary, now it concerned the amours of a pedagogue.

"Is that the sort of man to teach young children?" he concluded disgustedly. "A man who breaks up quiet homes. The woman does not even care for him; he bewitched her with charmed food. A respectable home wrecked by a worthless fellow!" and he spat with scorn.

Perhaps it was the full bottle of whisky standing tantalisingly on the table that induced him to confide in us that the village tavern had now been closed for over two years, during which time he had not touched a drink; he had almost forgotten the taste of liquor he said wistfully.

"Then you are a total abstainer now?" I ventured.

"What's to be done, sir, I have to be," he sighed.

"I suppose you wouldn't have a drink now if one were given you?" I asked.

"How can I refuse when a gentleman offers," said he, taking the wind out of my sails. "With your favour, sir, I will. Cha," he continued with sudden affection, "I feared you had been to the war and got killed. How glad I am to see you again, sir."

We poured him a bumper which he swallowed neat, placing the empty cup within easy reach beside him. He reverted to the school-master;

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1929) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and went on to tell us of the faithful services he (Kanapan) had rendered Government for over a score of years, and of his two sons on whose education he had spent much, and who were now out of employment. One of them, he submitted, had an aptitude for teaching; did he not know three languages? Who better than he to teach at Hanampitiya? He begged us to use our influence to have this worthy installed in place of that son of a.....who now so unworthily filled the post. And all for two limes?

His frequent glances at the bottle earned him a second drink, which he tossed off commenting, just audibly, that it was only two gulps. A third soon followed, with which he nearly choked himself in attempting to demonstrate that it was only three gulps.

Solicitous as Kanapan was of our comfort before, he became trebly so now. He fanned away mosquitoes from us, commented feelingly on our tick-bites, and declared his intention not to go away till he had seen us to bed. As his blood warmed, matters of the heart became his theme. He confessed to being an adept at love-philtres, and knew a herbal decoction which, did you but dip an eikel in it and touch the woman you fancied, would induce her to climb after you even to heaven.

"But what's the use of charms, sir," he said. "When I was young I had only to sing to bring a woman, however virtuous, to my feet." This from one who denounced as worthless dog an individual with a single lapse.

The interval between drinks evidently getting too prolonged, he related deeds of prowess he had wrought as tracker in the old days, and the fabulous meed of liquor he had earned from grateful sportsmen. That secured him a fourth bumper more liberal than any previous. Stroking the burning liquor down his throat (diluents he abhorred), he returned to his educational mission which he had now almost forgotten, prompted thereto by sundry nudgings and whisperings from his son who had stolen to his side in the dark. Vague promises did not satisfy him now; he wanted assurances. He forgot himself so far as to aver his intention not to leave us till he had seen the bottom of the bottle. Nor did he

We challenged him to walk; he did that tolerably well. But the collapse was complete when it came. His attentions became so embarrassing that we asked his son to lead him home. In taking affectionate leave he spilt all over us the only drinks we had poured for ourselves that evening. As he plunged hither and thither in the dark we heard him mutter, "That sort of gentleman is my father!"

It was a sad Kanapan who met us the next morning begging for medicine that would relieve the terrible pain in his stomach. He excused himself from accompanying us farther, but entrusted us to the keeping of his hopeful son.

CHAPTER V

WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND FRIAR'S HOOD

1. WESTMINSTER ABBEY

I know not where the white road runs,
nor what the blue hills are,
But a man can have a sun for friend,
and for his guide a star;
And there's no end of voyaging when once
the voice is heard,
For the river calls and the road calls, and oh!
the call of a bird.

GERALD GOULD

133 FROM some dominant height in the central uplands of Ceylon one can survey, to east and south, a vast sea of hill-studded forest. The scene, when glowing with the hues of evening, might well take its place among the panoramas of the world. In this medley of mountains there is one, a long ridge rising at one end to a square tower, which seldom fails to arrest the fancy. Westminster Abbey it is called by those who view it from afar, Govinda Hela by those with closer acquaintance of it. Well to the north of this is a peak, tall and lonely, known as Friar's Hood —the *Capello de Frade* of the old Portuguese mariners to whom it was a land-mark by which to evade their mortal foes the Dutch, "the rebels from Europe" as their despatches called them. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est*, says Tacitus; but does near knowledge always rob reality of romance? We shall see.

776 The inhabitants of Siyambala Anduwa, half way between Muppane and Pottuvil, are a simple folk ingrained with jungle superstition: That river beneath the bridge was haunted by demons; it was not safe to go there alone at night, or to bathe there by noon especially with scented soap, for this attracted devils who showed their displeasure by hammering on the bridge or throwing sand; a small boy digging in the river-bed was swallowed into the earth and rescued only to die of a fever a few days later. Apparitions were seen in the form of dwarfs who shot up to the proportions of trees and suddenly disappeared, striking the beholder with terror. As for children you could not bring up "those things" in these parts. The *gawara* was a buffalo-like beast possessed of a tongue so horny that when it licked man or animal the flesh dissolved away leaving only the bones. The *Nittaewo* were a pigmy race, that lived at one time in the Kattragam country of Lenama not far away. These hairy cannibals attacked in companies, driving their long nails into the

5: Spittel D-5 (da. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

flesh which they tore out and ate. They were afraid only of the buffalo and the dog. The Veddas, not very long ago, are said to have herded the last of them into a cave and destroyed them. Brute or man, persistent rumour in jungle countries brings the *Nittaewe* within the realm of the probable. 776

Entering the forest at Siyambala Anduwa, and working north, we strove to maintain a route as far removed as possible from civilisation represented by the coast road on the one hand, and the Badulla-Batticaloa road on the other.

Two miles within the jungle was the old path, now over-grown and abandoned, from Badulla to Pottuvil. It led hereabouts through a narrow pass guarded, it is said, a few generations ago by the Karande Hela Vedda who, having fenced it across, levied toll on travellers. Intercepting, as he did, a trade route from the interior to the coast, we may be certain he made a good thing of it, getting his share both of the *kurrukkan*, maize, vegetables and fruit of the *Vanni*, as well as of the paddy, salt and dry fish of the Coast. 173

Kandanketiya, nine miles from Siyambala Anduwa, boasts an ancient temple of the era of Dutugemunu. We found it in the keeping of a doddering priest of eighty, who showed us round, all the while muttering "hu-hu, hu-hu," his only form of comment. His bed-room, dark, airless and dirty, was better adapted to mice and spiders than human beings. A great brass spittoon, emptied he told us once in two weeks, was the proudest thing there. A stupendous bo-tree, planted by himself, mocked with its vigour the withered frame of him who had tended it. Throwing open the doors of his little temple, without much ado he bade us enter the holy of holies, and pointed proudly to pictures of *devas* and harpies, half spurred-fowl half woman, who he confidently asserted lived in the Himalayas. Incidentally he indicated a money-box on the altar. But no sooner were our donations secure than his interest in us rapidly declined, reaching its climax when we told him we were going: "All right, go," he said, settling down comfortably on his bed. 172

A hornbill flying repeatedly to a large tree attracted our attention. Perching itself wood-pecker-wise on the trunk, it fed the occupant of a hole there with berries which it brought out of its crop one by one. We were told this was the male feeding the female he had deprived of feathers and shut up in the hole. We suggested there might be young. "Not so," said a woman; "where then are the feathers and droppings at the root of the tree?" Here was an opportunity to test the truth of gossip we had heard regarding the domestic amenities of hornbills. A man was sent up to the nest. Squeezing his hand through the narrow opening he produced an egg; then seized something by the beak, and unsuccessfully tried to pull it through. With an axe he enlarged the hole and soon handed down to us a veritable travesty of a bird. Scared out of her wits, voiceless, featherless, with half-opened beak, she flapped pathetic wings and tumbled ludicrously about in attempts to escape. She was obviously unfit for existence in the outer world and we returned her to her dark abode. Rumour was right, the male hornbill took no risks. 136

Bowala village lies at the northern end of Westminster Abbey. Buried as we were in the forest depths, we had not seen the hill since leaving the heights of Haputale. Suddenly the leviathan bulked over the trees. "There, that is why it is called Govinda Hela*," said our guide pointing 361 [103]

*Goa inde hela—rock where the monitor lizard is.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342
361

Deserted Bowals (Page 48)

[Facing p.48]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 [103] to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though [262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that [281] ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and [534] manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothuru-pathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

224
292
534
535

The queen of Dorah. (Page 40)

Wakoko's weighted framework for trapping animals. (Page 40)

281
287
415

Principle of trimmed fire-pots and moving sun-pots. (Page 40)

[Facing p. 49]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree
that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of
the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of
brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pine-
apple.

The height was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the
superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then
the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There,
crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadina-
gala; to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thenagoda* (breast
mounds) and behind them *Thenahirigoda* (breast milk mound) with
wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks
driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the
summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach
of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale:
A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a
ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing
daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by
just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within
reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it.
When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep
into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards
it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge
collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year.
On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor
fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife
who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena kalanghal-
angma pepahorai*," which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 635
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were
hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with
slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose
and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that
these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted
by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with
great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that [534]
studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch
perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For
a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step
dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they out-
distance us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

A [the hill called Westminster Abbey. - Analyst]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 302 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarm- 755 ing blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a 252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the G picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company 101 of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike 105 those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a 361 medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maise sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

ooo V [132] A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

5: Spittal D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Borrowing mats (and incidentally a wilderness of bugs that befriended us for many a long night) we spread them over our sodden bedding and prepared to sleep, when our host looked in to ask us, by way of saying good night, to be so good as to drive away any elephants that might visit the plantain grove in which we were placed! informing us, that only a few days previously, one of these animals had dined off a quarter acre of his cassava. How apposite is the Sinhalese saw: "When you travel take with you the pig's snout, the bull's back, the coucal's eye and the peacock's ear."

The morning though cloudy gave promise of sunshine. Crows, drongos, spurfowl and barbets were as glad of the dawn as we; and so was a jungle cock that preened his bedraggled plumes on a sun-kissed snag at the edge of the garden; but he, poor fellow, soon hung head-down from our eaves.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

8. GIPSY HAUNTS

Let the blow fall soon or late,
Let what will be o'er me;
Give the face of earth around
And the road before me.
Wealth I seek not, hope nor love,
Nor a friend to know me;
All I seek, the heaven above
And the road below me.

R. L. STEVENSON

PADAGODA, thanks to coastal accessibility, was a flourishing hamlet. Hambantalawa, an extensive parkland five miles east of it, was apparently a paradise for hunters; and thither the gipsies, who had preceded us by a couple of days, had gone; we now despaired of meeting them.

The Gal Oya flows two miles north of Padagoda. It may seem incredible, nevertheless it is sober truth, that not until we came to Padagoda were we able to learn the name of a single village beyond the river, so effectual a barrier did it provide, directing traffic towards the prosperous east rather than the arid north. Forest folk do not travel far from their homes; a ten-mile radius is their ambit. The Moors, on the other hand, penetrate to the farthest interiors carrying commodities suited to the simple needs of the villagers. It is difficult to picture what the condition of the jungle dwellers would be but for the itinerant Moors—these ships of the Vanni. Much has been said against their extortionate methods; but let those only who possess their energy and enterprise be their critics.

The approach to the Gal Oya was a bad business; the rains had beset the path with marshes and running streams, and waked to activity innumerable leeches and scores of poisonous, russet *haramalas* of a colour with the sodden leaves. We almost walked into a cobra swallowing a young hare. In the jungle there is more to be feared from such hidden deaths than from great beasts.

Our practice was to secure a guide from village to village; but he whom Padagoda provided was a feckless, pot-bellied pigmy no more capable of leading us across the swollen river than a tadpole. Nor did our troubles end with the crossing. For two miles beyond we wallowed in flooded marshes; where snake-birds curvetted joyously, we splashed along under the quizzical eyes of securely perched eagles.

Wavinna was inundated and deserted; but here, on a rise amidst a cattle byre, was the inevitable Moor—sharing his dinner with myriads of flies; the necessary movements of his hands in conveying food to his mouth alone prevented his swallowing more flies than rice.

In a cassava field at Paragahakelle we occupied a leaf-walled hut rife with families of enormous centipedes, a bite from one of which would easily kill a child. Every now and then a shriek in the dark told of

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

some unfortunate who had trodden on a wriggling thing. We learnt too late that we had over-shot the game *talawas* of Wavinna by four miles. There was nothing for it, but to plough back through the mud at five the following morning, and to return at ten with a fine buck greatly to the joy of our dispirited company.

Veddas were my quest. Wherever I went, whomever I met, my one question was, "Are there any Veddas hereabout?" So far I had no luck.

A tall slouching man, obliging to obsequiousness, was the *aratchi* of Paragahakelle. He it was who first told me, as he escorted us the next morning, that good Veddas were to be found up north at Galmede. Years ago an illness took him there in search of a famous *vedarala** who one day said to him, "Let us go and see the Veddas." He found them in caves, clothed in leaf and beaten bark, grinding *hurrukhan* and maize with fragments of stone. They stank superbly, and averred that if they poured water on their heads they would surely die. But that was twenty years ago. Would we find them so to-day? The Veddas of Galmede became an obsession and a hope.

Reaching Hinimidurawa that evening the *aratchi* also told us that across the field were people who called themselves Veddas. Even as he spoke one of these joined us. Shifting his gaze from our guns to the fresh spoor of an elephant, he said, "That brute will certainly kill us one day; we cannot escape him. All last night he had me up that tree in the *chena*. A few weeks ago he pulled down one of our huts killing a man and his son." He suggested we might hunt the beast.

"Where is he now?" I asked.

"I drove him that way last night," he said, indicating the direction of our proposed camp. This was not reassuring; the ravages of the animal were in evidence everywhere.

We settled down for the night by a stream that intersected the path. Large fires were lit and the men asked leave to sing, for it was not safe to be voiceless in the feeding grounds of so notorious a 'rogue'. Even as the forest echoed to lewd snatches, we heard the challenge. Having arranged for an all-night watch we were soon asleep. I was roused at midnight by a blowing sound quite close to me. The fires had died out and no one was awake! Groping in the dark I tugged at the first human leg I touched, but it was quite a while before its owner awoke, yawned—and grasped the situation. Then for ten minutes the forest rang to an uproar that might have scared a demon. The next morning, traces in the sand revealed the story. Lying as we were full in the path of the elephant, it had come to within ten yards of us on its nightly visit to the *chena*; then, suddenly changing its mind, it had turned away. It was well I woke when I did.

Heenbanda, a Vedda of Hinimidurawa, illustrated, from personal experience, the potency of a charm he gave us: Coming suddenly on a she-bear with cubs, he had shouted his charm as she rushed at him. The animal was hurled back, spread-eagled, as if struck. Recovering, she advanced again, and this time clasped the unfortunate man by the neck with her fore legs, while with her hind paws she ripped his abdomen; marks of which encounter he still carried. Heenbanda's brother who

*Native physician.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda

Gypsies E15
Ceylon

142
291
231
302
854

A group of gipsies (Page 54)

411
516
854

The gipsy javelin thrower. (Page 54)

[facing p. 54]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 751 accompanied him, now struck the bear with his axe and, when she turned on him, killed her. So much for charms; excellent things—provided a weapon is in your hands. "Trust in God," says the Arabic proverb, "but fasten thy camel securely."

G 361 Uhana was a surprise; the place gave every promise of being in a few years a flourishing settlement, thanks to Government grants of land, cattle and grain on easy terms. Luck at last! Near Uhana was a gipsy camp. Wadinagala gave us first promise of these people; but like a mirage they had faded from stage to stage of our journey, leaving only their camp refuse to mock us. Now, here they were, within two miles of us. We stayed over the next morning that we might visit them. As we neared their encampment we met a man who told us that he had passed them on their way to another camp. They who had been here for weeks must needs pack and begone within an hour of our visit! They were bound, the man said, for a place a mile and a half away. We followed, but did not find them there; instead, was another tantalizer who assured us that we would find them on a knoll by a stream a mile and a half beyond. We proceeded, painfully aware that every step of our way must be retraced in the broiling sun before we could earn our lunch. Disappointment again! Almost tearful with frustration and fatigue, we had thrown ourselves down, when a kindly individual came to our aid.

"Rest here," he said. "I shall go forward and see. Come if you hear me 'hoo.' I can tell of their presence some distance away by the crowing of their cocks and the clatter of their camp." We waited and were rewarded.

G [492] [231] [343] On an undulant opening, reminiscent of Somerset pastures, we found the gipsies. They had just unloaded their pack-bulls and were setting up camp under the blazing sky of noon, disdainful of the shelter of the cool environing jungle—the very antithesis of Vedda ways. Cattle and fowls flecked the glade; boys led goats into the forest. Women, graceful as Dianas, were erecting talipot shelters over collected household goods and communal stacks of grain. Tall men, lithe and sinewy as greyhounds, with mongrels at their heels, carried naked babes. Children, reading favour in our faces, essayed shrill nasal choruses clapping arms to chest. The chief, a quietly curious, grizzled man, with a care-free air G 622 bred of the freedom and independence of his life, held in play a vicious cobra just captured. He summed the gipsy life in a sentiment savouring of Borrow: "What are we?" he said. "Children of the open ways, bronzed by the sun, soaked by the rain, born on the trail, buried on the trail. That is our life." They had a sambur spear among them, and G 411 apparently only one man adept in its use; but that spear, their little 224 dogs and their own untiring sinews were match enough for any sambur once started.

V 361 From Uhane to Kotelinda by way of hill-girdled Bokkebedda in the drenching rain. Here, at a glance, we noticed crude little Vedda huts amidst those of the Sinhalese villagers. We were now among the hills of Madana long famed for Veddas; but to-day their caves are only tenanted by bears. Up to now we had traversed a stretch of country V 103 designated on the maps Maha-Veddi-Ratta (Great Vedda Country)—an empty name of about as much significance at the present time as the term Cinnamon Gardens applied to Colombo. Kotelinda lies in the V 131 centre of a region that is to-day the last stronghold of the Veddas—that

5: Spittel B-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda

Gypsies E15
Ceylon

142
291
622
302
516

Gipsy Chiefs

291
854
301

Young Gipsy Mothers

[Facing p 55]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

triangle bounded on the south by the Gal Oya: on the west by the Bibile-Batticaloa road: and on the east by the coast road. Within this space are found the Veddas of Danigala, Henebedda and Bingoda, besides the few about Kotelinda, Divulana and Serangamadu. If to this tract were added that to the west and north of the Bibile-Batticaloa road, between it and the Mahaweli-ganga, we shall have embraced the Veddas of Bintenne, Gunner's Quoin, and other scattered settlements, and accounted for every Vedda extant—a mere handful of people in all.

Kaurala of Kotelinda was the first Vedda worthy of the name we had encountered on this long journey. He was a Bingoda Vedda of the Morana *warige*, but had spent most of his days at Bandaradua now derelict. He lived with his family in a crude hut in the jungle; his sole weapons were an axe, a bow and arrows. He was a simple soul, laughing uproariously at one moment, and the next assuming that troubled gravity so characteristic of his race. He knew every inch of his jungles; there was no tree, stream, or stone once passed which he could not instantly recognise again. This instinct and the sun were his sole means of orientation. We tried to press him into service, but he refused. "How can I come?" he said, tossing head and arms like a windmill. "I am a lone man. I live in the jungle. I am only a Vedda. If I go, who is there to look after my children? See here, now," pointing to the damaged trees about his hut; "this is what the *botukandas** have done. How can I come?"

Our deviation to Kotelinda was in vain. We had hoped to cut across the hills of Madana to Galmede; but the path had long been absorbed into the forest. We had therefore to double back to Bokkebedda, and thence strike north, through Gonagalla, to Divulana. With our usual ill-luck on this trip, we caught our fifth thunderstorm. It dropped plumb on us and worried us all the way; while in the unscathed beyond, over the treed parkland, the sunset wrought a panorama of opal and pearl, touching to glory the austere peak of Friar's Hood, queen of the distant hills.

*Elephants.

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena* ; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house" ; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark ; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that ; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats ; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone ; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned :

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas ; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain : it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good !

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes : *Góna-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
342

"Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold." (Page 53)

[facing p. 58]

291 When Kauwa was young his people wore threshed *riti** bark suspended
[287] from the waist by a *riti* strip. A Vedda belle would sometimes trick
824] herself out in such adornments as a *riti* collar sewn at the back with
nuga† fibre, anklets of red ixora blooms, lotus petals in ear lobes and as
301 garlands round neck and loins, and circlets of strung wild jasmine round
the hair knot. Difficult, though it be, to reconcile this picture with
the wretched specimens one meets to-day, it must be admitted that
Kauwa had no imagination to run loose. An old song tells of Vedda
maidens whose heads were adorned with peacock plumes.

844 Vedda man and wife usually walk the forest together, and accouche-
ments often occur away from home and female assistance ; the man then
84[does duty for midwife by placing the woman with her back to a rock
and two stones to her feet. For nine days after child-birth he feeds her
262 only on *gonala* yams and the flesh of monitors.

*Antiaris toxicaria.
† *Ficus altissima*

411

Kaurala and his wife. (Page 55)

291
516
854

A Galmede home. (Page 60)

[Facing p. 59]

4. FRIAR'S HOOD AND THE VEDDAS OF GALMEDE

ACCOMPANIED by Kauwa and a Tamil, we left Divulana to enter upon the wildest part of our journey. The *illuk* glades, so familiar to us for many days, now gave place to jungle sunless, forsaken, virginal and silent save for the cry of a cicala or the rustle of a jungle cock or chevrotan.

Crossing the Amankelle Oya we came to the deserted home of the Bandaradua Veddas—Kauwa's old home. It outlay a glade in full view of the Bandaradua rock. All that now marked the place were a cadju tree, that spread its branches in a great canopy, and a few live fence sticks all overgrown with *pussela-wel*, the pounded bark of which the Veddas soak in water rendering it soapy for cleansing their lousy heads.

Late in the evening we were at the foot of Friar's Hood, that loneliest of Ceylon's forest hills, the landmark of the old Portuguese mariners. The environing jungle was sinister with the menace of unseen things. Here our guide had once encountered a gang of no less than six bears, and indicated to us the very trees up which he and his companion had shinned. It was not the sort of place one would care to be in alone; and yet, in a clearing by the rock, a Moor had recently lived with his wife for three years, growing amidst his cassava a deadlier plant,* the joy and bane of Eastern lands.

We camped on this deserted plantation. As it darkened a sambur belled and stamped around us in high dudgeon that his accustomed pasturage had been usurped. The hooded peak before us melted into the gloom, only to stand out again under the stars more sinister and secret than ever. This lonely outlaw, standing away from the herded hills, had survived a race of men. It was there when the first paleolithic ancestors of the Veddas crossed from India, when Ceylon and that land were one. Towards it, and the security it afforded, was the best remnant of that race gradually driven by succeeding waves of civilisation through the long years. To-day around it the last of the Veddas are dying. And yet,

> The hills are shadows and they flow
> From form to form, and nothing stands;
> They melt like mists, the solid lands,
> Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

It is difficult to say where Galmede really begins. We must ascribe to it all that tract of deserted *chenas*, with their crumbling Vedda shelters and *mora* forests devastated by elephants, between Friar's Hood and the Magalawatavan Oya, on the other bank of which stand the few huts that comprise the Galmede of to-day. This place, the port of our dreams, we entered with beating hearts.

The first individual to meet us was no Vedda at all but a Chetty!

"Where are the Veddas?" I asked eagerly.

"There are no Veddas here," he said.

*Cannabis indica.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 "But surely there are Veddas in Galmede; everybody told us so," I insisted.

"Veddas of a sort, yes," was the reply; "and perhaps among them, one or two good ones; but the best live away in the caves, in those rocks yonder. Now if you'd come yesterday you'd have seen two of them who brought me some *goas* in exchange for betel and tobacco."

000 Disappointment melted into sudden hope. So, there were real Veddas still left. But oh! these people. Was ever chase so disheartening? Always the promise, never the fulfilment. Were we chasing phantoms of the wilderness, mocking spirits of a dead race, intolerant of the intrusion on their tranquil sepulchres?

There was no possibility of visiting the cave-Veddas that day. So I decided to stay over and visit them the next morning, travelling across the pathless hills to the high road; while my companion,—fed up to the teeth by now at the very mention of the word Vedda, and in a bad way with festering tick-bites, heat exhaustion, and lack of fresh food—tried to dissuade me from an adventure that promised no success. But I was bent on it. So we agreed that most of the bearers should accompany him to Maha Oya by an easier route, while I remained behind with three men and a two days' ration of tinned food.

With nightfall my prospect of securing a guide to the Galmede hills was no nearer than in the morning. The only man who could be relied on was down with fever. I was seated disconsolately in the Chetty's garden after dinner, close to a chatting group, when suddenly I saw a shadow slip in out of the darkness and join them; there was some whispering; "Ah, is this the man they call Meenemaruwa?*" I heard
648 one of my bearers ask.

241 "Yes, I am he they call murderer, rogue and everything besides."
115 The answer came loud and unabashed from the man himself.

Rumour had spoken of him as far away as Kotelinda; and it had not spoken kindly. He lived three miles up the river by himself, inspiring the neighbourhood with awe of him. He was in a quandary that night. Returning home after a short absence, he had found that his brother had been taken into custody for illicit *chena* cultivation. He waxed eloquent on his wrongs, while the others listened: "Now what I want to know," he said "is why they should have taken my brother, who is a fool and cannot say a word in his defence, when they might have taken me? No, they wouldn't do that because I can talk. My brother cultivated the *chena* it is true, but it was I who gave it to him; the land is mine. They want me to pay taxes, I who am a Vedda! My grandmother was a
[826 Vedda of Veddas, you should have seen her. How well I remember the
789 piece of human liver she carried in her betel-bag. We children would take it from her and want to throw it away; she would pluck it from us, saying, 'Hu, what do you want with this, isn't it mine?' Io, why do they treat me like this? Someone is angry with me. It must be the *aratchi*. No, the *aratchi* is good to me; he and I are friends. Now *Hettyar*, what must I do? I must go to the courts myself and get a petition drawn." Thus he talked interminably, while I wondered how a Vedda could come to argue like a lawyer.

"Now leave all that aside," I interrupted, "and tell me how I am to see these Veddas of the rocks tomorrow."

*Murderer.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

He left the group and seated himself before me—a sinewy, handsome, bearded man of perhaps forty. 115 114

"Those Veddas," he said contemplatively, when I told him how we stood; "who can say where they are? In one cave to-day, in a another to-morrow. They said they came from Dhik-galge, did they? But you can never take a Vedda's word for that. If they are not there—what then? All our trouble will be in vain. I cannot say I know the caves in those hills very well. I have only been among them once, and that many years ago, when I took my wife from her people. She and I wandered about there. How well she knew the trails, she who had trodden them but once as a little child; for her home, like mine, was elsewhere. I would see a track and point to it saying, 'This must be the way to the cave.' 'No,' she would say 'that leads to the wilderness; there should be a path by that tree yonder'; and she would always be right. I remember well the *kong* tree by the Alu-galge; I shot two monkeys and we ate them there." And so his thoughts rambled amid honey-moon scenes he loved to recall.

But, as this meandering led nowhere, I offered a reward of five rupees to anyone who would show me the Veddas in their caves on the morrow, and took to bed. For long I lay pondering what manner of man was the Chetty who could live in this wilderness with a Vedda woman for wife. He seemed to know intimately every Vedda in the district, and had sometimes even shared their caves. He remained an enigma, as also that smile of his, no more than a mere display of the teeth, which imbued the knit, pathetic cast of his features with an expression whether of saintliness or villainy, it was hard to tell. Ostensibly he was here to rear cattle; but why come so far for that?

The next morning, accompanied by Meenemaruwa, the Chetty and a half-Vedda of Galmede, we set out on our quest. The plan was this; we were to travel to a spot where a certain stream crossed the path: there we would probably find foot-prints; if these led to the hills we would follow, if in the opposite direction, pursuit would be useless, as that would imply that the Veddas had returned to their homes in Bingoda fifteen miles away; for at this season the Veddas did not live in their caves, and the party we were in search of must have come on a few days hunting. I now understood the reticence of these people to take me on what might prove a wild goose chase; and learnt, what was more important, that the Veddas of Galmede were the Veddas of Bingoda. 114

We came to the stream; the foot-prints were there. Our guides bent down eagerly examining them. "This is Suthubanda's," they said "and this Badapissa's; this other is a woman's; no, it's a boy's." The tracks pointed towards the hills! The chase began.

114 360 487

Meenemaruwa led, for he alone could decipher that trail, three days old, on the hard dry ground. Once we left the stream there was apparently not the faintest indication of a foot-mark; but our guide moved rapidly along, and soon involved us in an enforested labyrinth of hills. Very occasionally a broken twig would furnish a clue. Indicating one of these Meenemaruwa said, "Now, that would never have been done had old Handuna been alive. 'Hu,' he would have said, slapping the errant one, 'do you want to show everybody the way to our caves; then where would we go if people came after us?' To the rock, the cave and the hive there must be no clue; that is the Vedda law.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 342 114 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aratchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 224 482 142 609 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

600 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Meenemaruwa accompanied us a little way, singing Vedda songs with the voice of a priest chanting *bana*. I told him he had the throat of a drongo, which pleased him immensely. He explained, that as a boy he had been taken in hand by Buddhist priests who "straightened" his throat.

"Why are you called Murderer?" I asked.

"There was a man in our village," he said "whose wife abused everybody. I remonstrated with her, and her husband resented my interference, and bore ill-feeling towards me." (Rumour said that his relations with the woman were not quite as detached as he made out). "One day I was walking through an *illuk* field with a gun I had borrowed from a Moor, when I saw this man and two others coming towards me. The path was narrow; but who were they that I should make way for them or anyone else? This was twenty years ago, I was but a boy then. As we met, my enemy caught me by the neck and shoved me aside, and the two others struck me. I saw the devil then, and, placing my gun to the man's chest, fired; he dropped. A spark flew into my eye and, prevented my shooting the others as they ran. When I saw what I had done I went away and hid in the jungle. The first night I spent on a trestle where I used to watch for sambur; four drank at the water that night, but I had not the heart to shoot one. For a year I wandered in the forests, a hunted man, only creeping out occasionally at night to beg a little food or powder. Eventually, tiring of the life and hearing that the man I had shot had partially recovered, I sent word that I would give myself up. The *aratchi* who came to arrest me was afraid to approach me. I placed my gun aside and gave him my hands; as he clapped the manacles on there were tears in his eyes. I spent five years in various jails in the Island, seeing many places and learning much wisdom. That was many years ago; cha, I am getting older now." He left us happy with his morning's work and his well-earned reward.

The Chetty of Galmede escorted me to Maha Oya the next day where my friend, now quite refreshed, awaited me. Some hours after our arrival, I was recounting to the Chief Headman of the place, our two weeks experiences all the long and devious way from Siyambala Anduwa, when my mention of the Chetty's name suddenly electrified him.

"He came with you here, did you say?" he asked, starting up. "Then he is here now. *Aratchi*, go quick and get him. That's the man I have been wanting these two years. He's the greatest scoundrel in the Province; there are any number of writs against him; but he lives on the borders of two Provinces, and when I send my men to take him, he merely crosses over to the other side, defies them to capture him if they dare and sends back insolent messages to me. The man you call Meenemaruwa is another of his sort. If only I can get them."

That night we were dining with the Chief when a man sent a message asking if he might see him. It was the Chetty; now hand-cuffed, alas! He said something to the Chief in a whisper, and smiled that enigmatic smile of his. Was it a saint's or a scoundrel's? This time there was no doubt, for he had offered to betray his *ganja* growing accomplices among the poor half-Veddas of Galmede, as the price of his liberty.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291

Sathis Banda, Gama and their families. (Page 65)

[facing p. 64]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VI

VEDDAS OF BINGODA

I. BINGODA HOMES

Innumerable years had flown,
Since first the chisel in her hand
Necessity, the sculptor, took,
And in her spacious meaning planned
These forms, and that eternal look.

L. BINYON

197 [101] CONCEDE me three points and I shall attempt to show that there exist in Ceylon to-day Veddas worthy of the name. Language, apparel and weapons are the concessions I ask.

Let us begin by confessing, that the Veddas we shall tell of have no pure language of their own, but merely a patois, in which Sinhalese words predominate and Vedda words are few; their clothing is not the traditional 291 leaf or threshed *riti* bark, but fragments of foul rag affording, if anything, less cover; the weapons they favour are guns (of a type almost as 411 dangerous to user as to quarry) and not bows and arrows which they employ only in sore necessity.

Vital issues, you will say, which should deprive this people of their name. But language, dress and arms may change without materially altering, for a time at least, ancient customs and primeval instincts.

101 The word Vedda originally meant hunter; and a people supreme in jungle-craft, always capable of gleaning from the unfriendly forests a sufficiency for their needs and utterly incompetent to husband even the primitive agriculture of the *chena*, has surely a claim to the name.

224 It must not be supposed that every Vedda possesses a gun; far from it; [411] occasionally there may be a single weapon to a whole clan. The usual thing is for the Sinhalese or Moors to lend their guns to these superb [427] trackers, who never waste a shot and seldom return without their quarry, a large share of which goes by agreement to the owner of the gun.

114 Of my first accidental meeting with these Veddas amid the hills of Galmede, I have already told. Barely four months had elapsed before I found myself renewing their acquaintance; this time with set purpose.

Arriving at the forest village of Mullegama, sacred to Buddhists, and abounding in lime groves and Moors, I was fortunate enough to run up against my friend Kaurala of Kottelinde, who, so difficult of acquisition before, now became our willing guide.

131 Bingoda, the home of our Veddas, is some three miles from Mullegama, and lies on the Dhungolla Oya, a tributary of the Magalavatan Aar which connects Bingoda with Galmede, ten miles away—all in the circuit of

291
301
[582]
516

Veddas children. (Page 63)

Kaim and his wife. (Page 63)

[facing p.65]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese chena village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there. 131 361

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you. 101 161 [587] 855 [164 516]

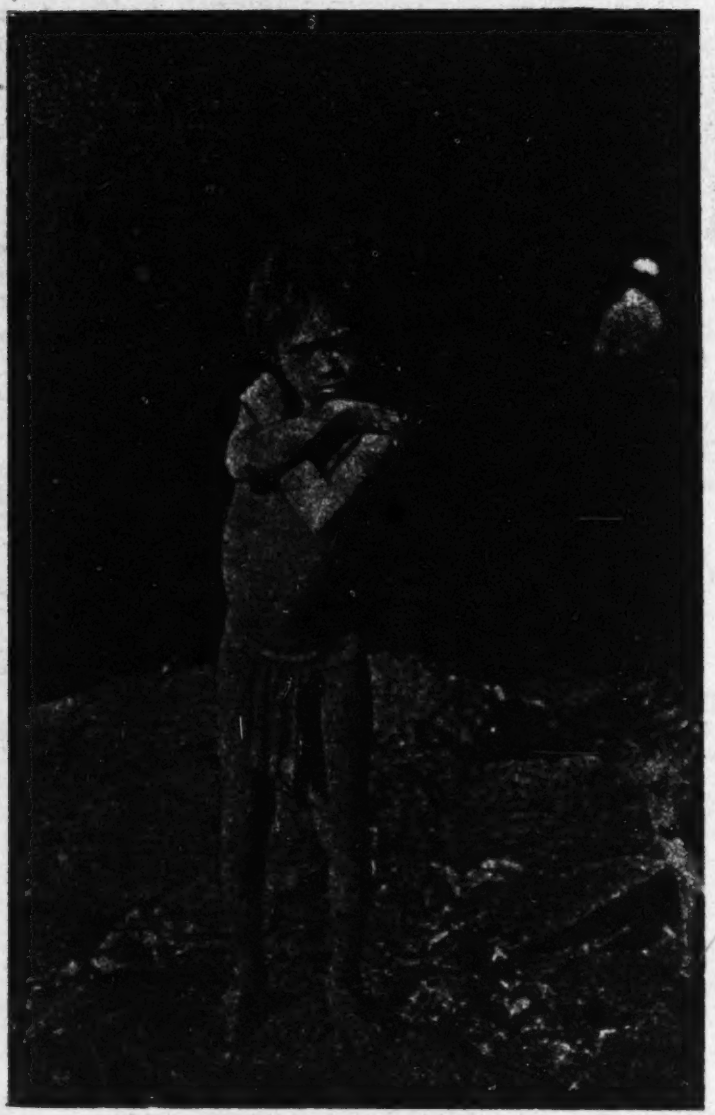
Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty. 361 [184 342] 101 161 [582] [164]

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect. [595 586]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

516
291



Little Handuna. (Page 65)

[Facing p. 66]

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
[283 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded
824] to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

56

The hut of Gama. (Page 65)

" Too ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness." (Page 65)

[facing p. 67]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1965 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Unapana *waruge*, like all the other *waruges*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *waruge* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *waruge* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *waruge* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *waruges* after similar occurrences under *nabudu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gamana*). 614 173 [551]

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season. 177 178

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *kanava* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukhan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukhan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukhan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter, he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more." [437]

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas. 161 186 731

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

241 181 THE genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a *chena* than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas [184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 222 177 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his 142 outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature— [826] and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a degree, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

familiarity savouring even of impudence and disrespect. But that is 181
because they know no better. I have had a Vedda address me as "*tho*,"
a word now used only towards a very inferior person. A Vedda once [576]
took my gun and cartridge-bag to shoot us something for dinner. He
returned empty-handed and disgruntled. I inquired what ailed him.

"What sort of cartridges are these?" he said, throwing down the bag contemptuously. "You fire at a wanderoo, and he sits and grins at you. You fire again, and he grins the more. You want six or seven big shot for animals, not *kurrukkan* grains."

I asked him how he knew the size of the shot in my cartridges. He answered that he had looked inside. It was not until the next day that I realised the thoroughness of his investigation. Every single cartridge in the bag, some fifty or more, had its wad at a rakish tilt! When I upbraided him for the liberty, he disarmed my wrath by laughing uproariously.

On one occasion we had pitched our tent under a big tree which caught fire through the carelessness of our cook who had pursued his occupation by its foot. As I lay in bed ignorant of a blazing branch overhead, I was warned repeatedly by the carriers of the danger of my position; but to these anxieties my tiredness made me deaf. "After to-night," said a Vedda, "no devil will be able to return to Colombo!" The words were electrical in effect—and in good time too, for the branch fell just as the tent was dismantled.

The quaintness of the Vedda language is always a delight. Not knowing the art of dissembling, they say just what they think. They are capable of exquisite and spontaneous similes and metaphors. Vulgarity is natural to them, and their talk is interlarded with phrases that would make a navvy blush.

I have said that a Vedda laughed uproariously. Now, it has been 181
stated repeatedly, by persons professing to know all about Veddas, that
these people are incapable of laughter. The statements have even gone 152
to grotesque lengths as the sub-joined extract testifies.* When a

---

*THEY NEVER LAUGH

MOST SOLEMN TRIBES IN THE WORLD.

Laughter, and the faculty of being merry and bright, are gifts of the gods to a world in which there is not too much sunshine at any time.

But this gift, according to the scientists who know all about these subjects, has been denied to the Veddas, the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon. It is the only people in the world who never laugh, and in consequence they are thin and flabby folk, and a fat man among the Veddas would be an extraordinary sight for sad eyes. A traveller who has studied the early races in Ceylon gives some interesting particulars about this curious tribe.

For nearly 2000 years, according to the best chronicles, these people, now almost extinct, have preserved the same characteristics, and no one, so far as history reveals, has ever seen a smile on the face of one of them or heard a laugh while in their section of Ceylon.

Why these people do not smile is a mystery. They alone of all the people on the earth know nothing of the sensation of laughter.

A scientist, who recently journeyed to Ceylon for the purpose of investigating this question, persuaded some of them to permit him to tickle them in the ribs and in the middle of their feet with straws, and never caught even the flicker of a smile on their faces, nor did he ever succeed in making one of them squirm and laugh aloud during the operation.

(*Continued on next page*)

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

181 sophisticated Vedda knows what is expected of him he will act up to
152 the expectation right enough. Personally I have never yet met a Vedda who could not laugh. The truth is that the Vedda will laugh with the best of us when there is occasion; but he is a stranger to the conventional, hypocritical smile of civilisation, meant only to please and so uncertain an index of the heart. The Vedda's face, like a child's, is a mirror to his mind.

His natural expression is one of apathy and moroseness. Schooled to hardship and privation, he is neither greatly distraught by sorrow nor transported by joy He expresses his emotions with more moderation than we; he is the greater fatalist; and accepts with stoic equanimity the hard conditions of his life which have wrought into his expression a dour indifference, a decorous gravity.

There is something naturally fierce in his nature; and it does not do to anger him. The tradition is undoubtedly true that the Veddas, at one time, carried in their betel bags fragments of human liver which they chewed when roused, to give fire to their frenzy. And this is probably the origin of the Sinhalese threat, "I'll eat your liver!" There is a spot in the Eastern Province which commemorates to this
[173] day an early incident of colonisation: A Vedda had once way-laid and killed a European soldier, and going up to him could hear the ticking of his watch; examining this he said, "His life is still here," and dashed it to pieces on a rock.

When a Vedda returns from an expedition no one must speak to him until he has rested and it has pleased him to talk first. One who had accompanied us once on a hunt nearly killed a Sinhalese boy who innocently asked him what he had brought, the moment he arrived. Most sportsmen, Vedda or not, are impatient of cross-examination when fatigued—especially if unsuccessful.

771 The Veddas have no conception of a supreme being; nor have they any myth or theory bearing on cosmogony. The panorama of the heavens is beyond their questioning; but its supremacy is instinctively avowed: "*Mā Suriya Deyyo*" (by the Sun God) is an oath by which
195 the Vedda vouches his good faith.

776 Like animals, concerned only with their immediate needs, they take the world very much as they find it. But if the aloof heavens leave their imaginations untouched, not so their immediate environment. Here exist real powers more within the pale of their comprehension, influencing every act of their lives, overshadowing their credulous minds, and affording at least some data on which to found a faith. Is it surprising then that they people Nature with sentient beings, unseen, but very evident by their acts. And what spirits more comprehensible to the primitive mind, more inspiratory of faith and fear, than those of one's

---

Another strange thing about the Veddas, and one which may possibly be connected with their lack of humour, is the fact that every one of them is a George Washington, unable to tell a lie or to conceive of anyone else telling a lie.

They cannot even believe that any one would take the property of anyone else, and association with civilisation has failed to convince them that it is possible.

With all this—or, rather without all this—the Veddas are a peaceable, gentle, quiet people. They take wives without any marriage ceremony, and are faithful and constant to them, supporting them to death.

Aberdeen Paper, 1922

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).* 776

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred. 761 [768]

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakka*).† 769 771

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *audes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells. 776 796

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Ravathath*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees, Peti-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*). 776

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad. 787

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakha* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakha* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakha* ancestral spirit. *Hetha* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanniya* is another word synonymous with *yakha* and *hetha*. [196]

†The Veddas, by Seligmann: page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

787 To ignore such warnings would be to court failure or even disaster. When a *kotaha* (large gekko) quaintly cries "krok, krok," a Vedda will seriously lean towards it and ask, "Shall we shoot a monkey to-morrow?" "Krok," says the *kotaha*, and the questioner's face falls, for here no answer is good news. Then there is that subtle thing the *kille*, an evil
778 influence possessed by certain kinds of meat when eaten under circum-
262 stances too involved to explain. The flesh of pigs, peafowl, langurs and a species of fish (*urang*, *monerang*, *wandoorang*, *magurang*) are said to have this property; but here it would seem that the rhyming of the names has something to do with their evil association.

776 There is an interesting little spirit, belief in which (as with many of the other superstitions already mentioned) is as universal among the Sinhalese as the Veddas. *Bothili*, *Vilirany*, or *Kunnu-yakkini** (dirty she-devil) is its name. It is said to have a nasty nack of grasping one's leg in the dark, and so making it wither to the thinness of an *illuk*-blade. The incarnation of a woman who died in child-birth it is thought to be, and comes moaning at night in the form of a light. The story is best told in the words of a solemnly sworn eye-witness:—Kalu Banda (the narrator) and his sister Balahamy were occupying a watch-hut in a *kurrukhan* field one dark night when they heard a moaning as of one in pain—"*andoa, andoa, oo oo oo.*" Kalu Banda, suspecting what it was, told his sister not to speak—for the *villirany* is shy of women and vanishes at the sound of their voice. He then charmed a little oil, and placing it some distance away, called out, "If you have a stomach-ache, come, rub some oil, and go away." A shadow appeared at which Kalu Banda
[825] fired. On going to the spot, what should he find but a green blood-sucker[1] with a red head! This is said to be the invariable discovery when the *bodili* is killed. The same is said of the devil bird; but here apparently the rule has exceptions; for I have met several people who shot at devil birds, and had a bird to show.

825 The identity of the devil-bird—*ulama* or *ulalena*—is still a matter of doubt; and it is a pity that those who have had the rare fortune to shoot this bird have not thought it worth their while to send it up for identification. Much of the mystery surrounding it is due to the fact that it cries only at night and has wide and sporadic circuits. That it has some sort of a crest, I think, there can be no doubt; also that it is a large bird mottled in its breast feathers like a jungle-hen. These particulars all my reliable informants (who shot the bird as it cried at night) have independently confirmed. It is supposed to be the brown wood owl (*Surnium indrani*) by some, the *Huhua nepalensis* by others. The theory that different birds are capable of uttering the devil-bird's cry, is, I think, quite untenable. Its note is too invariable and distinctive for that.

825 The cry of the *ulama*, like that of the owl (*bakumuna*) and *hanga*, is
787 said to be a portent, varying according to its direction. Should it come from the west, it forbodes rain; from the east, good luck; from the north, the visit of a relative or friend; from the south, a death. One of these birds hovered about our camp one night uttering its blood-curdling calls, now from this direction, now from that, baffling the ingenuity of
825 its interpreters! Its "hoo-oo" is most eerily human; but it has an even worse note, a gurgling chuckle, strongly suggestive of a person

*This is perhaps none other than the Ceylon loris.

1 [a species of lizard.—Ans/pt]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

being strangled. I know a man who, on hearing this cry, rushed out of this house one night, lantern in hand, imagining murder was afoot! A creature with a voice like that should not complain if stories are told of it. According to some, the bird is the incarnation of a Buddhist priest who goes about seeking his stolen book wailing, "*Mai potha ko?*" (Where is my book?). Others say the *ulama* cries whenever it sees a corpse prepared for burial held up before it by an exultant demon; then uttering a succession of screams it falls senseless from its perch. The most gruesome story to its credit is the following; even the old women who relate these tales show particular reticence with regard to this one:— Once there lived a man and his wife and they had a little child. One day when the woman went out to fetch firewood, the man killed his child, cut up some of its flesh and cooked and ate it, leaving a portion on the fire for his wife. When she returned she saw the meat and asked her husband where he had got it.

825
825
539

"Never mind that," said the man. "You eat."

The woman was enjoying her meal when suddenly she noticed a child's finger on her plate.

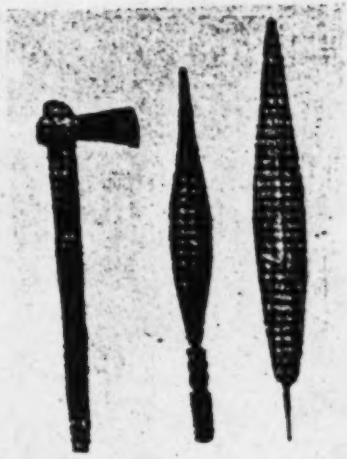
"Where is our child?" she asked apprehensively.

"That is what you are eating", said her inhuman husband.

Thereupon the woman, thrusting the handle of a coconut-shell spoon into her head, fled into the jungle shrieking, "*Mai lamaya ko? Mai lamaya ko?*" (Where is my child? Where is my child?) and became the crested *ulama*. Now this story, folk-lore though it be, confirms the assumption that the devil bird has some sort of a tuft on its head.

372
412
535

Strike-a-light and flint. (Page 74)



Vedda axe and audes

372
516

Fire making by rubbing sticks. (Page 74)

[Facing p. 74]

3. SOME VEDDA ARTS AND A DANCE

EDIBLE LIME

321 276 [237] THE Vedda method of making from snail-shells an edible lime, the concomitant of a betel or bark chew, is interesting. Four varieties of snail afford it :—The large, white, land snails (*wantako* or *godang bello*) ; the small, black, river snails (*alang bello* or *gadu bello*), found in dry stream beds ; the bivalved *ethal bello* ; and the convoluted *kankuro* or *lanu bello*.

The *wantako* give the best lime. Six to twelve of their shells are dropped into a small fire, and a layer of dry twigs is laid over them. The flame is now vigorously fanned with a leafy sprig, to prevent the shells getting charred. When the overlying layer of twigs is reduced to embers, and the shells glow white, they are gently picked off with a stick, taken on the palm and placed in a large leaf (*kenda* or *halmilla*). A little water is then added or, in its absence, saliva ! The leaf is quickly folded over the shells which now disintegrate and " ripen." They are then smashed up with the fingers, and the chunam is distributed.

When the small *gadu bello* are used, the process is slightly different : the burnt shells, moistened and bundled in a leaf as before, are replaced on the embers quietened down with a sprinkling of water. The chunam from these is coarser and more gritty than that from the *wantako*.

FIRE MAKING

372 Fire is obtained by jungle folk in a variety of ways. When gun-powder is to hand there is a choice of two methods : (*a*) A little powder is placed on a stone and closely surrounded with small fragments of cloth or tree cotton. It is then ignited, and the rag set on fire, by striking it sharply with an axe-head previously warmed by rubbing on a rock. (*b*) When, in addition to powder, a cap is available, the powder is put into a small square of rag with the upturned cap in its centre. Into the cap the point of a knife is inserted, and the rag is closed over and clapsed firmly against the blade. The striking of this on a stone explodes the cap, ignites the powder, and lights the rag.

These methods being too wasteful for routine use, the commonest mode of fire-making in the jungles is by means of a C-shape iron strike-a-light (*gini-katuwa*) and a piece of chert or crystalline quartz (*irimana gal*), against which is a piece of *kitul* cotton or rag to take the spark when the two are struck together.

The most primitive, and essentially Vedda, art of making fire is by the attrition of two sticks. Although I had hitherto travelled much in Ceylon forests, always making inquiries about this mode of obtaining [184] fire, it was not until I came to Bingoda that I was able to see it done, and that with astonishing ease. In Henebedde and Bintenne the art was dead ; indeed some of the Veddas had never even heard of it !

The light *velang* stick of which arrows are made is the wood *par excellence* for fire making. Elephants being fond of the tree, the dry

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

804
411
516

Method of measuring length of arrow shaft. (Page 76)

411
516

Feathering the arrow. (Page 76)

[Facing p. 75]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

sticks are easily obtainable from broken branches scattered everywhere. 372
Gama, who was entrusted with the demonstration, chose two twigs, one the thickness of the index finger and about a foot and a half long, the other as thick as the little finger and about ten inches long. Having barked these, he whittled down the centre of the larger stick, and, in the flat surface thus produced, scooped out a shallow cavity, at one border of which he contrived a V-shaped extension. A piece of cloth about two inches square was placed on the ground under the centre of the stick which was held firmly down, cavity uppermost, by the toes of the operator, aided by the hands of an assistant. The smaller stick was then placed vertically over the other—its point, rendered bluntly conical, engaging in the cavity—and briskly rotated between the open palms. The firm downward pressure with which these movements were accompanied, caused the palms to descend the length of the stick from time to time. As often as this happened, the hands were quickly disengaged and re-applied as before to the upper part, and the twirling manoeuvre repeated. This had been done but twice when smoke was seen. Soon a small heap of charred dust like coffee-grounds accumulated round the hole, to escape down the V-shaped gutter on to the cloth. The smoke increased; there was a smell of charred wood. Suddenly a spark was thrown on to the black dust and the rag caught fire. A few dry leaves were collected and set alight. Within two minutes of the commencement of the operation there was a lively fire. When the smoke is observed to come from the accumulated dust, apart from that at the point of contact between the two sticks, it is a sign that the object is achieved. The rag is then rolled to enclose the dust—cigarette-fashion—and blown into at one end, so that it soon smokes heavily and catches fire.

It is strange that an art so simple in adept hands (not by any means so in those of a novice) should have been allowed to fall into disuse in [178] wild Ceylon. I have seen refinements of this method; a coconut-shell, flat stone, or skull of a small animal for instance, being used by an assistant to press down the vertical stick, and a twist of bark to rotate it but they were less effectual than the simple procedure I have described.

ARCHERY

322
411

The present day Veddas, we have seen, are poor bowmen; they have, however, not yet quite lost the art of fashioning superb bows and arrows.

The bow is made from the *mahakahala-gaha* or the *hobawela*; the stone bow (*gal-dhunna*) from the *gatawela-gaha*; the bow string from the inner [824] sheath of the bark of *aralu-wel*.*

The size of the bow is proportioned to the archer's strength. I have seen one six and a half feet long and as thick as a child's wrist; and, judging from its drawing power, no hand but a giant's could have wielded it. The usual length of a bow is from five and a half feet to five feet ten inches. It is made of a single stave, thick at the centre, without contrivance to give grip, flattened along the back, and tapering towards the horns which, without being notched, are tightly encircled by a few turns of cord to prevent the string slipping.

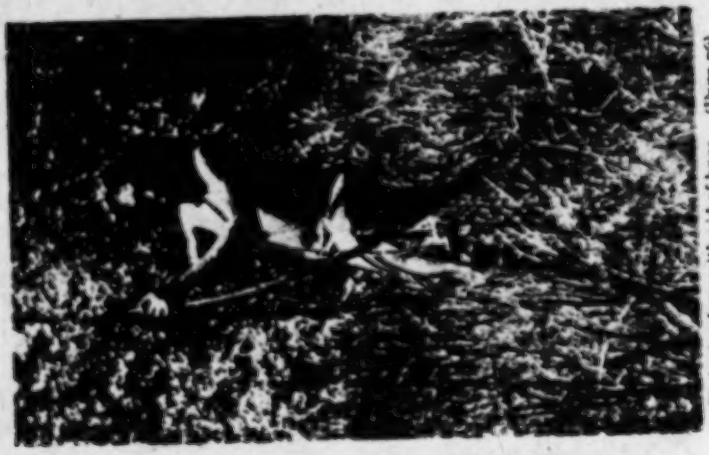
The arrow is made from the *ee* or *welang*† tree, the wood of which when dry is of remarkable lightness. A straight twig the girth of the finger

*Terminalia chebula.
†Pterospermum suberifolium.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

411
516

Stringing bow by foot-thrust. (Page 76)



Stringing bow with aid of knee. (Page 76)

[Facing p. 76]

322 is taken, barked, and straightened by being passed rapidly a few times
411 through a flame, and then bent over the knee or between the hands. It is shaved down to uniform thickness with an arecanut-cutter or arrow blade, and cut to suitable length, roughly gauged by holding it along the outstretched arm from the nearer nipple to the end of the middle finger, giving it an average measure of two and a half feet, or slightly less. An arrow belonging to the great bow I have mentioned, measured three and a half feet. The nock or notch is a quarter of an inch deep and cut square.

411 The arrow is feathered with the wing plumes of the owl, devil-bird,
237 jungle-cock, or large crane (*mana hoka*); the owl's, besides being the
284 best, are easily picked up along dry stream beds, on the trees bordering which the birds usually roost. A feather is split unequally down the rachis, only the larger segment being used. Four such segments, about two inches long, are arranged equidistantly round the shaft, an inch and a quarter from the end, and bound neatly down with *avalu* fire, the mouth helping in the process. The first turns are merely taken round that part of the shaft, which is immediately below the feathers, then round the bared lower ends of the rachis, and then carried along, at spaced intervals, between the carefully separated barbs. Should a strand not prove long enough, it is finished off by having its end tucked in between rachis and shaft, and another is similarly begun. Finally the ruffled barbs are straightened out between the thumb and fingers moistened with saliva. A few turns of fibre just below the notch serve to give grip to the drawing fingers.

411 The arrow-head is made of flattened iron obtained from local black-
smiths. It is three to five inches long, of lanceolate shape in imitation of the *na* leaf, and sharp at the edges; serving as much as a cutting implement as an arrow. By a tang it is let into the end of the shaft to which it is firmly secured with fibre. All the strung parts of the arrow,
[824] as well as the bow-string, are finally dressed with the sticky milk of *hiri-wel* to prevent untwisting. Both bow and arrow, being very liable to the ravages of boring insects, are always kept hung over the smoke when not in use.

The method of stringing the bow is by placing one end of it, to which the string is knotted, on the ground, and then pressing on its centre either with the bent knee or by a foot thrust. A correctly strung bow should measure at its centre a span between string and belly of bow; this is rather more than the "fist-mele" (clenched fist with thumb upright) the rough estimate of European stringing.

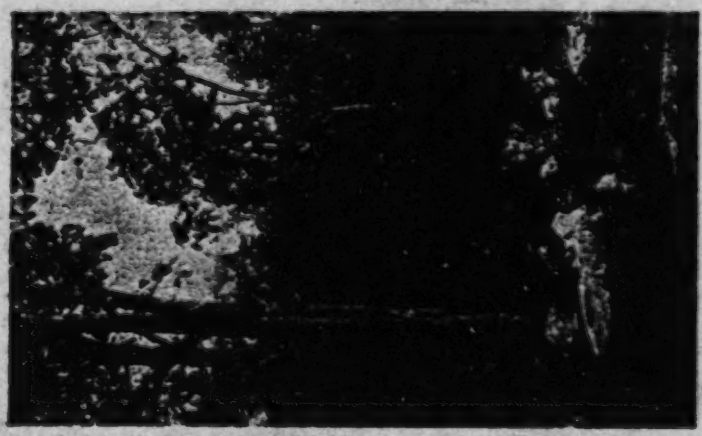
The arrow release favoured by the Veddas is that in which the cord is drawn with the first joints of the index and middle fingers, the arrow being usually placed on the left of the bow. The style of archery is often peculiar: the arrow fitted to the bow is raised head high; the right elbow is now swung up in an awkward flourish above the head, and then brought slowly down to alignment with the eye, as the string is drawn out to its fullest extent and the arrow delivered.

DANCING

177 The ceremonial dances of the Veddas have been minutely described
536 and illustrated by Seligmann. The dance we are about to describe seems to have been performed before him in its greatest purity at Henebedde. The differences between his description and ours must be

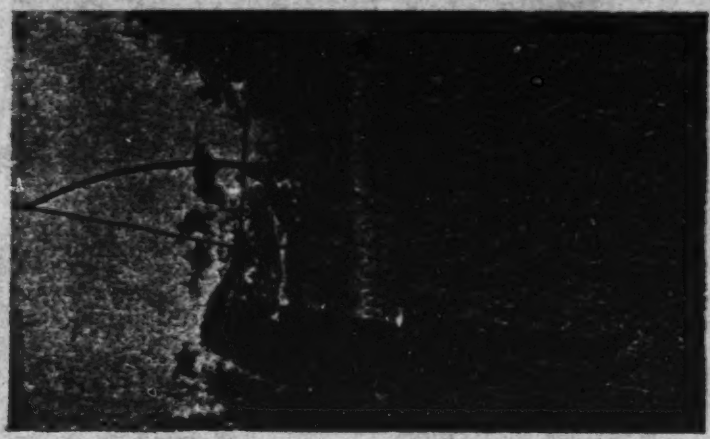
5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1820) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

423
614



Boundary tree marked with bow mark or *dhuna hena*. (Page 76)

411



A Vedda archer of Bintenne. (Page 76)

[FACING p.77]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

177
535

attributed to Sinhalese influence, especially the substitution of the mortar for the tripod, the drum for the slapping of hands and thighs, and the introduction of the coconut scraper and betel leaves.

The *kirihoraha* (milk-chatty)* dance has for its object the co-operation of certain ancestral spirits (*Nas Yakku*) in hunting enterprises. The occasion for it is a period of repeated ill luck, which is attributed to the disfavour of these spirits, whose names are, *Kande Yakha*, the great hunter, his brother *Bilinde Yakha* and their wives *Kudu Hora* (nest thief) and *Pol Hora* (coconut thief) respectively; also *Hath-kudu Hora* (seven-nests thief), elder brother of the two she demons. Significant signs in the ceremony are the fine bubbles that form when the coconut milk is handled, and the manner in which the coconut divides; if the halves are equal the omen is good, in unequal, bad.

535
796
[776]
[787]

In a clearing was placed a mortar and on it a bowl containing a coconut with two arrows laid across the brim. Kaurala, the dancer, took care to eat no meat that morning. Having smeared his head with lime-juice and his body with saffron, he would have worn a white cloth borrowed for the purpose, had we not dissuaded him from covering his picturesque nudity, much to the disapproval of the other Veddas who feared the anger of the spirits invoked.

[262]

The dance began quietly enough. Taking up the coconut and an arrow, the performer clasped them together in his hands which he placed now on the shoulder, now on the head, now well before him, as he walked round the mortar chanting a supplication to *Kande Yakha*. Soon he began hopping alternately on each heel, making half-turns with the body so characteristic of Vedda dances, and sweeping his arms semi-circularly. Gradually the monotonous song loudened to the drum-beats, and more and more vigorous became the contortions of the dancer, whose shaggy hair covered his face and whose body streamed with sweat. So he danced for perhaps a half hour, when suddenly he became as one possessed. *Kande Yakha* had "covered" him. Shouting the fearful name he staggered to the mortar and, bending over the bowl, split the coconut in halves. He stood by panting, while the coconut was scraped, the milk prepared, and seven betel leaves were arranged around the sides of the bowl, which was then replaced on the mortar with a single arrow across it. The other arrow, with a betel leaf transfixed in its point, was now in the hands of the dancer who holding it at both ends resumed his movements. *Bilinde Yakha*, the spirit next invoked, soon possessed him. The dance was then continued to each of the other spirits, male and female, in turn. By each of these he was successively possessed. With each possession the strange, wild-eyed figure before us, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, shouted the name of the mastering demon,† and threw lifeless hands on the shoulders of one or other of the onlookers as if for support. Eventually, when the frenzy was at its height, he had just breath enough to gasp out the inspired message that the spirits were propitious and success was assured‡. With his forearm he indicated the length of the quarry's horns and, pointing to the heavens, the favourable time for starting. Then, taking up the two arrows and the bowl containing the two halves of the coconut, the milk and the betel leaves, he danced

*Coconut milk is the juice obtained by squeezing out with water the scraped kernel of the coconut.

†*Pana kiyanawa.*

‡*Hewy galgewara magalak alla thenawa.*

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

535 to all the spirits combined. Suddenly he stooped, twirled the chatty
796 on the ground, and shouting " hooy ", fell swooning into the arms of one who had for some time been waiting to catch him. The dance was over. He was artist enough to impart something of his wild fervour to his spectators.

224 The next day at the appointed hour we set out, the Veddas buoyed up with the certainty of success. We had not gone far when Kaurala, who was leading, suddenly levelled his gun (or rather mine) and fired. A fine buck bounded away.

"Cha", he said, examining the spot where the animal had stood; "now why did that animal not fall? So close too. That was the *kirihoraha* deer right enough; did you not see the horns?" When he discovered that he had fired the barrel containing small shot and not the bullet, he fell to cursing my gun.

782 Should an animal be killed after a *kirihoraha* ceremony an offering of
224 boiled rice, with flesh from the head and chest, is made to the propitious spirits. Of this offering the hunters may themselves partake with a view to continuance of success.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1965 AX5 Vedda AX5

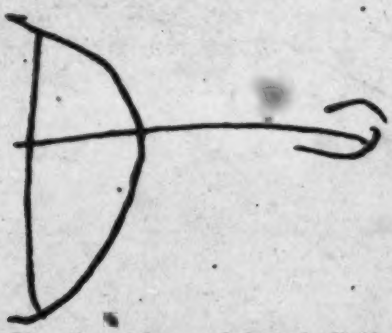
4. VEDDA JUNGLES

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them

ISAIAH.

THE forests we were now in were the immemorial haunts of the Veddas of Bingoda, Galmede and Sittala Wanniya. They stretched from Bingoda to Newaragala, and included such famous Vedda hills as Walimbe (Friar's Hood) and Bandaradua. The Magalavatan Aar cleaves this country on its way to Unichi tank. The jungle is virginal, but one is surprised to find here an occasional guava bearing luscious fruit, and much wild cinnamon. *Palu* and *veera*, so abundant in the more southern forests, is wanting here. 131 [137]

Nowhere is the Vedda more at home than in this wilderness, intersected by game trails only known to him and wild animals, and studded with the rocks that hold his caves. This land is all their wealth. By old Vedda law it is divided into *panguas* or shares, marked off by such natural landmarks as streams, rocks, or conspicuous trees scored with the *dhuna hena* (bow mark) distorted beyond recognition with age. The *panguas* of the Bingoda Veddas are six:—(1) Madana-gama: (2) Marana-pangua: (3) Kumburu-wella-gama (kuda and maha): (4) Bingoda: (5) Kakalana-bokke: (6) Bandaradua. Of these, the first three are included under the name Galmede and are now the property of Suthu Banda; the last three are Kaurala's. Each of these divisions, in days of greater prosperity, had its own chieftain. 423 614



Dhuna-hena or bow mark drawn by Vedda

It is to the credit of these Veddas that they alone of all the Veddas in Ceylon can still name their shares, indicate their boundaries, and observe the traditional law of non-transgression, hunting only in their allotted spheres. Suthu Banda, for instance, would not take the swiftlets' nests on Walimbe because they were Kaurala's by right; nor would he break the hives beyond Newaragala because those lands, once Vedda, have now lapsed to the Sinhalese.

Land goes to the eldest child whether son or daughter; failing them to the nephew. In the old days the proofs of inheritance were a white stone (*kirivanagala*) and molar tooth, bound together with a wisp of human hair; later the *ola* supplanted it; and still later a paper document issued by Government, and so carefully hidden away that it was invariably eaten by termites! These people, it would appear, were wiser than Government in their choice of a seizin. 428

[p. 79]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

423 But what irony is all this talk of chiefs and clans and possessions, where
656 only a mere handful of spiritless people is concerned. The Veddas alone recognise their boundaries, Government does not. Quite rightly they are not permitted to fell their forests without sanction, or to give their lands away; for what would be easier than to cozen such simple folk. These Veddas may cultivate *chenas* with permission from Government but without tax; a privilege they are impotent to avail themselves of, and are still hunters enough to disregard, whether under encouragement or compulsion. "What lands have the Veddas now?" lamented Kaurala. "Our rightful lands! Why should we be deprived of them? The earth of our land is honey to us". And in those words he spoke the doom of his race.

Let us leave the last of the Veddas alone, and not try to fashion them to our ways; for that would kill them the sooner. Let them die out, scattered in their lonely jungles, the hunters they have always been. A few decades hence and the Vedda will be but a name.

651 Not every Vedda is exempt from taxation. I believe those in the Eastern Province are taxed, while those of Uva are not. Why this distinction, it is hard to understand; except for the plea that nowadays it is difficult to say who is a Vedda and who not. But, in cases of doubt, the conditions of life that characterise a particular community should be the criterion that influences the decision, favourably or otherwise. It does seem hard that these poor people, who never handle a single cent from one year's end to another, and have barely a rag with which to cover their nakedness, should have to pay a tax of two rupees with the richest in the land! In default of payment, a penalty of some ten days' work on the roads is imposed; an equitable provision on the face of it; but what of the family with the bread-winner thus engaged? After all, these people only live from day to day; and even sickness very often means starvation.

241 As for *chena* cultivation,* there can be little doubt that it is the one form
311 of agriculture, best suited to the primitive folk of the arid forests; but a
656 serious attempt should be made to better the wasteful methods now in vogue. I remember once travelling through a Province where a progressive, but misguided policy—as applied to these parts—prevailed: *chena* licences had been with-held that year with a view to enforcing paddy cultivation; (in such forests! and among such folk!). The result was disastrous. It was heart-rending to see the starved, emaciated villagers Sinhalese and Veddas alike, digging out wild, unsavoury yams from
261 the baked ground. They would have given their lives for a little *kurrukhan* or maize, which was nowhere to be had.

Chenas represent a very primitive and wasteful form of agriculture. In June of each year an area of jungle is leased by several families. The trees are felled, and burnt two weeks later. The land is then cleared, except for a residue of charred trunks. Temporary huts are suitably disposed, and the whole surrounded by a fence-work of burnt logs, so strong that it must be proof against elephants, so tall that it must top the sambur's leap, so close that it must keep out the hare. By August this work is completed.

In September the crops are sown:—Maize or *iriudu* which takes 4 months, and manioc which takes a year to mature; vegetables such as pumpkins, melons and beans (*pukul*, *wattaka*, *thimbiri*, *kahiri*, *lorma*); yams such as *hukul-alla*, *wal-alla*, *watapol*, *hodel*. In October and November, *kurrukhan*, chillies, green-gram, and perhaps a little paddy is planted.

During February, March, and April the *kurrukhan* and maize crops are harvested—or rather what is left of them when the elephants and drought have had their say

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

In their inhospitable forests, the most wild and arid in the Island, where food is scarce and only attained with great hardship, the Vedda is king. His lifelong apprenticeship to the harsh conditions fits him superbly to the mercile s task. He knows season and place and is sensitive to the slightest clue. How ill-fitted for this life are we of the towns who would starve by a tree with a honey-comb or with a succulent yam under foot. They make us feel like children, in that environment, these admirable Crichtons of the jungle, and our urban refinements as dross compared with their simple skill and hardihood. 311

It is truly a delight to travel with the Vedda and watch his ways. Moving silently, speaking no word except to "hum" an animal call to attract each other's attention, they allow nothing to escape them, and read the ground like a book, indicating spoor where you see nothing. Becoming sceptical of such claims I thought I would test the skill of Suthu Banda, also known as Poromola. Telling him to turn his face away, I tip-toed lightly on the bed of leaf that carpeted our path, and asked him to indicate my foot-prints. 151 224

"Here they are, and here," he said without a moment's hesitation. "Why, it's easy; don't you see the leaves turned?" (I certainly did not, demonstrate as hard as he might). "What is the difficulty for us to see a human foot-print here," he continued, "who have to follow a mouse-deer's trail on ground that shows less than this."

We had halted by a tree of great height and enormous girth, branchless for quite forty feet from the ground—as awkward a proposition for a climber as one could wish. I asked Suthu Banda whether he could climb it. "Why not," he said; and, without so much as putting down the axe hitched to his shoulder, he mounted the rock beside which the tree stood, and looked up a second or two. Then, shinning up an adjacent sapling that shot high, swung on to the slender extremity of the big tree's lowermost branch that sagged under his weight, and moved along with a carelessness painful to watch. He was soon among boughs no bigger than a man's wrist, and from the dizzy height wished to know whether we wanted him to go higher! None of your artificial aids, such as loops, for the Vedda; he is a veritable quadrumana, with feet as prehensile as hands. 481

They have a sure method of killing sambur. In the rainy months, and also, more rarely, in the drought, these animals climb to the tops of solitary hills. The Vedda, always watchful for the opportunity, is quick to detect this by the spoor. Cautiously attaining the summit, one or two of them guard with guns the only path by which the sambur must 224

Yams, chillies and melons survive a few months longer. After one to one and a half years the *chena* is abandoned as worthless, and a fresh acreage leased; for *kurrukkan* especially, is reputed to take such heavy toll of the soil, that this must be allowed to lie fallow for some ten or twelve years before being fit for recultivation! A terrible consumption of forest land results, unless controlled; harmless enough where a few families exist in vast forests; but sadly devastating in places at all populous. [241]

Irrigation, as these people know it, is solely what heaven bestows. Water may lie to hand but is not seriously utilised. A drought brings ruin, and scatters the folk far in quest of food. It is time a more economic system of agriculture was introduced to the Vanni, and the people taught, by the institution of model *chenas*, at least the value of forest leaf mould as a manure, and the advantages of some simple system of irrigation from available streams or wells, such as the Tamils of Jaffna and the Moors of the Eastern Province exploit so well.

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
267 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike
324 its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

257 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his
[482] shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
267 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent
824 to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251 252] little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle like meat.

Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is
222 plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galseembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *katuala*, *hirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261] various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davala* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galseembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up
752 with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapotho*, *anguluo*, *lulo*, *katukanao*, *kanupatho*, *antho* (eels), *maguro*, *hungo*, *kehsliyo*, *pethy*, *walihondo*, *sethalu*; *badapathalo*, *walikairiyo*, *piniwtliyo*, *kovalayo*, *galpandiruo*.

† *Kukurumang-gedde*, *kala-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

757
752
832
276
824

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing hobomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *hansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *nreagalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-hadurugedde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *hirinthea*.

276

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *hansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat.

832
539

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams.

342
[178]
[574]

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho,*" he shouts. "*Kiribala, haria, haria, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho.*" A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them.

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

342 eggs of gekkoes very like candle droppings. A few of the caves have drip ledges (evidence of Sinhalese occupation) which serve to keep them dry: those without this feature are all adrip during the rains and their floors are mossy. Rocky out-crops, large loose stones and, perhaps a white-ant hill or two, divide up the floor space into sections in which the various Vedda families lie grouped, each in its allotted span. Here and there the stony floor is cupped where maize has been pounded, or worn [372] smooth where *kurrukhan* has been rubbed to flour with the flat polished stones that lie about. A fire-place or two, a cooking frame, and dry leaves (*pana*, *pinney dea*, or *kelanea*), the bedding of these people, complete the picture.

Let us take the more important of the caves as we pass them on our way from Bingoda to Newaragala. Like our houses they are all named.

Matigaha galge is a deep roomy grotto formed by a superincumbent rock mass supported slantwise on large flanking boulders. Partially obstructing its entrance, and just within cover of its roof, is a steep rounded stone which one family would occupy silhouetted against a [312] tree-intersected sky. Its only source of water is the Magalavatan Aar a quarter mile away. This disadvantage, and its nearness to the Bingoda homes, accounts for its present disuse. Suthu Banda was born here. Kaurala who had not seen it since his childhood could not help a word of regret on seeing it now after the long years: "Ah!" he sighed. "Is this the old home. No one to inhabit it now."

Galthale galge (Rock-slab cave) owes its name to a slab of rock within it, beneath which one must crawl to gain a gloomy inner compartment. A reedy pool below, and the cyfax, cactus and vines about its mouth give it a touch of wild picturesqueness.

Alu galge (Ash cave), which lies at the base of Newaragala, is less a cave than a passage under an immense boulder spanning two lateral outcrops. It is so well concealed by large stones guarding its mouth that one would not suspect its presence even when standing within a few feet of it. The floor slopes up steeply towards a narrowing exit, and is so bestrewn with rocks as to afford no convenient resting place. Yet, in a cranny here or a basin there, the Veddas contrive to make themselves comfortable, as the withered leaves that have served them as mats testify. A small tripodal frame shows where flesh has been [312] roasted. There is no lack of water here; for not only does a perennial spring lie at its entrance, the resort of innumerable bears during the drought, but in the rainy season a rivulet flows right through the cave.

This cave is a favourite of the Veddas who come here when the jak 222 trees, which grow on the slopes of Newaragala, are in fruit. Then, spending a few days, they feast to surfeiting on the tender fruit, and with their [261] characteristic improvidence carry none away. It was here that Kaurala stayed when he "skinned" Nuwaragala—which was his own beautiful way of saying he had stripped it clean of hives. How secret are the ways of Veddas may be judged from the fact that here was a cave frequented by them without its being known to the Sinhalese who lived six miles away. And we who had once spent a night on Newaragala were ignorant that here below us was a cave used by the very Veddas we yearned to know.

261 But of all the caves I have seen *Dhik galge* was the best. I have already described this cave; it remains for me to add a few vital touches. In

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

front of it is a much chipped *opulu* tree from which the Veddas every now and then renew their chew. Throughout the day the surrounding woods echo to the voices of food-gatherers or the blows of axes, as combs are cut out of hollow trees. At fiful intervals the *kolong koha* (stork-billed king-fisher), lord of the rocky stream, raises a clamorous cry, or the wood-pecker startlingly proclaims to the world that it sees the great she-demon (*maha yakkini*). As evening comes, the *kotaha* (gekko) that shares the cave, drawls in quaint imitation of his name, "ko-tak-ko." The night is ushered in by the solemn notes of the night jar* and bell-like sounds of frogs. The crescent moon shines through the trees, peopling the forest with mysterious shadows. Strange noises are heard around, a breaking branch perhaps, a dropping stone, or an animal's foot-falls. Then the little one creeps to its mother whispering, "Mother, the *hetha*"; and she, fondling, replies, "Yes, it is the *hetha*, child; be still." Now fires are stirred, and the Veddas, couched on leaves, and doubled up under their meagre rags, lie as close to them as they dare. For the caves are cold at night even on the hottest day. And every now and then throughout the dark, one or other of them groans with the chill, gets up, pokes the fire, and snuggles nearer to it. Is it a wonder that ash is the morning mark of the Vedda and *Alu galge* a favourite name of his cave? By six, the morning mists have melted and the cave begins to warm.

*At dusk, and all through the night, Horsfield's night jar gathers into its rich liquid notes the silence and mystery of the forest. There is no jungle, however desolate, in which this ever welcome music is not heard. It is at once the curfew of the jungle, the embodiment of all the stealthy, nocturnal life in it, and the destiny and doom of it.

Pulin-hath-peresa (seven-sons-axe) is the Sinhalese name of the bird in perfect imitation of its cry; and the following story explains it.—A woman once sent her seven sons into the jungle to fell trees. One of the trees falling in their direction, the brothers attempted to shoulder it off and were all killed. The mother, having cooked the evening meal, waited at home for her sons. But as they did not return she went out to look for them, and found them all dead beside the fallen tree. Taking up an axe she killed herself and became this bird; and now from dusk till dawn she cries *pulin-hath-peresa* through the lonesome woods.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
224

An ape for dinner. (Page 82)

342

Alu-gaige, a Vedda cave. (Page 84)

[Facing p. 86]

5. NESTS AND HIVES

This is the time to climb the steep;
Up through the shadowy woods to grope,
Over the stones where the lichens creep,
On to the crag that crowns the slope;
To the wild bees stronghold hushed in sleep.

J. STILL

NESTS

136 222 In dark fearsome caverns, and down the sides of dizzy ravines, the little edible-nest swiftlet builds its dainty nest fashioned of hardened saliva and moss. Those who think they know better will tell you that the all but invisible specks, sometimes seen high away in the empyrean at dusk, are flights of these birds on their way to the sea to gather salt foam with which to build.

222 One of the favourite pursuits of the Veddas is the collecting of these nests for barter. They call the birds *kudukarayas* (nest-makers) and their [439] nesting caves *kudu galges*. These caves are often deep gloomy recesses only entered with lighted candles (made by squeezing a column of bees-[373] wax round a central wick of cloth or bark) to scare away the scores of poisonous snakes (*karawalas* and *mapilas*) that gather there to eat the eggs and young. Sometimes the nests stud the steep sides of narrow [417] gorges, and are then taken by the aid of cane ladders let down from above.

The nesting-places are a secret the Veddas guard closely. When they took me on one of their expeditions it was on the condition that no bearers came. A hard climb brought us to near the summit of the tree-covered mountain side. "*Cho-ho-ho*," shouted the Veddas as a warning to possible bears. The approach to the cave was over-run with *aralu-wel* (used for bows) and *niyande* (of which waist strings are made). The cave itself, surmounted by an enormous rock the fall of which seemed imminent, was dark and stifling; and it was quite a time before one could discern the cup-shaped nests that clung in clusters to the vaulted roof. A Vedda handed me a parent bird he had trapped, a tiny-beaked, brownish thing, with sweeping wings, black feet and unswallow-like tail. It was quite a time too before one realised that there was a commotion in the air, and that little wraith-like forms were flitting in and out in sore distress "Swish, swish; wing, wing; twit, twit; kisiri, bisiri; takara, takara; kata, kata, kata," as from fairy castanets, came the barely audible sounds. Outside, these were louder, "Chara-chiris, chara-chiris; che-week, che-week, che-week," they twittered in futile resentment. But to these sounds the ruthless despoilers were deaf, as, mounted on heaps of stones, they scraped away with knife or arecanut cutter the trim nests from their tenacious attachments, leaving only those with eggs behind, lest the colony be killed outright. On a boulder near by [252] was a fire-place where the young had been roasted, as Kauwa of Divulana had described.

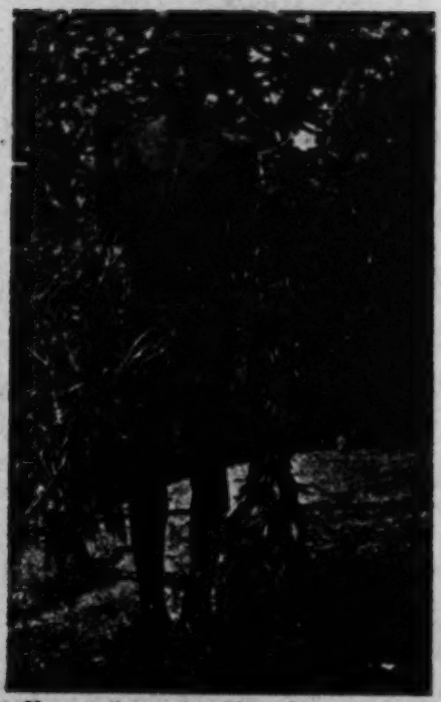
[p. 86]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222
417
481

"Over the edge." (Page 89)

222
373



Honey-gatherer, girt with torches and stake, ready to descend. (Page 89)

[Facing p. 87]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

HIVES

There are five varieties of honey bee in Ceylon :—The large *bambara* (*Apis dorsata*) that builds huge combs of very pure wax on bare hill sides and the large branches of lofty trees ; the *mee massa* (*Apis indica*) sweetest honey bee of all, whose combs are to be found in hollow trees, rock-clefts and within ant-hills ; the *dandual massa* (*Apis florea*), the smallest honey-bee in the world, that hives on rocks and boughs ; the *kanava massa* (Rosin or Dammar bee) a docile, stingless, friendly little creature whose long black combs within tree crevices yield a delicious, if heady, honey ; the *kotha massa*, an even smaller species, whose puny comb is hardly worth the taking. 222 136

Kanava and *kotha* combs are available all the year round ; they are the *pathinchiharayas* or stayers. If the Vedda is hungry it is for one of these he goes at a pinch. The *bambara* and *mee massa*, the most abundant honey makers, are seasonal in their habits ; and June and July are the great honey months ; the fruit season synchronising with this, marks these months as the festive time of the jungle ; then the Veddas leave their homes for caves and stream beds, take their fill, and have a surplus for barter. 222 [439]

On the flavours of honey the Veddas are connoisseurs. They can tell by tasting a comb the flower or medley of flowers that contributed to its making. That honey is relished most which prevails when the *mora*, *veera* and *galseembela* are in bloom. [151 262]

Honey gathering is the master art of the Vedda. Supreme as he is in other jungle crafts, he is supremest in this. As he travels through the forest he is alive to the faintest hum, and no hive, however concealed, escapes him. His adroitness in tracking a bee to its lair is well described in a delightfully euphonious song they have (beginning, *Thomba, thomba Gomba me-na-na*), that tells of a Vedda Thutha who goes on the honey quest with his brothers Gomba and Naga. Thutha leads in the trail of a particular bee ; and as he goes he sings to his brothers, indicating various trees in which bees are busy ; but not decoyed by these, and with his eye steadily on the bee he first sighted, he follows it, till eventually it guides him to its hive within the skull of an elephant—*kolanathe gatche* (tree without leaves) as he quaintly describes. [533]

The taking of any hive, other than that of the rock *bambara*, is a very simple thing for the Vedda. All he does is to climb the tree, steady himself at the hole containing the comb, and blow into it to drive the bees away. Then with his axe he enlarges the opening sufficiently to enable him to introduce a hand and secure the cache, stopping every now and then to blow inside or to slap an offending bee. He eats the comb at his perch, grubs and all, throwing down fragments to those below.

The *bambara* comb is quite a different proposition. These great bees build high on the precipitous sides of rocks ; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only. A dangling cane at Westminster Abbey gave us some idea of the daring of the enterprise. To reach the combs ladders of vines are lowered from the summit of the rock ; and down these the collector descends ; as this does not bring him within arm's length of the hives, he has usually to rely on the use of a long stake. Sometimes [417 481]

5; Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222 the hives are beyond the reach even of this; and then, though the honey itself may not be secured, the wax may, by being dislodged with long bamboos and collected at the foot of the hill; *ili bambara* (wax hives) such combs are called. There are others, so safe under prominent brows, that they are absolutely untakeable; *yakhini baliya* (she-demon's portion) is the name of them.

[417] When the rock is not too high, the ladder is made long enough to reach the ground, where it can be held slantwise close up against the face of the rock, bringing the gatherer within easier access of the hive. But where the hill is too lofty for this, as usually happens, the ladder hangs free, and the gatherer may even have to swing to and fro to enable him to get at the combs. Nor is this all; the *bambaras*, several of which may kill a man, have to be reckoned with; they can only be dispersed by heavy smoking; and, what is worse, when several hives are clustered together in a colony, the work has to be done on a pitch dark night.

Imagine then the picture of the man smothered in smoke, assailed by angry bees, swinging in the darkness two hundred feet or more above the stony earth, with neck and knee hitched to the ladder so as to leave the arms free to manipulate torch and prong. Is it a wonder that every Vedda is not a *kapunharaya* or cutter, but only the boldest of them; and that he, when he descends to his work, does so without thought in his heart of life or father or mother?*

222 417 284 We will now describe the scene as it actually takes place:—On Panihela were five large combs the Veddas meant to have one night. That morning they assembled on the rock. Their first business was to collect the canes and vines that go to the making of the ladder (*yothala*). Two canes, some twenty or thirty feet long and about an inch in diameter, were cut, dragged to the top of the hill, and lined out. Knotting the end of one to a tree they split it in half. One man, standing at the end, held these apart; while two others stood in between, constructing strong rungs at intervals of two feet with *kiriwel* creepers, which they first looped round the two halves of the cane and then bound together with a running twist. A ladder of any length may thus be constructed; for, should a single cane not be long enough, its ends are looped and interlocked with similar loops in another length of split cane. The ladder is finished off by overlapping and binding together the free ends in the form of an U. This is the type of ladder employed in the perilous descents; where the drop is easier they do not go to all this trouble, but merely split the end of the cane for a yard or so and tie a stick across; standing on this the man is lowered.

372 222 The ladder having been completed, the *hullas* or torches and the *matha* or forked stake are yet to make. The torches, four of which are required, are designed to give a maximum of smoke, and are therefore constructed by enclosing dry *mana* grass, leaves and bark within a sheath of green leafy twigs. The *matha* or *masleya* is a stake six feet long, made of the light *velang* or *walumala*; it is pointed at one end and forked at the other by being split cross-wise into four pointed prongs which are kept apart by two pieces of stick wedged in cross-wise and tied. Both *matha* and *hulas* have long loose loops attached to them by which they are slung to the arms when not in use.

* "*Pana epa biyath wala bahinay; emma thatha ehi biyala.*"

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Lastly, there is the *kangotuwa* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakha-hatis* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom. 222 415 776

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuapa**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight. 222 [372]

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *hulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation* to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone. [587] 607 [782]

With smoking *hulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *hulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *hulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives. [412]

---

*"The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

†*Yothinawa* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Haibos, haibos, haibos.
Ma winthagang hetuahas marichas,
Ahi upang nawanthangis mathi halawy,
Mathi wal opahwa thenawa hitiwa,
Hamathayan tanthoon opuwaragana harumahagma.
The hadey yanna, the hadey yanna, the hadey yanna.

8: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222 And as he works he sings the cutter's song* and many a vulgar song besides. For this is the epic event of the Vedda's life, and never is he so happy as when engaged in the perilous work. Wild is the jungle night and the rocks around re-echo to his song.

[533: 152]

[439]

The honey-gatherer at work

When the "devil's mouth" is full, he releases it from the ladder and shouts "*adapo*" (lift) to those above; they pull on the attached rope. With a series of short jerks, the cutter climbing and helping from below, the honey is lifted. As each pull brings the vessel to the level of the cutter's head he calls out "*ho-ho*," and the hauling is stopped; then, climbing a rung or two he gives a helping hand and cries "*adapo*" again. And so, with "*adapo..... ho-ho*" following each other in quick succession, the precious freight is safely hauled over the edge of the cliff. It may be that the cutter has to descend to his work again. With the last load he climbs over the top, a figure to behold—sweating, exhausted, honey-bedaubed, bereft of all the stamina that has sustained him so long. He throws himself down. Nor have all his arts availed him against the bees, for he is covered with stings. Solicitously his wife and a friend or two group round him, and with pitying words pick off the stings. But, impatient of this, he besmears himself with sand that the ants may not worry him, and is soon asleep.

Such is the story behind the potful, of *hambara* honey the Vedda offers for a trifle of grain or a fragment of cloth.

*Bovi, bovi, bovi, bovi,
Bovi, bovi, bovi, bovi.
Ama, ama,
Aramaya, aramaya, aramaya, aramaya,
Thabang bedawage adang padang kathai hayya
Kaale hawale pelang ande hanthalang
Gagang thangewa yanna
Ahatta Vannaya!

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

CHAPTER VII

BINTENNE

THE pass at Kadugannawa was thronged with bartering humanity. Being Sunday, it was market day, and the occasion served well to help us lay in a good stock of tobacco and betel, the best passport to the wild interior.

On through Teldeniya, whose cocoa plantations teem with snails that straggle over the road to explode under our car-wheels, and then, after Urugalla, we climb the Nugatenne gap and, skirting the Dumbara valley, attain beautiful wind-swept Madugoda. So far among the hills. From here it is a sudden drop to the Mahaweli and the wilderness beyond. We have left Madugoda but a little way when, at a turn, there suddenly opens before us a magic sea of misty greenery broken by hill ranges; there stand many blue mountains we know, Kokagalla, the dancing rock of the Veddas, and Friar's Hood faint and far; and there gleam a river and a tank; the former the Mahaweli, the latter placid Horabora Wewa traditional lake of Vedda lands.

The descent from the hills here is perhaps the most precipitous in all Ceylon; we drop some two thousand feet, and negotiate eighteen elbow bends within four miles; then, skirting the base of the mountain we come to the ferry of Weragantota and cross the Mahaweli in canoes to Alutnuwara, a fever-stricken place; whoever sojourns here even a few days invariably pays the penalty.

A quaint old town is Alutnuwara, or Bintenne as the jungle dwellers call it. Cosy homes and boutiques nestle under shady trees. Chained monkeys and caged parrots are ubiquitous and may be purchased for a song. Laden *tavalam* teams rest here on their way to the interior. It being April, every tree has its nesting bird—bee-catchers, bulbuls, drongos, coppersmiths and all the rest of them; hungry little squirrels cheep spasmodically for food; song fills the air.

Scattered about the place one is surprised to find old cannon. Those who see them for the first time frame visions of an era when ancient Sinhalese kings built these in foundries, and fed them with powder made from sulphur and nitre available in the neighbouring hills. But we may safely assume that firearms were unknown in Ceylon prior to the coming of the Portuguese. What then is the story of these brave things that lie in a ditch here, set off a doorway there? They were brought here, according to some, from the East coast by the English in their attempts to take Kandy; but finding the mountain barrier impassable they abandoned them here. The more likely explanation, however, is that they are a survival of the time when Alutnuwara was a military station after the Kandyan rebellion of 1817, "the last great occasion on which the English forces were arrayed in hostility against the natives of any portion of Ceylon."* To prevent a repetition of rebellion, a

*EMERSON TENNENT.

1

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda

Sinhalese AX4

S
174
351
411

Cannon cave—gate-posts now. (Page 91)

S
178

Maháyanguwa-dagoba. (Page 91)

[facing p. 92]

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda
Sinhalese AX4

174 Negro detachment under an English subaltern is said to have been posted at Alutnuwara. It was not long before the subaltern died. The remnant of soldiery, now leaderless, took the law into their own hands and terrorised the district. Housed in their barracks, which stood on the old hospital premises, they molested women on their way to and from the river. Eventually the villagers surrounded them and forced them to a surrender, the terms of which, everything considered, were not unfavourable to the Negroes; for they were allowed to settle peaceably in a village on the opposite bank of the river, where, to this day, the people are said to speak with a drawl reminiscent of certain African tribes.*

718 788 Alutnuwara is by no means the insignificant place it would appear on a casual visit. It is a very ancient and sacred town; and, at one season of the year, is the goal of multitudes of pilgrims who come thither on foot from all parts of Ceylon, descending the flanking hill—Galpadihela—, not by the present motorable road, but by the steep pilgrim path paved with two thousand steps of stone. The little dagaba here, the Mahayangana, now in ruins, is said not only to be the oldest in Ceylon, but also 173 to mark the very site where Buddha sat when he first came to the Island 773 and preached to his followers, having driven away the Yakkhas as the original inhabitants were called.

Thus the Mahawansa†:—

"The Conqueror‡ in the ninth month of his Buddhahood himself set forth for the isle of Lanka (Ceylon) to win Lanka for the faith. For Lanka was known to the Conqueror as a place where his doctrine should shine in glory; and from Lanka filled with Yakkhas, the Yakkhas must be driven forth.

And he knew also that in the midst of Lanka, on the fair river bank, in the delightful Mahanaga garden, the meeting place for the Yakkhas, there was a great gathering of all the Yakkhas dwelling in the island. To this great gathering went the Blessed One and there, hovering in the air over their heads, at the place of future Mahiyangana-thupa, he struck terror to their hearts by rain, storm, darkness and so forth. The Yakkhas, overwhelmed by fear, besought the fearless Vanquisher to release them from terrors, and the Vanquisher spoke thus to the terrified Yakkhas: 'I will banish this your fear and your distress, O Yakkhas, give ye here to me with one accord a place where I may sit down.' The Yakkhas thus answered the Blessed One: 'We all, O Lord, give you the whole of our island. Give us release from our fear.' Then, when he had destroyed their terror, and had spread his rug of skin on the ground that they bestowed on him, the Conqueror, sitting there, made the rug to spread wide while burning flame surrounded it. Daunted by the burning heat thereof

*I am indebted to Dr. A. Nell for this information.

†Ancient Ceylonese chronicle, of the trustworthiness of which Geiger the translator says, "The presentation of the subject, taken as a whole, may be called modest and simple, indeed dry. True there is no lack of fables and marvellous tales. But they appear as outward decoration which can easily be omitted. The ornament with which tradition decks out the victory of the true faith enfolds a deeper meaning. The facts in themselves are extraordinarily simple; but to the pious sentiment of the believer they seemed great; and fantasy glorifies them with the many coloured lights of miracle and legend."

Professor Rhys Davis lays stress on the fact that these chronicles contain no pure history, but represent the traditions of their time.

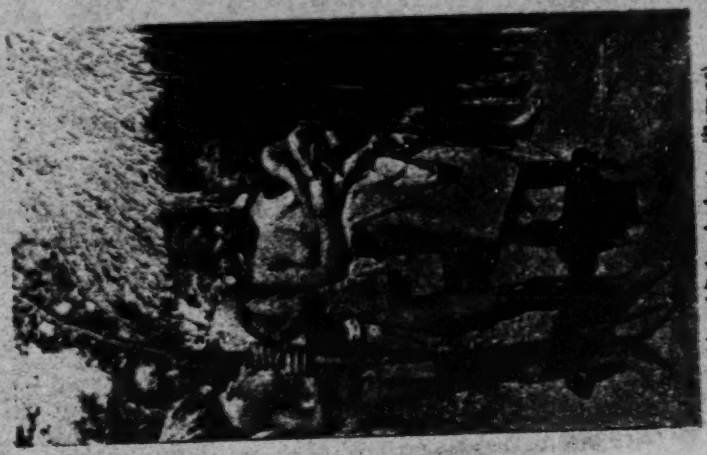
‡Buddha, born 563 B.C., died 483 B.C., lived 80 years.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

342
516
854

Veddas of Bahugahadena. (Page 93)

[411]



Veddas of Bahugahadena. (Page 93)

[Facing p. 93]

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

and terrified they stood around the border. Then did the Saviour cause the pleasant Giridipa (Highlands) to come here near to them, and when they had settled there, he made it return to its former place. Then did the Saviour fold his rug of skin; the devas assembled, and in their assembly the Master preached them the doctrine. The conversion of many kotis of living beings took place and countless were those who came into the precepts of duty. The prince of the devas craved of him something to worship. The Conqueror, who had pure and blue black locks, passing his hand over his head, bestowed on him a handful of hairs. And he, receiving this in a splendid golden urn, when he had laid the hairs on a heap of many coloured gems, seven cubits round, piled up at the place where the Master had sat, covered them over with the thupa of sapphire and worshipped them. S 173 773

"When Sambuddha had died, the thera Sarabhu, by his miraculous power, received, even from the funeral pyre, the collar bone of the Conqueror and brought it to Lanka and laid it in that same cetiya.

"The king Dutthagamini, dwelling there while he made war upon the Damilas (Tamils) built a mantle cetiya over it eighty cubits high. Thus was the Mahiyangana-thupa completed." S [778]

Barely four miles from Alutnuwara is the beautiful tank of Horabora Wewa whose vast waters have been cunningly trapped by a great earth work or bund, amidst a natural barrier of surrounding hills. As one sits here of an evening and looks across with field-glasses to the wilder opposite shore, small herds of deer may be seen feeding on the grassy edge between forest and lake; and in the drought, herds of elephants come to the water. White cranes fly overhead to roost on the bordering trees at dusk. Placed as it is in the heart of the Vedda country, this tank has long been associated with the Veddas. To-day only a few very destitute families of half-Veddas are to be found at Malgoda on the borders of the tank, living in the crudest of shelters, and feeding for the most part on the seeds of lotus pods (*olu*). V 136 312 V 361 262

By an ancient sluice cut out of stone,* the tank-water is conducted along a channel to a wide stretch of paddy fields, now mostly in disuse owing to the paucity of the population. This brimming waterway, its grassy banks studded with beautiful trees, affords many a delightful picture, especially where the lotus thrives with its large, snow-white blossoms and no less beautiful leaves be-diamonded with sparkling droplets of water. Here halcyons fish all day. Up to recent years the tank itself was covered with lotus; but now, for some reason or other, there is none; and when no breeze stirs the glassy waters at midday, they reflect an ever changing panorama of dazzling clouds only broken where a darter or cormorant gambols. S V 312 [773]

It is not surprising that so beautiful a tank should have inspired a fine poem, of which I have attempted a poor translation that does scant justice to the euphonious idioms, the long vowel cadences, the alliterations, and rhymes of the Sinhalese original. S 538

*Tradition has it that two giants (*yodheyas*) sat here on opposite sides of a crack in the great rock, and each, seizing that part on which he was seated with his hands, and thrusting with his feet against the other, wrenched the rocks apart, making an outlet for the water!

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
516
854

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

142
291
351

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

[Facing p. 94]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

S 538 Wild are the wastes that surround Sorabora Wewa. Through a channel of cut stones her waters feed the fields. To the temple of Bintenne her lotus blooms are borne. Eyes that have not beheld her, can they worship truly?

On Na-nithule trees the white cranes brood in sleep: their bills not with silver but rich gold gleaming; their plumes, though not gay with colour, are bright with a satin sheen. The cranes of Sorabora that move in the sedge.

In Sorabora Wewa fine *olu** clusters grow. To gather these come women fair and lovely. They will roast them red and black and set them before us; but, alas! to eat with the *olu* rice, we have no meat.

Deep under the water the good yams lie; on the surface above, the leaves swing lightly round. The flowers unfold to the dew and the rain—pearl-studded shades for the fishes below.

S 173 773 The dagaba, the tank and the pilgrim path are associated in legend:—Dutthagamani (101—77 B.C.), the most renowned of Sinhalese kings, lived at one time at Mahanuwara, as Alutnuwara was then called†. Being as devout as he was brave, he set about to complete the Mahiyangana-thupa or dagaba. In those days there were giants or *yodhayas*; and Dutthagamani had under him one conspicuous *yodhaya* named Bullatha whose daily duty it was to milk a cow at Kiripatiya across the mountains, and to make for the king thirty chews of betel, one for each hour of the Sinhalese day. In addition to these appointed tasks, he contrived to carry out clandestinely two other works which were to win him great merit and incidentally death. For, on his way back from Kiripatiya, laden with milk for the king, he brought each day a great stone which he laid down on the steep mountain side, and so constructed the steps (*gal-padi*) of the pilgrim path; hence is the hill called Galpadihela. He also found time to pile up the great bund of Horabora Wewa, digging up a few shovelfuls of earth each day. The work being completed he threw his spade into the tank.

Works of this magnitude could not long be kept secret; and soon it reached the ears of the king that his *yodhaya* had constructed a vast tank. Dutthagamani, who in the meanwhile had completed the Mahiyangana dagaba, visited Horabora Wewa, and when he saw it, recognised at once that here was the more virtuous accomplishment, being a greater boon to the poor people.

"Give me," he said to the *yodhaya*, "the merit that is yours for the building of this tank; and I will give you that which is mine for restoring the dagaba."

Bullatha refused. He was killed and his body thrown into the tank. Then the waters blossomed; from his head sprang the *olu* (head) flowers, from his eyes the lotus fruit, and from his limbs the lotus stalks.

V 131 Bintenne, as all this country is called, has always been the home of Veddas. "Worse than a Vedda of Bintenne," is a term of opprobrium common even to-day. Were the present Veddas of Bintenne any wilder than those we had already seen? We suspected, not; for a glance at the map showed this country to be better supplied with bridle-paths than most of the jungles we had already explored.

We had not gone many miles from Alutnuwara before our eyes convinced us that even among those avowedly Sinhalese there was much

**Nymphæa lotus* or water lily; the roots, stalks, yams, fruit, and seeds are all eaten. And so are those of the large-flowered lotus *Nelumbium speciosum*—sacred bean.

†The present rest-house is said to mark the site of his palace.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
411
415
482

The finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. (Page 95)

[facing p. 95]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were 131
unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously.

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these 101
parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow [301]
stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was [157]
the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne.

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found [361]
the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were appar- [626
ently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very 152]
jealous of their women.

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each 576
hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to [41]
know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine.

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for 342
Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukkan* [241]
and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community.

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the 101
same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a 361
rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit!

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never 161
before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by 177
their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting.

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, 224
better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224 a bear-bite, came one afternoon with two dogs and suggested a monitor hunt.

After having walked aimlessly through the jungle for the better part of an hour, we got impatient, and asked the Veddas what manner of hunt was this, and of what breed were their useless mongrels? They replied, and with justice, that the jungle was none of their choosing, and that there were no goas about for their dogs to scent them, as any one could see from the lack of traces. Once within the jungle, we had expected the dogs to shake off their lethargy and nose about at every scent. Not so these beasts, they hung on the heels of their masters, the least enthusiastic of the company. However, our remarks put the men on their mettle and, walking ahead, they tried to set their dogs to; one of them actually whistling and snapping his fingers after the manner of us in towns!

We had given up all hope of even seeing a monitor when suddenly there was a rustle in front of us, and a Vedda and his dog shot forward. We followed to find the Vedda gazing helplessly at a hole high up in the trunk of a tall tree, and his cur, its enthusiasm already wilted, lying contentedly with closed eyes, as if nothing was further from his thoughts than lizards in general and this one in particular.

224 313 The tree up which the reptile had sought refuge was quite four feet in diameter. The Vedda was not long in doubt as to how he should act. Walking round the tree he tapped it with the head of his axe, and, finding it reasonably hollow, what should he do but proceed to fell it with that toy axe of his the cutting edge of which was no more than one and a half inches! So astonished were we at this that we settled down to a smoke, and watched.

After almost two hours of arduous toil, the great tree groaned and bore slowly down through thwarting lianas and the boughs of its huddled neighbours. It hesitated in its fall and then, despite ominous cracklings, remained poised aslant. A half hour more, and a supporting tree of no small girth was sacrificed with many an obscene curse; then another, and another tree; and finally the giant fell.

But what of the monitor? There was not the least sign of him. The dogs, roused to expectation by the falling tree, had already resumed their repose. The Veddas, to their chagrin, discovered by tapping the trunk that its whole length was hollow. They hewed an opening into it some feet away from the entrance hole; and then with long sticks vainly tried to poke the reptile out. Two more windows were made, and much more progging done before, with the onset of dark, the project was abandoned as hopeless. "Why not have smoked the animal out?" you will ask; we did suggest it, only to learn that, while it would answer for the pangolin, it was useless for the monitor which tenacious creature will rather die suffocated in its lair than emerge to fall a victim to axe or canine jaw. That little beast certainly had the laugh of us!

This incident demonstrates well how wasteful of forest vegetation Veddas are. Often one sees great trees—even satin or ebony—felled across the path, only to find on inspecting them that they were sacrificed for a parrot's nest or a honey-comb! Be the crime what it may in the eyes of the law, it required a demonstration such as this to inspire us with respect for the toy-like axe the Vedda carries on his shoulder, and the stamina of his stringy arm.

[pp. 97-110 not processed]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann 2-3 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

PREFACE

THE Veddas have been regarded as one of the most primitive of existing races, and it has long been felt desirable that their social life and religious ideas should be investigated as thoroughly as possible. The welcome opportunity of conducting this research was afforded me on the initiative of Dr A.C. Haddon, who suggested to the Honourable Mr John Ferguson and Dr Arthur Willey that it was desirable that the Ceylon Government should continue its enlightened policy of studying the anthropology, archaeology and history of Ceylon and its peoples. This proposal received the warmest support of the Governor, Sir Henry Blake, G.C.M.G., and his successor the present Governor, His Excellency Sir Henry E. McCallum, G.C.M.G., A.D.C., of the Colonial Secretary and of the other members of the Legislative Council who made a liberal grant covering the expenses of the expedition in the field.

Not only was the work urgently needed on account of its scientific importance, but it was known that the Veddas were a numerically small people verging on extinction, and so affected by contact with Tamils and Sinhalese that if they were not studied promptly there was every possibility that it would soon be too late to study them at all; indeed, with all my efforts I was able to meet only four families, and hear of two more, who I believe had never practised cultivation. Pure-blooded Veddas are not quite so rare as this statement implies. The Danigala community, the best known "wild" Veddas of Ceylon, are still reasonably pure-blooded, though they have adopted many Sinhalese habits, including cultivation, and have assumed the rôle of professional primitive man. They are commonly fetched to be interviewed by travellers at the nearest rest house, where they appear clad only in the traditional scanty Vedda garment, whereas, when not on show, they dress very much as the neighbouring peasant Sinhalese.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

for leisure enables me to follow the suggestion of a friend, and to endeavour to arrange the materials which I collected with so much care and labour. 117

At a time when the investigation of the origin of uncivilised races is attracting so much attention in England, I trust that the results of my inquiries and observations may not be considered devoid of interest; and, in this hope, I venture to present them, such as they are, to the Ethnological Society. 121

The following sketch of the Veddahs is the result of personal and often-repeated investigation among the people themselves: it is founded only on direct evidence; I have admitted nothing on hearsay. Indeed, so difficult is it to elicit anything from people in such a state of barbarism, that I have accepted even the most direct testimony with caution and have only adopted it after careful cross-examination had satisfied me of its trustworthiness. I have tested again and again the truth of every statement I have made, sometimes reluctantly abandoning a link here and there which would have made my case more complete, only from a *doubt* of the perfect accuracy of my information.* 124 114

The facts I state are, so far as I can judge, beyond dispute, if honest and patient inquiry be of any value. The deductions I draw from them are my own, and must go for what they are worth. 114

I limit my observations to the wildest tribes, for it is amongst

* It may be said that it is a work of mere supererogation, if not presumption, on my part, to attempt to describe the Veddahs, seeing that Sir J. E. Tennent has so recently devoted several chapters of his work on Ceylon to this subject. But, interesting as these chapters are—perhaps the most interesting in the book—they contain little else than a comparison of the habits of the people of the island, as observed by the ancient voyagers in the fourth and fifth centuries, with the traditional but now long-exploded customs of the Veddahs as reported by Knox. The accomplished author throws no new light on the wild tribes of the Veddahs as they are. On the contrary, his account of them is in some important particulars defective, and even inaccurate. He glances casually at those tribes which are in the wildest state, touching with precision none of their peculiarities, and dwells in detail upon those only which, from long association with the Singalese and Tamil races, have lost much of their originality. Of the ancient aborigines he has compiled much that is curious. Of the existing Veddahs he has given us little besides an epitome of former notices.

An account of the aboriginal races of Ceylon, published under the authority of a late colonial secretary of the island, would naturally be accepted and quoted as accurate and authentic. Sir J. E. Tennent's chapters on the Veddahs, therefore, render it more incumbent on me to lay before the Society the results of my own inquiries. For, though the habits and customs of wild tribes are important aids in determining their origin, a description of them is worse than useless, unless it be made by a person competent of his own knowledge to describe them. I pretend to no competency beyond this.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

177 bours' language, customs, and manner of life. In a few of the
184 remoter forest fastnesses of the interior there are still to be found more or less pure-blooded Veddas who continue to support life
144 by the precarious *chena* cultivation and by hunting: but in addition to these pure-blooded Veddas, who are a very feeble folk indeed in point of numbers, the inhabitants of many of what are generally recognized as Sinhalese villages, and the so-called "coast Veddas," who have their settlements in a few places along the eastern coast to the north of Batticaloa, are to a greater
114 or less extent of Vedda origin. The Veddas as a race have been visited and described by C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann [1] and more recently by Dr. R. L. Spittel [2] of Colombo. Of the coast Veddas the Seligmanns say,—"although these coast Veddas, or Verdas
114 as they call themselves, have intermarried with the Tamils and
796 have adopted many Tamil customs, they still have remains of the old clan system of the Veddas, and although they usually speak Tamil, the majority of them say they have a language of their own which they consider to be the old Vedda language, and which was found to be Sinhalese. They have roughly-built temples, and we were told independently in two settlements that the chief agency worshipped was called Kapalpe or Kabalpe, *i.e.*, "ship spirit." At first we feared some misunderstanding, but when one of us was shown within one of their temples, into which after some trouble he was allowed to penetrate, a small model of a ship partly square rigged was seen, and it was stated that at a
796 special ceremony this was hoisted to the top of a pole some thirty feet tall which stood outside the temple." [3] The ceremony to be described in what follows appears to be in fact that conducted for the propitiation of this "ship spirit" and of the goddess Ammal, and, if so, it is that which the Seligmanns saw rehearsed, in part
121 at any rate, at Vakarai.[4] The description, therefore, imperfect
796 and perhaps inaccurate in some details as it may be, being

[1] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *The Veddas*. See also *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 155 *et seq.*

[2] R. L. Spittel, *Wild Ceylon*.

[3] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 156, 157.

[4] *The Veddas*, pp. 335-9.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

written from memory aided by not very adequate notes made shortly after the ceremony, helps to fill up a lacuna in the hitherto published records of Vedda customs and ritual. 121 796

In June of 1925 I was engaged, as a junior administrative officer, in dealing with an outbreak of cholera among the Muslim tobacco cultivators in the neighbourhood of a remote coast Vedda village, about forty-four miles north of Batticaloa on the Batticaloa-Trincomalee coast road. Investigation by the medical officer with whom I was associated soon revealed the fact that the focus of the infection was a yet more remote inland district lying behind that part of the coast, and that to grapple effectively with the disease it would be necessary to evacuate the population of that area and to concentrate it, for the treatment of the actually sick and for the segregation of the "contacts," in the comparatively accessible locality where we had already established ourselves, not far from the spot where the first cases to be brought to our notice had occurred. I therefore found myself obliged, at short notice, to enlarge the camp of which I had already begun the construction, and in particular to begin the building of a new hospital hut on a more grandiose scale than that originally contemplated. For the work of construction, which consisted of the erection of a framework of jungle sticks and the covering of it with *cadjans*,—dried and plaited palm branches,—according to the familiar village method, it was necessary to enlist the services of the coast Veddas of the adjoining settlement. The villagers were naturally reluctant to engage in work which they not unreasonably supposed would expose them to the infection, and it called for much tact and persuasiveness on the part of the Chief Headman of the *pattu* to get them to do so. Fully realizing that, apart from all other considerations, the occurrence of even one case of cholera among them would effectively put a stop to all co-operation, the Chief Headman and I took, successfully as the event showed, every possible precaution to prevent such a catastrophe. Everything seemed to be going on without let or hindrance when the Chief Headman upset my calculations by announcing that the work must cease for twelve hours on the 8th of June, to enable the villagers to perform a ceremony in honour of the *Periya Devi* 123 [131 361] [796 776]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 . AX5 Vedda AX5

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THERE is little of hunting in these pages, much of the forest-folk and their ways. I have purposely refrained, except in one section, from introducing incidents of sport—of which, truth to tell, I have had small share—into a narrative primarily designed to describe the more human and homely aspects of jungle life, especially where as it concerns the Veddas—the last remnant of Ceylon's aboriginal race. 121

Regarding the origin of the Veddas, I incline to the view that they are an off-shoot of one of the wild, autochthonous tribes of India, who crossed over to Ceylon, in prehistoric times, when the two lands were one, and subsequently got cut off by the inroad of the sea. They appear to be very akin to the Gonds of India. Indeed, the description of a present day Gond might just as well apply to the Vedda :—" A man of small sturdy build, with piercing eyes and a free athletic carriage..... axe hitched on shoulder, bow and arrows in hand ".* 174 [142]

I must acknowledge help I have received from many friends. Apart from those to whom reference is made in foot-notes in the text I am indebted to Mr. F. Lewis for much valuable advice in the planning of some of our journeys ; to him and Mr. C. Drieberg I owe the botanical names of trees. Three of the trips described here were made in the company of Mr. Leigh Smith, to whom, I take this opportunity, of expressing my gratitude for much valuable help in the preparation of my manuscript for the press. 000

The pen and ink illustrations are by Mr. E. F. Van Dort.

Colombo

R. L. SPITTEL

[p. v]
[p. vi is blank]

* " Rifle and Romance in the Indian Jungle ", by A. I. R. Glasfurd

PREFACE

THE Veddas have been regarded as one of the most primitive of existing races, and it has long been felt desirable that their social life and religious ideas should be investigated as thoroughly as possible. The welcome opportunity of conducting this research was afforded me on the initiative of Dr A.C. Haddon, who suggested to the Honourable Mr John Ferguson and Dr Arthur Willey that it was desirable that the Ceylon Government should continue its enlightened policy of studying the anthropology, archaeology and history of Ceylon and its peoples. This proposal received the warmest support of the Governor, Sir Henry Blake, G.C.M.G., and his successor the present Governor, His Excellency Sir Henry E. McCallum, G.C.M.G., A.D.C., of the Colonial Secretary and of the other members of the Legislative Council who made a liberal grant covering the expenses of the expedition in the field. |2| |2|

Not only was the work urgently needed on account of its scientific importance, but it was known that the Veddas were a numerically small people verging on extinction, and so affected by contact with Tamils and Sinhalese that if they were not studied promptly there was every possibility that it would soon be too late to study them at all; indeed, with all my efforts I was able to meet only four families, and hear of two more, who I believe had never practised cultivation. Pure-blooded Veddas are not quite so rare as this statement implies. The Danigala community, the best known "wild" Veddas of Ceylon, are still reasonably pure-blooded, though they have adopted many Sinhalese habits, including cultivation, and have assumed the rôle of professional primitive man. They are commonly fetched to be interviewed by travellers at the nearest rest house, where they appear clad only in the traditional scanty Vedda garment, whereas, when not on show, they dress very much as the neighbouring peasant Sinhalese. |6| |177|

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

123 126 In spite of the decay into which the Vedda social fabric has fallen, I believe that the expedition may be considered to have achieved a considerable measure of success, since it has brought to light a number of facts hitherto unknown. This result is largely due to my wife, for I feel convinced that the measure of success attained in gaining the confidence of these shy and extremely jealous people was entirely due to her presence and assistance. Not only would it have been impossible otherwise to obtain certain important results in special departments, as for instance the phonograph records of lullabies, but I should never have had the opportunity of studying Vedda family life with the degree of intimacy which her presence made possible. It must not however be thought that the assistance she rendered was of the somewhat passive kind which the presence of any sympathetic woman would have given. Indeed, the opposite was the case, for, with a single exception, the ceremonial dances described in Chapter IX were recorded by Mrs Seligmann, while I devoted the whole of my attention to obtaining a reasonably complete series of photographs. So fully did she share in the work in this and many other ways that when working up our results I found that my original idea of a volume containing a number of jointly written chapters by no means did justice to her work, and her name therefore appears as that of joint author of this book.

126 With regard to the dances photographed, those witnessed at Sitalá Wanniya and Bandaraduwa were performed in the depth of the jungle under circumstances which necessitated under-exposure in spite of the use of the most rapid plates. Hence a number of the photographs reproduced in Chapter IX have been more or less "faked," the detail being painted in on bromide prints and fresh negatives prepared. Probably no one will have any difficulty in recognising the photographs which have been treated in this way, but in order to avoid any possibility of a mistake those plates which have been touched up are indicated by an asterisk.

000 The translations and transliterations of the charms in Chapter VIII and the invocations in Chapter X have been prepared by Mr. Henry Parker, late Assistant Director of the Ceylon Irrigation Department, who has also read through and

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

231 custom of the country and also selling those they have bred themselves. However, all this was unknown to us when we first met the people, nor would it have been possible to guess their prosperous condition from the first sight of their settlement. 123 It was well known throughout the Vedirata that investigations were about to be made among the Veddas, and all the village headmen had been given instructions to render assistance. They therefore told the Veddas to expect us, and would have sent for them to come to the Public Works Department bungalow on our arrival had we not expressly stated that we preferred to visit the people in their homes. A very rough track led to the top of 361 the Danigala Hill, about 1200 feet high, where, on a rounded 342 shoulder of rock, stood the skeleton hut of the Danigala Veddas shown in Plate II. This was built on the pattern of the ordinary village Vedda habitations but entirely lacked the slats of bark which make the sides moderately weather proof. By its side was an even rougher shelter consisting of a large bough with the smaller branches trimmed and overlaid with banana leaves. Kaira the patriarch or "senior" of the group sat outside the hut with three other men; there were also present three women, a boy of about 12, and two younger children, and although both of the latter had many teeth they suckled persistently. This hut and some of its occupants are shown in Plate II, the rough shelter by its side in Plate XI, figure 1.

609 Although Mr Bibile, whom all these people knew quite well, 123 was with us, they were quite apathetic, their attitude was clearly not the result of shyness, but simply due to the fact that they took no interest in our presence; the women continued to suckle their infants and the men squatted or lay upon the rocks and chewed in gloomy silence, and when addressed they grunted "yes" or "no." One of the infants who smiled and cooed and tried to gain our attention was the only member of the group who seemed to take the least notice of us. Kaira told us that the people we now saw represented all that remained of the Danigala Veddas. We noticed some bananas (which do not grow wild in Ceylon) on the further side of the ridge and we asked to see their plantation. A prompt denial of its existence was the result, though Kaira afterwards told Mr Bibile that he

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

would show him his chena but that he did not wish the white people to know anything about it. Further talk with these people showed that it was impossible to obtain reliable information from them, they had been utterly spoilt as the result of being frequently interviewed by travellers. 609 123

The Veddas have long been regarded as a curiosity in Ceylon and excite almost as much interest as the ruined cities, hence Europeans go to the nearest Rest House on the main road and have the Danigala Veddas brought to them. Naturally the Veddas felt uncomfortable and shy at first, but when they found that they had only to look gruff and grunt replies in order to receive presents they were quite clever enough to keep up the pose. In this they were aided by the always agreeable villagers ever ready to give the white man exactly what he wanted. The white man appeared to be immensely anxious to see a true Vedda, a wild man of the woods, clad only in a scanty loin cloth, carrying his bow and arrows on which he depended for his subsistence, simple and untrained, indeed, little removed from the very animals he hunted. What more easy than to produce him! The Nilgala headman sends word when strangers are expected, then the Veddas repair to their very striking hut on the rock dome and often post a look-out on a big rock about half way up, for on our second visit the leading man of our party who was carrying the camera stated that he saw a Vedda bolting from this rock as we came up. These folk, who when we saw them [291] wore their Vedda loin cloths and were smeared with ashes, are reported to wear ordinary Sinhalese clothes when not in their professional pose, and Mr Bibile, who has himself seen one or more of them in sarongs, points out that the imposture is kept up for two main reasons; firstly, they fear that their cultivation might be stopped (evidently an echo of the chena difficulty of the Eastern Province), or that they might be taxed if they did not appear to be poor fellows living on hardly won jungle produce; secondly, their pose of poverty interests strangers and procures them visitors, whose generosity is the greater the more primitive their mode of life appears to be.

As a matter of fact the Danigala Veddas like those of 231
Henebedda (with whom we became really friendly) keep cattle

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *hodri*, *tiru* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure i) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *maraga* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *maraga* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Arachi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

temperament. Travellers have called the Vedda morose, and stated that he never laughs; this belief has doubtless been strengthened by the disagreeable behaviour of the "show" Veddas (see p. 50), yet Veddas have told us how they throw leaves in the air and laugh and dance for joy. Nevill was certainly right when he said, "They are a merry people, delighting in riddles, songs and jests. Mr Hartshorn observed some Vaeddas who never laughed in his presence. They must have been either terrified, or sulky and offended, for those I have seen, of all clans, laugh often and merrily, a habit very strongly contrasted with that of the Sinhalese, who scarcely ever go beyond a smile. They burst into a verse of song, now and again, apparently from sheer exuberance of spirits, and any ludicrous incident amuses them[1]."

At Bendiyagalge we were particularly well situated to observe their behaviour, our camp being out of sight of the Vedda cave but within 200 yards of it, here we could listen to their unrestrained chatter and laughter which was especially noticeable at sunset. It is true that their faces express no emotion of pleasure or gratitude when they are given exactly what they expect. Thus, white cloth, which the men like to wear, is well known to them, they buy it themselves from the Moormen pedlars, it is the usual present for a European to make to Veddas, and they receive it with perfectly stolid faces, and are hence dubbed sullen. We had an excellent example of this at Henebedda when we gave a piece of white cloth to Poromala the senior of the group, whom we knew well and who had frequently smiled and laughed in our presence. When, however, a sharp pruning knife was given him his face beamed like a schoolboy's, he ran his thumb along the blade and tried its edge on pieces of grass. Things new to them which we showed

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 192. Veddas often dance for a few moments when pleased, thus a Henebedda Vedda on being given a piece of sacking to cover himself with after complaining of cold, immediately held it over his head, bowed his body forward and went through a few dance steps, singing the while. On another occasion this man and three companions (all young men) began to dance spontaneously. This was about 9 p.m. one night in the courtyard of the Ambilinne Rest House, where they had visited us, their sense of well-being in this case may have been stimulated by a liberal feed of curry and rice which had been given them, but we do not think they danced in payment for this.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

XXVI.—*An Account of the Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon: their Habits, Customs, and Superstitions.* By JOHN BAILEY, B.A., Oxon., Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary of Ceylon.

114 "WE shall, in this part, speak of the inhabitants of this Country, with their Religion, and Customs, and other things belonging to them. Of these Natives there be too Sorts—Wild and Tame. I will begin with the former. For, as in these Woods, there are Wild Beasts, so Wild Men also."*

So wrote, nearly two hundred years ago, that truthful old chronicler Robert Knox; and, though he praises God he never saw one of these "wild men," he proceeds, nevertheless, to give us in a couple of pages, by far the best sketch of the Veddahs that has yet appeared, notwithstanding the multitude of pens that have been employed since his time, on Ceylon.

Early in 1854, I was appointed to the charge of the extensive district of Badulla, which comprises, besides the ancient Kandyan province of Ouvah, that portion of the island where the most barbarous Veddah tribes are found. My tastes led me to take every opportunity of studying their habits and customs. My [123] official position gave me the greatest possible facilities for prosecuting my inquiries.

I accumulated much information that was both curious and valuable, but my official duties prevented me from shaping my rough notes into a readable form. For years, my papers lay in my desk, half forgotten, and it is only now that a little unlooked

---

* An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon, in the East Indies, etc., by Robert Knox, a Captive there near twenty years, folio, London, 1681.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

written from memory aided by not very adequate notes made shortly after the ceremony, helps to fill up a lacuna in the hitherto published records of Vedda customs and ritual. 121 796

In June of 1925 I was engaged, as a junior administrative officer, in dealing with an outbreak of cholera among the Muslim tobacco cultivators in the neighbourhood of a remote coast Vedda village, about forty-four miles north of Batticaloa on the Batticaloa-Trincomalee coast road. Investigation by the medical officer with whom I was associated soon revealed the fact that the focus of the infection was a yet more remote inland district lying behind that part of the coast, and that to grapple effectively with the disease it would be necessary to evacuate the population of that area and to concentrate it, for the treatment of the actually sick and for the segregation of the "contacts," in the comparatively accessible locality where we had already established ourselves, not far from the spot where the first cases to be brought to our notice had occurred. I therefore found myself obliged, at short notice, to enlarge the camp of which I had already begun the construction, and in particular to begin the building of a new hospital hut on a more grandiose scale than that originally contemplated. For the work of construction, which consisted of the erection of a framework of jungle sticks and the covering of it with *cadjans*,—dried and plaited palm branches,—according to the familiar village method, it was necessary to enlist the services of the coast Veddas of the adjoining settlement. The villagers were naturally reluctant to engage in work which they not unreasonably supposed would expose them to the infection, and it called for much tact and persuasiveness on the part of the Chief Headman of the *pattu* to get them to do so. Fully realizing that, apart from all other considerations, the occurrence of even one case of cholera among them would effectively put a stop to all co-operation, the Chief Headman and I took, successfully as the event showed, every possible precaution to prevent such a catastrophe. Everything seemed to be going on without let or hindrance when the Chief Headman upset my calculations by announcing that the work must cease for twelve hours on the 8th of June, to enable the villagers to perform a ceremony in honour of the *Periya Devi* 123 [131 361] [796 796]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 (Great Goddess).[8] It was in vain that I pointed out the urgency
[596 of the work and protested against any delay, even going the
776] length of suggesting that the ceremony should be postponed.
After a good deal of futile argument I was obliged to resign myself to the inevitable.

My chagrin was to some extent lessened when the Chief Headman approached me with an invitation from the people to be present at the ceremony. The invitation was welcome, for it offered an alternative to an evening spent in the company only of a book and of my own thoughts in the solitude of the one-roomed "rest house" where I had my temporary quarters. It was accordingly arranged that the Chief Headman should come to fetch me after my dinner.

The moon,—full two days before,—had already risen when the Chief Headman and his following of village notables emerged from the shadows of the jungle bordering the high road. I got up from the long chair in which I had been sitting on the verandah and joined them, and we set off northwards along the road. After walking along it for about half a mile we turned off to the right through alternate thick jungle and open spaces overgrown with *illuk*-grass, and with here and there a solitary tree casting a deep black shadow under the white light of the moon, in the direction of the mouth of the river which crossed the high road about three and a half miles to the north of our camp. We had
[534] gone in this way perhaps a mile in all when I began to be aware of the rhythmical throbbing of a tom-tom, at first only faint in the distance, somewhere ahead in the jungle. I recollect well the feeling of growing excitement as the sound grew gradually louder and more insistent with our advance. Another mile, and the path which our party was following, at that point through thick
123 jungle, took a sharp turn to the right, and we suddenly found
796 ourselves in a large circular clearing, surrounded by high timber. To our right as we entered were the spectators, squatted upon the ground in rows and facing towards that part of the enclosure which lay to our left. Even the fringes of the jungle seemed to be

[8] This goddess is presumably the goddess Ammal, "who sends small-pox and skin disease": see *The Veddas*, p. 336.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

full of people. To our left was a shrine set up against the jungle wall in that quarter. In a space left clear in front of the shrine stood what can best be described as a sort of "maypole," and between the "maypole" and the spectators was a small area enclosed by lengths of coloured cloth stretched between upright sticks. Within this area could be seen a small temporary booth, with human figures moving about a fire, over which, the Chief Headman informed me, rice was being cooked to be offered to the goddess. 123 796

When we reached the clearing the ceremony had not yet begun. I was conducted to a seat of honour in the front row of the spectators, and sat there for some minutes looking round with interest on the scene, which was lighted here and there by the flare of torches, and listening to the monotonous throb of the tom-tom, which was apparently being played somewhere close by in the jungle. Suddenly the tom-tom took on a more staccato note. Excitement rose among the spectators; and presently, from a gap in the jungle wall on my right and rather behind me as I sat facing the shrine, there defiled into the clearing a procession which slowly threaded its way through the ranks of the spectators to the clear space in front of the shrine. In this procession there were carried two wooden ceremonial swords,* which were to be prominent in the dances which followed. In front of the shrine the procession stopped, and a ritual of some sort, the exact nature of which it was impossible to gather in the semi-darkness, was gone through. [373]

At the conclusion of the ritual at the shrine a red flag, bearing embroidered upon it the sun and moon and two human figures, and another device the details of which I was unable to distinguish, but which was possibly the figure of a ship, the emblem of Kapalpe, was hoisted upon the "maypole." This was, perhaps, the formal beginning of the ceremony, for after the hoisting of the flag flowers were brought in baskets, as a mark of respect, to the Chief Headman and myself. Under the Chief Headman's [576]

* These swords resembled the ceremonial swords (*ran heduwa*) seen by the Seligmanns *only* in the ceremony of the invocation of Rahu Yaku at Sitala Wanniya, (fifty miles from the place at which the ceremony here described was performed), and illustrated on p. 256 of *The Veddas*.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 796 guidance I touched the flowers in acknowledgement. After this the rice which had meanwhile been cooked in the enclosure in front of the shrine was offered to the goddess at the shrine, and the enclosure itself was removed.

The offering of the rice appeared to mark the conclusion of the first stage of the ceremony, for it was followed by a procession of those who were to take part in the subsequent dancing,—apparently accompanied by the image of the goddess,—out of the clearing and, as I was informed, down to the river about half a mile away for the sacred bath.

Time dragged by. The moonlight flooded the clearing, showing the ranks of the spectators sitting in their places with oriental patience and talking in undertones. At last the procession of dancers re-entered the clearing and advanced to the open space in front of the shrine. Here a ritual was gone through which seemed to be intended to induce in the dancers a state of "possession,"[7] and after the performance of this ritual the dances began.

First of all two principal dancers, wearing what were evidently ceremonial jackets of red cloth, took, each of them, in one hand one of the wooden swords previously mentioned and in the other [535] a bunch of leaves, and went in and out among the people with a queer shuffling step and a curious rhythmic brandishing of the swords and leaves. Once or twice the leader stopped, and laying his sword upon the head of some person in the crowd began to [787] prophesy.[8] One prophecy, as interpreted to me by the Chief Headman, concerned the outbreak of cholera, and was in the form

[7] The Seligmanns, on pp. 134-5 of *The Veddas*, discuss at some length the nature of "possession" in the Vedda ritual dances.

[8] My impression at the time was that in uttering these prophecies the [114 197] leader of the dance used the Vedda language. Certainly the language used did not appear to me to be either Sinhalese or Tamil. It is true that the Seligmanns say, in the passage quoted in the text, that the "old Vedda language" as spoken by the coast Veddas was found to be Sinhalese; but (i) it seems at least possible that the Vedda language may remain to some extent in ritual use among them; and (ii) I am inclined to think that in the ceremony here described the invocation of Rahu Yaku, described by the Seligmanns on pp. 254-9 of *The Veddas*, was combined with the worship of Ammal and Kapalpe, described by

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a prophecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *choregos*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wach! wach! wach!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announcement was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[9]

them on pp. 335-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were not coast Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one of some interest; but as, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[9] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 It was now two o'clock in the morning, and, though the ceremony was by no means concluded, I had seen enough of it to appreciate its general nature and it behoved me to get a little sleep in preparation for the day's work before me. Accompanied by the Chief Headman I made my way back along the jungle paths and across the open spaces, still white in the moonlight,—with the throb of the tom-tom behind me becoming fainter and fainter as I pursued my way,—to the quiet of my lodging.

R. B. NAISH.

[796 dancers lay upon the ground and certainly appeared to be genuinely
789] and completely unconscious for about ten minutes, *i.e.*, up to the time at which I left the clearing.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [164] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and [146] framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even 177 their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*ilee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schleichera trijuga, Nephelium longana,* respectively.

2. FOREST CHILDREN

621 THE village of Potuliyadda lies in the heart of the country of the Henebedde Veddas. We had hoped to take these people unawares in their homes some three miles away; but it was not to be; for a Vedda boy who had witnessed our arrival had forestalled us.

We were at lunch, when my friend, whose seat commanded a view of the jungle, quietly remarked, "Hullo; who are these? Veddas without a doubt."

142 157 [411] [622] Five men, armed with bows, arrows and axes, strode in single file under the leadership of a small one-eyed man, half of whose face was covered by an awful scar which puckered an eyeless socket, giving a touch of pathos to an otherwise harsh expression. Such was Poromola, chief of the Henebedde Veddas also called *Walaha* (bear) for obvious reasons. Then there was Handuna a fine type of wild man; though close on fifty his figure was well-knit, and this combined with his goatee beard and tousy head gave a strength and rugged dignity to his bearing. There were also a tall bearded man of forty, loquacious and sophisticated enough when you knew him; a lanky, slouching, beady-eyed fellow; a robust, curly-haired bumpkin; and lastly, the snub-nosed little mischief-maker to whom we owed the honour of this visit.

123 As the Veddas came up to us, they uttered some fierce jargon we did not understand. It was pretty obvious they were acting; and not caring to encourage them in this, I casually motioned them away. They retired mumbling. We recalled them later to find them in dudgeon, evidently not being used to such treatment. They stared mutely at us affecting not to understand a word of the Sinhalese in which I addressed them. I tried again and again, but not by the flicker of an eyelid did they signify comprehension. Civility and persuasion having failed, I tried the effect of candour, telling them that we were not gullible strangers and knew all about them. This also was without effect.

Opening Seligmann's book, which contained the portraits of these very Veddas taken ten years previously, we suited picture to prototype. They gazed uncritically with stolid intentness showing no surprise or enthusiasm. I asked them whether they remembered the author and his wife who had spent so much time with them and been so kind to them. One nodded, and the others' faces betrayed interest. Thus was the first barrier carried.

Gradually we won them over one by one; but despite our best efforts the conversation flagged. And we, tired of making all the advances simulated an indifference we far from felt, and took to our books.

"We are hungry," said Handuna after a while. "Will you not give us food?"

We could only offer them money, an almost useless thing to the Vedda. We had made the serious mistake of coming unprovided with a surplus of rice, betel, arecanut and tobacco; for the surest way to the heart of the Vedda is through his stomach. We

S: Spittel D-S (ca. 1920) 1946 AX5 Vedda AX5

were loath to purchase their intimacy with gifts. Time enough for that, when we had won them over by less humiliating means. Besides, these Veddas were evidently spoilt, and we wished to show them they were not the important personages they imagined themselves to be. 123

"We are going then," said Handuna. It was now our turn for dejection. Was it for such an ungracious issue we had travelled so far?

I had a last card, having brought some neosalvarsan, a sovereign remedy for yaws so rife among these people. The offer was received with indifference. There was only one case among them, they said, and the patient was too ill to come. This being just what we wanted, I offered to visit them the next morning. [164]

"You cannot come where we live unless we allow you," said the irrepressible Kaira. "And we won't show you our caves or anything, unless you give us presents."

Sick with exasperation and disgust at the behaviour of these impossible children, I told them they could take our offer or leave it as they chose, and turned to other work. The result was a grudging acquiescence; and, leaving a guide behind, they went away.

A word of explanation regarding the sophistication of a people so remote. They were in fact about the purest-blooded Veddas extant; indeed, it was to this very circumstance they owed their disappointing behaviour; for it had attracted Seligamann among them. What that implied may well be imagined. To obtain the valuable sociological information with which his book abounds, he had gained the confidence of these folk with scrupulous consideration and kindness, showering on them gifts of all kinds. Moreover, the patient investigation of the most intimate details of their lives by such a man, heightened their self-esteem. Of this we had an amusing illustration. I was obliged to admonish a group of Sinhalese that embarrassed us with their attentions. A Vedda sidled up and, tapping me familiarly on the shoulder, whispered, "Those people don't like us, they are jealous of us. We and you gentlemen are one; they are different!" 156 114 [186]

To dismiss these Veddas as spoilt uninteresting folk would imply failure to discern their innate simplicity, beneath the veneer of pose and importunity, for which contact with an indulgent stranger had been responsible. In their homes they still are as artless as their forbears were before ever white man set foot on these shores.

We were out hunting early that afternoon, when a sudden snapping sound arrested our attention. The Vedda we were with listened a few seconds. "Catching *talagoyas*," (monitor-lizards), he said laconically. The excited barking of a dog and rebuking human voices soon confirmed his conjecture. Going up, we found two men, one of whom carried a large quivering monitor just killed; while two dogs, still spirited with the chase, danced round their victim and growled and snapped at us. One of the men now set about to disjoint the quarry's tail at the middle, leaving it connected only by a tag of sinew; then, slitting the submandibular web, he rove the tail through till it locked at the division, making the reptile eat its own tail as it were, and carried it neatly in a loop. The monitor is best hunted at high noon; after four in the afternoon it takes to trees and holes. 224 231

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukkan* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

for leisure enables me to follow the suggestion of a friend, and to endeavour to arrange the materials which I collected with so much care and labour. 114

At a time when the investigation of the origin of uncivilized races is attracting so much attention in England, I trust that the results of my inquiries and observations may not be considered devoid of interest; and, in this hope, I venture to present them, such as they are, to the Ethnological Society. 121

The following sketch of the Veddahs is the result of personal and often-repeated investigation among the people themselves: it is founded only on direct evidence; I have admitted nothing on hearsay. Indeed, so difficult is it to elicit anything from people in such a state of barbarism, that I have accepted even the most direct testimony with caution and have only adopted it after careful cross-examination had satisfied me of its trustworthiness. I have tested again and again the truth of every statement I have made, sometimes reluctantly abandoning a link here and there which would have made my case more complete, only from a *doubt* of the perfect accuracy of my information.* 124 114

The facts I state are, so far as I can judge, beyond dispute, if honest and patient inquiry be of any value. The deductions I draw from them are my own, and must go for what they are worth. 114

I limit my observations to the wildest tribes, for it is amongst

---

* It may be said that it is a work of mere supererogation, if not presumption, on my part, to attempt to describe the Veddahs, seeing that Sir J. E. Tennent has so recently devoted several chapters of his work on Ceylon to this subject. But, interesting as these chapters are—perhaps the most interesting in the book—they contain little else than a comparison of the habits of the people of the island, as observed by the ancient voyagers in the fourth and fifth centuries, with the traditional but now long-exploded customs of the Veddahs as reported by Knox. The accomplished author throws no new light on the wild tribes of the Veddahs as they are. On the contrary, his account of them is in some important particulars defective, and even inaccurate. He glances casually at those tribes which are in the wildest state, touching with precision none of their peculiarities, and dwells in detail upon those only which, from long association with the Singalese and Tamil races, have lost much of their originality. Of the ancient aborigines he has compiled much that is curious. Of the existing Veddahs he has given us little besides an epitome of former notices.

An account of the aboriginal races of Ceylon, published under the authority of a late colonial secretary of the island, would naturally be accepted and quoted as accurate and authentic. Sir J. E. Tennent's chapters on the Veddahs, therefore, render it more incumbent on me to lay before the Society the results of my own inquiries. For, though the habits and customs of wild tribes are important aids in determining their origin, a description of them is worse than useless, unless it be made by a person competent of his own knowledge to describe them. I pretend to no competency beyond this.

C.Seligmann & Seligmann I-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

123 In spite of the decay into which the Vedda social fabric has
126 fallen, I believe that the expedition may be considered to have achieved a considerable measure of success, since it has brought to light a number of facts hitherto unknown. This result is largely due to my wife, for I feel convinced that the measure of success attained in gaining the confidence of these shy and extremely jealous people was entirely due to her presence and assistance. Not only would it have been impossible otherwise to obtain certain important results in special departments, as for instance the phonograph records of lullabies, but I should never have had the opportunity of studying Vedda family life with the degree of intimacy which her presence made possible. It must not however be thought that the assistance she rendered was of the somewhat passive kind which the presence of any sympathetic woman would have given. Indeed, the opposite was the case, for, with a single exception, the ceremonial dances described in Chapter IX were recorded by Mrs Seligmann, while I devoted the whole of my attention to obtaining a reasonably complete series of photographs. So fully did she share in the work in this and many other ways that when working up our results I found that my original idea of a volume containing a number of jointly written chapters by no means did justice to her work, and her name therefore appears as that of joint author of this book.

With regard to the dances photographed, those witnessed at
126 Sitala Wanniya and Bandaraduwa were performed in the depth of the jungle under circumstances which necessitated under-exposure in spite of the use of the most rapid plates. Hence a number of the photographs reproduced in Chapter IX have been more or less "faked," the detail being painted in on bromide prints and fresh negatives prepared. Probably no one will have any difficulty in recognising the photographs which have been treated in this way, but in order to avoid any possibility of a mistake those plates which have been touched up are indicated by an asterisk.

000 The translations and transliterations of the charms in Chapter VIII and the invocations in Chapter X have been prepared by Mr. Henry Parker, late Assistant Director of the Ceylon Irrigation Department, who has also read through and

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1908
AXS Vedda AXS

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
111 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
●126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

had actually been to the village. They had been sent for often 574
to see others at Wewatte and Alutnuwara bungalows, and for 609
even greater folk had been taken to Kandy. And so they had 431
learnt to shake hands and had picked up exaggerated ideas of their own importance and the value of their information, and expected a present for every remark they vouchsafed. It was a horrible change from the courteous behaviour of the Sitala Wanniya cave Veddas.

As the Dambani folk were so very unfriendly we began 609
to hope the carriers would not come at all that night, there was nowhere for them to sleep, and we thought the Veddas might resent their presence. They told us repeatedly that "Sinhalese men would not dare to come to their village," in spite of the fact that there were two petty Sinhalese traders in the village at the time, who did not even trouble to go away before dark, but seemed naturally to expect a night's lodging, which was granted them without any fuss, and there appeared to be no difficulty about language with them. About six o'clock our servants and the carriers arrived, and curiously enough instead of resenting the intrusion the Veddas seemed very impressed by their number, and presumably our importance, in having so many dependents, for they became much more friendly.

The next morning early, we set the phonograph going with 126
a Vedda song: immediately the whole village crowded round us, intensely interested. They recognised the song and said it was very good. The Vidane then sang a song into the machine and was quite excited to hear it repeated, but again began his demand for presents although besides a rupee we had now given white cloth to him and the other men from whom we had got vocabularies. Having obtained records we realised that it was impossible to do any good work among such spoilt people and decided to go to Belligala. We offered some beads to the headman's wife, but she said the string was not long enough; this annoyed us and we asked her if she would prefer not to have any, and on her repeating they were not enough we put them away.

The Dambani men said they did not know to which *warige* 614

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER X

INVOCATIONS

THE translations of the invocations given in this chapter have been made by Mr H. Parker who has spared no pains in working out very complicated and often incomplete material. The invocations themselves were written down by our interpreters to the dictation of the Veddas, and thus naturally contained a certain number of mistakes and contractions. These are noted and explained by Mr Parker, and it should be realised that the philological and mythological explanations appended to many invocations are entirely his work and are therefore placed between inverted commas. 782 126

Neither the Veddas themselves, nor our interpreters, could give a translation of some of the invocations or even explain the meaning. In others no translation could be supplied and it was noted in the field that the meaning was probably only correct in a broad sense. In yet other invocations more or less accurate translations of the words themselves were given, but the significance could not be determined. Under these circumstances we have thought it best to give Mr Parker's translation in every case, indicating how this differs in sense from the version given us in the field in those instances in which we have reason to believe that our field version peculiarly expresses what our informants believed to be the meaning of the invocation.

These invocations fall into two main groups; the first, distinguished by their simple form, are straightforward requests to the spirits of the dead to provide game and yams, or to show their loving kindness by partaking of the food provided by their descendants. The second group although embracing a con- 782

[p. 273]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XIII

MUSIC

By C. S. Myers.

Introductory.

The account of Vedda music given in this section is based upon an examination of thirty-four phonographic records of songs obtained from the Veddas by Dr and Mrs Seligmann[1]. 533 [126]

These songs are probably simpler in structure than any other native songs hitherto studied.

Nine of the tunes are composed of only two notes. In three others the tune consists also of two notes, but with the addition of one or more unimportant grace-notes. These twelve songs may be conveniently classed as belonging to Group A.

Twelve other songs consist of three notes only. These we shall class under Group B.

Nine songs contain four notes, and one consists of five notes. These we shall consider as Group C.

Of the songs in Group A, in no case is the range sensibly greater than our whole-tone interval. With the exception of two anomalous songs, no song in Group B has a range sensibly greater than our minor third. With one exception, no song in Group C has a range greater than a fourth.

There is evidence that the songs of Group A are more archaic than those of Groups B and C. For, unaware of the above system of classification, Dr Seligmann was asked to indicate those songs which appeared to him (on grounds of language, ceremonial, etc.) most probably archaic and those

[1 We received the manuscript of this chapter from Dr Myers in November 1909, but owing to our absence from England, publication was deferred for six months. Meanwhile, in the *Quarterly Magazine of the International Musical Society* (Year xi, Part 2, 1910) there appeared a short account of Vedda music by Herr Max Wertheimer, based on an examination of four phonographic records obtained by Frau M. Selenka. Dr Myers has thus had no opportunity of alluding to Herr Wertheimer's observations in this chapter.] [114 113]

[p. 341]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

invocation songs are accompanied by dance movement, and that the purpose of such song and dance is to produce possession by the *yaku* or spirits. 533

METHODS OF ANALYSIS.

The speed of the phonograph used for studying the records of these songs was so regulated that every record reproduced a tone $c' = 256$ vibrations per second, a tone of this pitch, emitted by a pitch-pipe, having been always sounded into the recording phonograph just before each record was taken by Dr Seligmann in the field. Consequently when the reproducing phonograph emitted the note, one was sure that the speed of this instrument agreed with that of the instrument into which the song had been sung. That is to say, the reproducing phonograph reproduced the exact tempo and pitch of the recorded song. 126

A rough notation was then made of the song, a metronome being employed to determine its approximate tempo.

Finally a more accurate determination of the pitch of the various tones was made by means of an Appunn's Tonmesser, an instrument consisting of a box of carefully-attuned metal tongues, any one of which could be sounded at will by means of a bellows worked by the feet. The particular instrument employed contained 65 tongues, the pitch of each tongue differing by two vibrations per second from its neighbour and the extreme range being an octave, from c^0 to c', i.e. from 128 to 256 vibrations per second[1].

The songs are transcribed as accurately as our European notation allows. Bars are only inserted when the regularity of the rhythm clearly permitted their use. A + or – above a note indicates that it should be somewhat sharpened or flattened. Greater precision may be obtained by observing the numbers written beneath the notes. These give the mean vibration-frequency of the tone in question, obtained by comparison with the standard Tonmesser. The sign V indicates a "breath mark," i.e. a short rest during which the singer draws a breath.

[1] For further details in manipulation, the reader is referred to the writer's Essay on "The Ethnological Study of Music," in *Anthropological Essays presented to Edward Burnett Tylor*, Oxford, 1907, pp. 235—254.

[pp. 21-33 not processed]

CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE VEDDAS AND JUNGLE SHRINES

And here were forests ancient as the hills
Enclosing sunny spots of greenery

COLERIDGE

I. THE EMBRACE OF THE TREES

13 BURIED in the jungle ten miles north-west of Maha Oya lies the old Vedda
131 village of Omuna. Forest, unbroken by the meanest glade, intervenes
361 between. At a pool we flush a brace of bronze-winged pigeons or set a-chirruping a covey of small birds; while every now and then the scurry of unseen feet tells that the woods are live with game. Jungles darken early; by five-thirty a cathedral gloom creeps to the songs of roosting birds: the shama throats a rambling lay, the grubbing pitta sounds a shrill call, the cuckoo wakes, like a curfew, the forest echoes, "while like a long-roll drummer the night-jar thrills the treen."

It is all but dark when, through a break in the trees, the hill of Omuna stands before us; and the clamour of resenting dogs and a welcoming fire tell us we have reached the limit of an arduous walk.

13 Where the Vedda is, there is the inevitable rock. The tie between them
823 is intimate. To the life, animal and tree, on the timbered sides of the hill the Vedda is beholden for sustenance. The boulder-bound stream gives him water, and there lurk demons watchful for his undoing, and tutelary ancestral spirits. Nowhere is the relation between men and rock closer than at Omuna; for from the heart of the hill flows a spring that does not fail in the cruellest drought. Is it a wonder the place has for ages been
144 favoured of the Veddas? But time the iconoclast breaks the oldest bonds; the half-Veddas* there to-day are not of the ancient stock; that died out some fifteen years ago.

000 Besides its association with the wild men, Omuna has other claims to interest. Like many another forest stronghold it is the site of ancient Buddhistic ruins—frescoed caves and headless, chest-battered Buddhas despoiled by treasure-hunters What induced the priests of old-time to seek such sanctuaries as this, it is hard to surmise; religious persecution perhaps, by their inveterate foes the Sivaite Tamils; or merely the claims of austere devotion. Be that as it may, it was in these fastnesses that the light of Buddhism was nursed when it flickered low, till, happening

*There is almost certainly no Vedda living to-day without Sinhalese blood in his veins. The term *half-Vedda* therefore may appear superfluous, but is used to designate Veddas who have intermarried with the Sinhalese and settled down to agricultural pursuits, the word *Vedda* being used for the wilder folk that depend mainly on the jungle for sustenance. [p. 34]

3. THE MARAWEETHIYA

Far or forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear
And one to me are shame and fame.

EMERSON

13 FROM Yakkure to Horiwila is six miles. The first part of the journey is through marsh; here the Mahaweli make a bend which all but encroaches on the path. The place is rank with vegetation. Tall grass thrives amidst sombre trees that stand apart, clothed out of all recognition in stoles of trailing mycania. The air is humid and oppressively still. One is glad to be rid of the swampy luxuriance with its strong suggestion of malaria.

Beyond a pleasant stretch of paddy, closer than we had ever seen it before, stood Gunner's Quoin. Tinkling cow-bells and the mournful cries of peafowl welcomed us to Horiwila.

361 144 The racial types we have passed, will repay review. Omuna, Dolagalwella and Kalukolu Eba were shifting *chena* settlements inhabited by Veddas with a large proportion of Sinhalese blood. Yakkure was a permanent village with the *chenas* apart; here the people called themselve Veddas but showed strong Tamil traits. The folk of Horiwila were not sure whether to call themselves Tamils or Veddas; while Manampitiya, beyond Horiwila, was a purely Tamil village. So does propinquity shape the type of Vedda, and forest penetration by the Sinhalese on the one hand and Tamils on the other, tend to obliterate the aboriginal race.

000 Decoyed by its beauty, we camped on a rock on the bund of the Horiwila tank, soon to learn that a stone exposed all day to the sun, was not the most desirable of camping places even at night. The stored heat radiating from the rock kept us awake till morning, and we rose quite unrefreshed for the good day's work before us, for to-day we would climb the Quoin, which, ever since we saw it across the marsh at Yakkure, beckoned us on. The Tamils of the place could only take us to the base 115 of the hill; from there a Vedda of the Ulpotta must guide us. It was quite an hour before we found him. I recognised him at once as Sinna an old friend; there were the bunions on his shoulder from carrying loads of lizards and yams, and there the hooked finger caused by a snake-bite [142 when plucking a *kanava* comb from a creviced tree. A dwarf, with 157] frizzly upstanding hair and wild eyes, and shy almost to timidity, Sinna had nothing of the sophisticated Vedda about him. He lived alone with [166] his small family at the end of the rock. The rest of his people had left when the *kurrukhan* crop failed: but Sinna remained to gather a precarious living from the scanty pickings of the field. We came on him searching for food in the forest.

The poor fellow was in great distress that morning, his favourite dog having been taken by a leopard the previous night. Hearing the animal's

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the *goa*-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Maraweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

13 causeway over an abysmal ravine. We had not the stomach to tempt those ways.

Below us stretched a vast forest studded with the tree-clad hills of Omuna, Henanagalla and many another; and over the red-topped *bongs* we caught the glimpse of the Mahaweli as it cleft the wilderness of trees.

173 To this retreat once came an ascetic who lived alone, lost in meditation, for months. His evening chant could be heard at Horiwila three miles away. The bears that came to drink at the pools in the caves did him no harm. In a hidden vault, so the story goes, he found a gold-lettered slab and a phial of oil. He made the wisdom of the script his own, and drank the oil; then descended the rock, and ever after went about as one obsessed.

115 Sinna's droll talk relieved the irksomeness of our descent. Indicating [301] a wild jasmine, he told us they were the flowers Vedda women strung on creeper-stems for the adornment of their hair. He was for leaving us at the foot of the hill and continuing his search for food for his waiting family. But we took him to camp, fed him abundantly on rice and venison and gave him a heavy hamper besides. It was pleasant to picture the rare joy of his home-coming.

000 At Manampitiya old Kanapan-*vidane* met us with two limes which he graciously presented to us. This charming Tamil custom is often the prelude to a villainous request. Kanapan gave us cordial welcome, eyed solicitously our unkempt figures, and chided us in a kindly, paternal way for undertaking so 'terrible' a journey. "Why wander in the wilderness when you can play about the highways in your car?" he said. His conversation, though varied kept reverting to one theme—the delinquencies of the village school-master, now away on a holiday. Kanapan had a penchant for denunciation; on a previous occasion it was the tyranny of an apothecary, now it concerned the amours of a pedagogue.

"Is that the sort of man to teach young children?" he concluded disgustedly. "A man who breaks up quiet homes. The woman does not even care for him; he bewitched her with charmed food. A respectable home wrecked by a worthless fellow!" and he spat with scorn.

Perhaps it was the full bottle of whisky standing tantalisingly on the table that induced him to confide in us that the village tavern had now been closed for over two years, during which time he had not touched a drink; he had almost forgotten the taste of liquor he said wistfully.

"Then you are a total abstainer now?" I ventured.

"What's to be done, sir, I have to be," he sighed.

"I suppose you wouldn't have a drink now if one were given you?" I asked.

"How can I refuse when a gentleman offers," said he, taking the wind out of my sails. "With your favour, sir, I will. Cha," he continued with sudden affection, "I feared you had been to the war and got killed. How glad I am to see you again, sir."

We poured him a bumper which he swallowed neat, placing the empty cup within easy reach beside him. He reverted to the school-master;

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL

THE Vedda country at the present day is limited to a roughly triangular tract lying between the eastern slopes of the central mountain *massif* and the sea. This area of about 2400 square miles is bounded on the west by the Mahaweli Ganga, from the point where, abandoning its eastern course through the mountains of the Central Province, the river sweeps northwards to the sea. A line from this great bend passing eastwards through Bibile village (on the Badulla-Batticaloa road) to the coast will define the southern limits of the Vedda country with sufficient accuracy, while its eastern limit is the coast. So defined it includes the greater part of the Eastern Province, about a fifth of Uva and a small portion of that part of the North Central Province known as Tamankaduwa, and is traversed by a single high road capable of taking wheeled traffic. This runs from Badulla, the capital of Uva, lying at the foot of the central mountain mass of the island, to the coast a few miles to the north of Batticaloa, the capital of the Eastern Province. 131 [491]

Excepting only the mountain scenery of Upper Uva and the Central Province, the Vedda country even in its present diminished form presents every variety of scenery met with in Ceylon, including alike the magnificent Uva park lands and the sandy mangrove-fringed flats of the Eastern coast. Within its borders is situated Mahayangana (Alutnuwara) the ancient assembling place of the Yakkas where, according to the Mahawansa, Buddha appeared and struck terror into their hearts before propounding his doctrines to the hosts of *deva* who 133

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 height. Clear rock-strewn streams abound, their banks
brightened by the deep green leaves and the bright red flowers
137 of the *ratmal* (*Ixora coccinea*). Scattered masses of rock often
of great size form convenient shelters for the Veddas, and assist
the rapid drainage of the country, which does not become water-
logged even during torrential rains. This beautiful country is
rich in game. To the east, where many Veddas have drifted,
the jungle is thicker, the land lies lower, and is generally less
healthy. The Nuwaragala Hills to the north of the Nilgala
ranges are perhaps the wildest part of the island and are more
densely clothed in jungle, but there are plenty of streams, while
the slope of the country permits of ready drainage.

The coastal zone north of Batticaloa inhabited by the coast
Veddas is flat and sandy, and the vegetation though dense
is often less tall and less abundant than in other parts of the
country. Salt water marshes are common, and the country
is cut into by numerous lagoons and creeks, often bounded
by a fringe of mangroves which stretches some distance up
the mouths of the rivers. Although this area may now, and
131 for yet a few years, be rightly called the Vedda country it must
161 not be thought that any considerable number of its inhabitants
are Veddas, or that they exercise any territorial or political
563 influence; on the contrary, they constitute an insignificant
fraction of the Tamil and Sinhalese inhabitants before whom
they are rapidly disappearing, partly by intermarriage and
absorption, partly owing to misery and a high death rate
brought about by sheer inability to cope with the new state
of affairs that the increased settlement of this, the wildest part
of the island, has brought about.

Formerly the Vedda country is known to have embraced
131 the whole of the Uva, and much of the Central and North
175 Central Provinces, while there is no reason to suppose that their
territory did not extend beyond these limits. Indeed there is
no reasonable doubt that the Veddas are identical with the
"Yakkas" of the Mahavansa and other native chronicles.

175 The seventh chapter of the Mahawansa relates the arrival in
Ceylon, B.C. 543, of Vijaya who married Kuweni an aboriginal
princess (*Yakkini*) and by her assistance destroyed a great

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 those only who are the most barbarous, who have preserved in all essentials their isolation from other races intact, that we must expect to find the most marked peculiarities.

101 The term Veddah—or Weddah—in itself, indicates no particular race. It simply means "a hunter", and is, in India, applied to aboriginal or barbarous tribes generally.*

In this sense, a great portion of the population of the eastern parts of Ceylon appears, at some period or another, to have been so called. There are still extensive districts known as "Weddirata", or the country of the Veddahs, the inhabitants of which, although they are, owing to the remoteness of their situation, less civilized than the bulk of the people of the island, are not Veddahs, but Singhalese, in kindred, religion, and customs.

101 It is highly probable that the people of these remote districts and of others, where Veddah descent is still claimed, are more 174 directly derived from the race which originally stocked the island than those who inhabit such parts of it as were more accessible to the settlers from Continental India, who, in process of time superseded the aborigines.†

But the people distinguished in Ceylon, by the name of Vedda 131 dahs—wholly distinct, as I have said, even from those who, though now Singhalese, yet describe themselves as descended from Veddah ancestors, are to be found in the districts of Batti-

---

* Weddà (Singhalese) an archer; some trace it to Bedda (Jungle). Introduction to Alwis' Sidath Sangarawa.

Vedán (Tamil), a hunter—one who lives in the woods; a name given to rude tribes, aborigines in the Indian peninsula. Vedan (Tamil), corruptly Vaidan, Veddah, also Beddah, or Weden—a hunter, a fowler; a name given to wild tribes, inhabiting the hills and forests of the south of India almost in a state of nature—probably the aboriginal race of the peninsula. Prof. Wilson's *Glossary of Revenue and Judicial Terms.* The word Veddah is still used in Ceylon as a hunter, and so applied to persons, not "Veddah" in the limited sense of the word.

† The Weddirates were, under the native government, exempted from 648 all service save military—the most honourable; and rendered tribute to the king, of beeswax, dried flesh, and honey, which was continued for some time after we obtained possession of the Kandyan provinces. But the inhabitants of these districts marry and associate with those of the adjoining districts, and are apparently the same people. There may exist some eth- 142 nical difference; indeed, I think even an unscientific eye can detect a difference in the appearance, not only of these people, but of the Wanniahs of the northern and central parts of Ceylon, when compared with the ordinary natives. I have tried to obtain skulls of the different races, of which there are many in the island, viz., Tamils, Moors, Singhalese of the low country and of the Kandyan provinces, the people of the Weddiratas —Wanniahs of Newerakalawiya and Batticalas—Mookwas of the north-west and east provinces, Malays, Goorowas, Rhodias, etc., but it is most difficult to obtain them. The subject may be worthy of the attention of the Ethnological Society, though beside the object of this paper.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

caloa and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.*

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt.

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in *their* barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other.

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenna. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited.

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

3: Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda Propitiation Ceremony.

The Veddas are the remnants of what may for convenience be referred to as the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon. They are found exclusively in that part of the island,—the greater part of it wild jungle country,—which is bounded on the north by the Verugal Aar, on the east by the sea, on the south by the Gal Oya, and on the west by the central mountain *massif* and the middle reaches of the Mahaweliganga. They vary greatly from group to group in the degree to which they have intermarried with their Sinhalese or Tamil neighbours, and have adopted those neigh-

101
131
177
184
[p. 187]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

written from memory aided by not very adequate notes made shortly after the ceremony, helps to fill up a lacuna in the hitherto published records of Vedda customs and ritual. 121 796

In June of 1925 I was engaged, as a junior administrative officer, in dealing with an outbreak of cholera among the Muslim tobacco cultivators in the neighbourhood of a remote coast Vedda village, about forty-four miles north of Batticaloa on the Batticaloa-Trincomalee coast road. Investigation by the medical officer with whom I was associated soon revealed the fact that the focus of the infection was a yet more remote inland district lying behind that part of the coast, and that to grapple effectively with the disease it would be necessary to evacuate the population of that area and to concentrate it, for the treatment of the actually sick and for the segregation of the "contacts," in the comparatively accessible locality where we had already established ourselves, not far from the spot where the first cases to be brought to our notice had occurred. I therefore found myself obliged, at short notice, to enlarge the camp of which I had already begun the construction, and in particular to begin the building of a new hospital hut on a more grandiose scale than that originally contemplated. For the work of construction, which consisted of the erection of a framework of jungle sticks and the covering of it with *cadjans*,—dried and plaited palm branches,—according to the familiar village method, it was necessary to enlist the services of the coast Veddas of the adjoining settlement. The villagers were naturally reluctant to engage in work which they not unreasonably supposed would expose them to the infection, and it called for much tact and persuasiveness on the part of the Chief Headman of the *pattu* to get them to do so. Fully realizing that, apart from all other considerations, the occurrence of even one case of cholera among them would effectively put a stop to all co-operation, the Chief Headman and I took, successfully as the event showed, every possible precaution to prevent such a catastrophe. Everything seemed to be going on without let or hindrance when the Chief Headman upset my calculations by announcing that the work must cease for twelve hours on the 8th of June, to enable the villagers to perform a ceremony in honour of the *Periya Devi* 123 [131 361] [796 776]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

NOTES ON ANIMAL AND PLANT LIFE IN THE VEDDA COUNTRY.

By FREDERICK LEWIS, F.L.S.

(*With one map.*)

THE locality to which these notes apply represents the whole of the Maha Wedirata, the eastern half of the Buttala-Wedirata, and the southern half of the Panawa Pattu of the Eastern Province. 131

This large extent of country falls within part of Uva from the Monaragala range eastwards, and, as indicated above, part of the Eastern Province, or more specifically within the following rough boundaries. Starting from the conspicuous needle-pointed mountain called Wadinagala on the north, it follows the provincial limits of the Eastern Province to the point where it crosses the Government cart road from Potuvil to Muppane. From that point the road to Muppane is adopted as far at Potuvil, from thence following the sea-coast to Kumuna on the banks of the Kumbukkan river.

Next the Kumbukkan river is followed to a point called Kebilitte, at the foot of the imposing mass of rock shown on the Admiralty charts as "Chimney Hill." From here, a line drawn to Sirigala and thence to Wadinagala encloses the whole.

Within this area there is only one perennial river—the Kumbukkan-aar, which forms the southern limit of the region in question. The next largest stream is the Heda-oya, which in the north-east monsoon is a wide and formidable river. To the north the Lankiya-oya is an important stream, which is supplemented by several considerable branches that after uniting with it form a great branch of the Namal-oya. 133

The Govindu-oya, rising on the east flank of the "Westminster Abbey," forms a useful branch of the Karandi-oya that drains the eastern half of the Maha Wedirata country,

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDAS OF GUNNER'S QUOIN

THE ferry at Periathurai marked the end of our river journey. Some miles inland was the rock called Gunner's Quoin round which Veddas lived. 131

Under a bo-tree by the river was an image of Ganesha the pot bellied, elephant-headed Hindoo god with offerings of withered lotus flowers before him. In a temple hard by, were massive bells and drums that kept deafening accompaniment on many a ceremonial day when peacock-plumed men, in the self-imposed torture of skewered cheek and pronged back, bounded hither and thither in delirious dance; and here were the implements, prongs and tridents, these frenzied devotees had dedicated to their unhearing god.

At the Tamil village of Manampitiya we were regaled with an old man's tales of the Veddas. He told us of one Patabanda only recently dead, called *walige**-Patabanda owing to his habit of wearing his loin cloth long behind. It appeared this Vedda was a fine marksman. A *rata-mahatmaya*† once wishing to test his skill pointed to a small jak fruit on a tall tree and asked him to shoot. The arrow flew true and stuck in the fruit; whereupon the Vedda feigning anger said roughly, "Now give me my arrow; it was you who asked me to shoot". The timid chief proffered money which was disdainfully refused. The Vedda then taking another arrow hit the stem of the fruit so that it fell and enabled him to recover both arrow and fruit. Thus do men pass into fable. 114 173

We were told many another tale of Veddas and their ways, and of matters connected with the ancient ruins to be found on the rock; of an anchorite who had lived in a cave there unharmed by the bears; and of ancient Vedda kings captured by stratagem and fraud.

A walk of five miles the next morning brought us to the foot of Gunner's Quoin. I was now brimming with expectancy; for I was about to see for the first time the Veddas in their homes; that aboriginal people who had time and again attracted the scholars of Europe, and in whose veins flowed the oldest blood of the inhabitants of Ceylon. They were here when Wijeya came from India in 543 B.C. and founded the Sinhalese dynasty; long earlier, when that Buddha came who preached to his followers at Mahiyangana after having put to flight the Yakkhas (Veddas?); to an even still older beginning their ancestry went, to a time in the stone age when man vied for existence with prehistoric forms. 114

To-day hardly a Vedda true to the old traditions survives; not one that uses beaten bark for apparel, or depends for sustenance solely on the jungle. The inroads of civilisation and the effects of miscegenation with the neighbouring Sinhalese or Tamils are tending surely towards the extinction of the race. Yet, for all that, many of the old Vedda traits still survive in their degenerate descendants and these are still a link with an unfathomable past. 144 178

*Tail †Kandyan chief

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER II

THE VEDDAS OF HENEBEDDE

I. NUWARAGALA AND BEYOND

Talk not of temples, there is one
Built without hands, to mankind given;
Its lamps are the meridian sun
And all the stars of heaven,
Its walls are the cerulean sky,
Its floor the earth so green and fair,
The dome its vast immensity;
All Nature worships there.

VEDDER

For months we had nursed the prospect of a ramble in the Vedda country. Professor Seligmann, writing some nine years previously of the parts we hoped to visit, had said: 114

"We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgalla but among the Nuwaragala hills.....After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sittala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to have a surplus to barter with the Moormen or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, pots and occasional rice and coconuts."*

Thus it was that the Nuwaragala and Sittala Wanniya terrain came to be the object of our search. But reaching Maha Oya we received a rude awakening at the outset. We were questioning our guides regarding the route when to our surprise they told us that no Veddas now remained in Sittala Wanniya; that some few who had been at Galmede had either [131] died or gone eastward: and that, not certainly for two generations had Veddas been known to inhabit the Nuwaragala caves. To see Veddas, they said, we would have to go to Henebedde and Danigala, places within easier access of Bibile farther south. We had no choice but to change our plans and commit ourselves to the larger undertaking of working down through Henebedde to the high road at Bibile, after a journey of some sixty miles through the forest.

The jungle is as a home to some; they are never so happy as when they are amidst its delight and mystery. The bird songs, the sun glimmering

*The Veddas by C. G. and B. Z. Seligman [p. 11]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

000 habit acquired as much through the necessity of directing their teams as from their solicitude to warn off wild beasts. The chief of the gang, as we said, was garrulous. His proclivity for vagrancy sustained a religious fervour, which betrayed itself in the incessant punctuations of his eloquence with such phrases, as "By the grace of Buddha," "If God wills," etc. With his future life he took no risks; for there was not a shrine in two provinces, Buddhistic or Hindoo, he had not visited. He shouldered his pingo impatient of departure, but lingered to honour us with a ingratiating glance; interpreting it rightly I gave him a pittance; but the same look bestowed on my friend (who had no sympathy for even amusing humbugs) was only wasted. He left us with his uproariousness ringing in our ears, and the regret, in my heart at least, that I was not of his company.

177 [131] The Danigalla Veddas were within easy reach of us at Nilgalla, the picturesque frontier of the Vedda country. But, so soon after our experience with the Henebedde Veddas, we were in no mood to repeat all over again the tedious palaver that contact with them would mean. For generations the classic show-Veddas of Ceylon, within easy reach of the Bibile resthouse on the high road, they and their ancestors had often been summoned to satisfy the thirst of scientists, or the curiosity of casual visitors. On such occasions they would appear clad in the scantiest rags, equipped with bows and arrows they seldom used, and, feigning ignorance of Sinhalese, would assume that moroseness and ferocity of expression they knew to be expected of them. What wonder then, that some of the impressions carried away, gave as true a picture of the real Vedda, as a performing animal of his wild brother?

One of the younger Veddas had accompanied us all the way from Henebedde to Bibile. He had been unfortunate enough to sell our cook some bear's grease and leopard oil; and no change being available in the jungle, he had no alternative but to accompany us some twenty-five miles, burdened into the bargain with a forty-pound tent! The look of blank wonderment he bestowed on the miracle of a moving automobile is a memory difficult to efface.

[pp. 21-33 include no information on the Vedda. - Analyst]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

[pp. 21-33 not processed]

CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE VEDDAS AND JUNGLE SHRINES

And here were forests ancient as the hills
Enclosing sunny spots of greenery

COLERIDGE

I. THE EMBRACE OF THE TREES

13 BURIED in the jungle ten miles north-west of Maha Oya lies the old Vedda
131 village of Omuna. Forest, unbroken by the meanest glade, intervenes
361 between. At a pool we flush a brace of bronze-winged pigeons or sat a-chirruping a covey of small birds; while every now and then the scurry of unseen feet tells that the woods are live with game. Jungles darken early; by five-thirty a cathedral gloom creeps to the songs of roosting birds: the shama throats a rambling lay, the grubbing pitta sounds a shrill call, the cuckoo wakes, like a curfew, the forest echoes, "while like a long-roll drummer the night-jar thrills the treen."

It is all but dark when, through a break in the trees, the hill of Omuna stands before us; and the clamour of resenting dogs and a welcoming fire tell us we have reached the limit of an arduous walk.

13 Where the Vedda is, there is the inevitable rock. The tie between them
823 is intimate. To the life, animal and tree, on the timbered sides of the hill the Vedda is beholden for sustenance. The boulder-bound stream gives him water, and there lurk demons watchful for his undoing, and tutelary ancestral spirits. Nowhere is the relation between men and rock closer than at Omuna; for from the heart of the hill flows a spring that does not fail in the cruellest drought. Is it a wonder the place has for ages been
144 favoured of the Veddas? But time the iconoclast breaks the oldest bonds; the half-Veddas* there to-day are not of the ancient stock; that died out some fifteen years ago.

000 Besides its association with the wild men, Omuna has other claims to interest. Like many another forest stronghold it is the site of ancient Buddhistic ruins—frescoed caves and headless, chest-battered Buddhas despoiled by treasure-hunters What induced the priests of old-time to seek such sanctuaries as this, it is hard to surmise; religious persecution perhaps, by their inveterate foes the Sivaite Tamils; or merely the claims of austere devotion. Be that as it may, it was in these fastnesses that the light of Buddhism was nursed when it flickered low, till, happening

*There is almost certainly no Vedda living to-day without Sinhalese blood in his veins. The term *half-Vedda* therefore may appear superfluous, but is used to designate Veddas who have intermarried with the Sinhalese and settled down to agricultural pursuits, the word *Vedda* being used for the wilder folk that depend mainly on the jungle for sustenance.

[p. 34]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 751 accompanied him, now struck the bear with his axe and, when she turned on him, killed her. So much for charms; excellent things—provided a weapon is in your hands. "Trust in God," says the Arabic proverb, "but fasten thy camel securely."

G 361 Uhana was a surprise; the place gave every promise of being in a few years a flourishing settlement, thanks to Government grants of land, cattle and grain on easy terms. Luck at last! Near Uhana was a gipsy camp. Wadinagala gave us first promise of these people; but like a mirage they had faded from stage to stage of our journey, leaving only their camp refuse to mock us. Now, here they were, within two miles of us. We stayed over the next morning that we might visit them. As we neared their encampment we met a man who told us that he had passed them on their way to another camp. They who had been here for weeks must needs pack and begone within an hour of our visit! They were bound, the man said, for a place a mile and a half away. We followed, but did not find them there; instead, was another tantalizer who assured us that we would find them on a knoll by a stream a mile and a half beyond. We proceeded, painfully aware that every step of our way must be retraced in the broiling sun before we could earn our lunch. Disappointment again! Almost tearful with frustration and fatigue, we had thrown ourselves down, when a kindly individual came to our aid.

"Rest here," he said. "I shall go forward and see. Come if you hear me 'hoo.' I can tell of their presence some distance away by the crowing of their cocks and the clatter of their camp." We waited and were rewarded.

G [492] [23] [343] On an undulant opening, reminiscent of Somerset pastures, we found the gipsies. They had just unloaded their pack-bulls and were setting up camp under the blazing sky of noon, disdainful of the shelter of the cool environing jungle—the very antithesis of Vedda ways. Cattle and fowls flecked the glade; boys led goats into the forest. Women, graceful as Dianas, were erecting talipot shelters over collected household goods and communal stacks of grain. Tall men, lithe and sinewy as greyhounds, with mongrels at their heels, carried naked babes. Children, reading favour in our faces, essayed shrill nasal choruses clapping arms to chest. The chief, a quietly curious, grizzled man, with a care-free air G 622 bred of the freedom and independence of his life, held in play a vicious cobra just captured. He summed the gipsy life in a sentiment savouring of Borrow: "What are we?" he said. "Children of the open ways, bronzed by the sun, soaked by the rain, born on the trail, buried on the trail. That is our life." They had a sambur spear among them, and G 411 apparently only one man adept in its use; but that spear, their little 224 dogs and their own untiring sinews were match enough for any sambur once started.

V 361 From Uhane to Kotelinda by way of hill-girdled Bokkebedda in the drenching rain. Here, at a glance, we noticed crude little Vedda huts amidst those of the Sinhalese villagers. We were now among the hills of Madana long famed for Veddas; but to-day their caves are only tenanted by bears. Up to now we had traversed a stretch of country V 103 designated on the maps Maha-Veddi-Ratta (Great Vedda Country)—an empty name of about as much significance at the present time as the term Cinnamon Gardens applied to Colombo. Kotelinda lies in the V 131 centre of a region that is to-day the last stronghold of the Veddas—that

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

triangle bounded on the south by the Gal Oya: on the west by the Bibile-Batticaloa road: and on the east by the coast road. Within this space are found the Veddas of Danigala, Henebedda and Bingoda, besides the few about Kotelinda, Divulana and Serangamadu. If to this tract were added that to the west and north of the Bibile-Batticaloa road, between it and the Mahaweli-ganga, we shall have embraced the Veddas of Bintenne, Gunner's Quoin, and other scattered settlements, and accounted for every Vedda extant—a mere handful of people in all.

Kaurala of Kotelinda was the first Vedda worthy of the name we had encountered on this long journey. He was a Bingoda Vedda of the Morana *waruge*, but had spent most of his days at Bandaradua now derelict. He lived with his family in a crude hut in the jungle; his sole weapons were an axe, a bow and arrows. He was a simple soul, laughing uproariously at one moment, and the next assuming that troubled gravity so characteristic of his race. He knew every inch of his jungles; there was no tree, stream, or stone once passed which he could not instantly recognise again. This instinct and the sun were his sole means of orientation. We tried to press him into service, but he refused. "How can I come?" he said, tossing head and arms like a windmill. "I am a lone man. I live in the jungle. I am only a Vedda. If I go, who is there to look after my children? See here, now," pointing to the damaged trees about his hut; "this is what the *botukandas** have done. How can I come?"

Our deviation to Kotelinda was in vain. We had hoped to cut across the hills of Madana to Galmede; but the path had long been absorbed into the forest. We had therefore to double back to Bokkebedda, and thence strike north, through Gonagalla, to Divulana. With our usual ill-luck on this trip, we caught our fifth thunderstorm. It dropped plumb on us and worried us all the way; while in the unscathed beyond, over the treed parkland, the sunset wrought a panorama of opal and pearl, touching to glory the austere peak of Friar's Hood, queen of the distant hills.

*Elephants.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VI

VEDDAS OF BINGODA

I. BINGODA HOMES

Innumerable years had flown,
Since first the chisel in her hand
Necessity, the sculptor, took,
And in her spacious meaning planned
These forms, and that eternal look.

L. BINYON

197 [101] CONCEDE me three points and I shall attempt to show that there exist in Ceylon to-day Veddas worthy of the name. Language, apparel and weapons are the concessions I ask.

Let us begin by confessing, that the Veddas we shall tell of have no pure language of their own, but merely a patois, in which Sinhalese words predominate and Vedda words are few; their clothing is not the traditional 291 leaf or threshed *riti* bark, but fragments of foul rag affording, if anything, less cover; the weapons they favour are guns (of a type almost as 411 dangerous to user as to quarry) and not bows and arrows which they employ only in sore necessity.

Vital issues, you will say, which should deprive this people of their name. But language, dress and arms may change without materially altering, for a time at least, ancient customs and primeval instincts.

101 The word Vedda originally meant hunter; and a people supreme in jungle-craft, always capable of gleaning from the unfriendly forests a sufficiency for their needs and utterly incompetent to husband even the primitive agriculture of the *chena*, has surely a claim to the name.

224 It must not be supposed that every Vedda possesses a gun; far from it; occasionally there may be a single weapon to a whole clan. The usual [411] thing is for the Sinhalese or Moors to lend their guns to these superb [427] trackers, who never waste a shot and seldom return without their quarry, a large share of which goes by agreement to the owner of the gun.

114 Of my first accidental meeting with these Veddas amid the hills of Galmede, I have already told. Barely four months had elapsed before I found myself renewing their acquaintance; this time with set purpose.

Arriving at the forest village of Mullegama, sacred to Buddhists, and abounding in lime groves and Moors, I was fortunate enough to run up against my friend Kaurala of Kottelinde, who, so difficult of acquisition before, now became our willing guide.

●131 Bingoda, the home of our Veddas, is some three miles from Mullegama, and lies on the Dhungolla Oya, a tributary of the Magalavatan Aar which connects Bingoda with Galmede ten miles away—all in the circuit of

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese *chena* village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect.

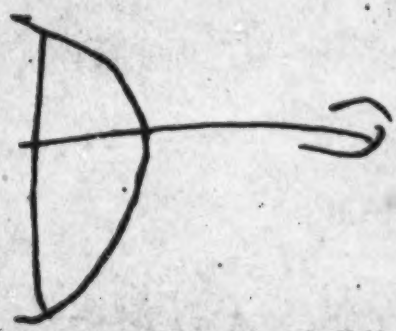
4. VEDDA JUNGLES

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them

ISAIAH.

THE forests we were now in were the immemorial haunts of the Veddas of Bingoda, Galmede and Sittala Wanniya. They stretched from Bingoda to Newaragala, and included such famous Vedda hills as Walimbe (Friar's Hood) and Bandaradua. The Magalavatan Aar cleaves this country on its way to Unichi tank. The jungle is virginal, but one is surprised to find here an occasional guava bearing luscious fruit, and much wild cinnamon. *Palu* and *veera*, so abundant in the more southern forests, is wanting here. 131 [137]

Nowhere is the Vedda more at home than in this wilderness, intersected by game trails only known to him and wild animals, and studded with the rocks that hold his caves. This land is all their wealth. By old Vedda law it is divided into *panguas* or shares, marked off by such natural landmarks as streams, rocks, or conspicuous trees scored with the *dhunu hena* (bow mark) distorted beyond recognition with age. The *panguas* of the Bingoda Veddas are six:—(1) Madana-gama: (2) Marana-pangua: (3) Kumburu-wella-gama (kuda and maha): (4) Bingoda: (5) Kakalana-bokke: (6) Bandaradua. Of these, the first three are included under the name Galmede and are now the property of Suthu Banda; the last three are Kaurala's. Each of these divisions, in days of greater prosperity, had its own chieftain. 423 614



Dhunu-hena or bow mark drawn by Vedda

It is to the credit of these Veddas that they alone of all the Veddas in Ceylon can still name their shares, indicate their boundaries, and observe the traditional law of non-transgression, hunting only in their allotted spheres. Suthu Banda, for instance, would not take the swiftlets' nests on Walimbe because they were Kaurala's by right; nor would he break the hives beyond Newaragala because those lands, once Vedda, have now lapsed to the Sinhalese.

Land goes to the eldest child whether son or daughter; failing them to the nephew. In the old days the proofs of inheritance were a white stone (*kirivanagala*) and molar tooth, bound together with a wisp of human hair; later the *ola* supplanted it; and still later a paper document issued by Government, and so carefully hidden away that it was invariably eaten by termites! These people, it would appear, were wiser than Government in their choice of a seizin. 428 [p. 79]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

S
538

Wild are the wastes that surround Sorabora Wewa. Through a channel of cut stones her waters feed the fields. To the temple of Bintenne her lotus blooms are borne. Eyes that have not beheld her, can they worship truly?

On Na-nithule trees the white cranes brood in sleep: their bills not with silver but rich gold gleaming; their plumes, though not gay with colour, are bright with a satin sheen. The cranes of Sorabora that move in the sedge.

In Horabora Wewa fine *olu** clusters grow. To gather these come women fair and lovely. They will roast them red and black and set them before us; but, alas! to eat with the *olu* rice, we have no meat.

Deep under the water the good yams lie; on the surface above, the leaves swing lightly round. The flowers unfold to the dew and the rain—pearl-studded shades for the fishes below.

S
173
773

The dagaba, the tank and the pilgrim path are associated in legend:—Dutthagamani (101—77 B.C.), the most renowned of Sinhalese kings, lived at one time at Mahanuwara, as Alutnuwara was then called†. Being as devout as he was brave, he set about to complete the Mahiyangana-thupa or dagaba. In those days there were giants or *yodhayas*; and Dutthagamani had under him one conspicuous *yodhaya* named Bullatha whose daily duty it was to milk a cow at Kiripatiya across the mountains, and to make for the king thirty chews of betel, one for each hour of the Sinhalese day. In addition to these appointed tasks, he contrived to carry out clandestinely two other works which were to win him great merit and incidentally death. For, on his way back from Kiripatiya, laden with milk for the king, he brought each day a great stone which he laid down on the steep mountain side, and so constructed the steps (*gal-padi*) of the pilgrim path; hence is the hill called Galpadihela. He also found time to pile up the great bund of Horabora Wewa, digging up a few shovelfuls of earth each day. The work being completed he threw his spade into the tank.

Works of this magnitude could not long be kept secret; and soon it reached the ears of the king that his *yodhaya* had constructed a vast tank. Dutthagamani, who in the meanwhile had completed the Mahiyangana dagaba, visited Horabora Wewa, and when he saw it, recognised at once that here was the more virtuous accomplishment, being a greater boon to the poor people.

"Give me," he said to the *yodhaya*, "the merit that is yours for the building of this tank; and I will give you that which is mine for restoring the dagaba."

Bullatha refused. He was killed and his body thrown into the tank. Then the waters blossomed; from his head sprang the *olu* (head) flowers, from his eyes the lotus fruit, and from his limbs the lotus stalks.

V
131

Bintenne, as all this country is called, has always been the home of Veddas. "Worse than a Vedda of Bintenne," is a term of opprobrium common even to-day. Were the present Veddas of Bintenne any wilder than those we had already seen? We suspected, not; for a glance at the map showed this country to be better supplied with bridle-paths than most of the jungles we had already explored.

We had not gone many miles from Alutnuwara before our eyes convinced us that even among those avowedly Sinhalese there was much

**Nymphaea lotus* or water lily; the roots, stalks, yams, fruit, and seeds are all eaten. And so are those of the large-flowered lotus *Nelumbium speciosum*—sacred bean.

†The present rest-house is said to mark the site of his palace.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were 131
unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously.

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these 101
parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow [301]
stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved
and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was [157]
the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne.

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found [361]
the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two
to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation
we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were appar- [626
ently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep
the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very 152]
jealous of their women.

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each 576
hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted
us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to [411]
know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave
us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly
wretch craved for medicine.

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for 342
Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so
characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were
finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukhan* [241]
and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and
contented community.

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the 101
same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered
about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a 361
rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were
obviously there for our benefit!

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never 161
before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On
previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we
had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen
in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about
fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by 177
their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their
representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne.
This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that
are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows;
but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting.

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, 224
better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from

18: Kleiweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia OB1
Prehistoric Philippines OA3
Vedda AX5

found in Philippine caves. This particular /106/ skull seems to indicate a race of people of short stature, sub-brachycephalic, with receding forehead, an arcus supraorbitals which protrudes only slightly; a very prognathous and also very platyrrhine race. Sanchez believes that this race preceded the present Negrito groups.

However, it appears to me that this conclusion is very premature, based as it is on only one skull of which one does not even know its correct age. (1)

1. D. Sanchez y Sanchez, "Un cráneo humano prehistorico de Manilla /A Prehistoric Human Skull of Manila/," Memorias de la Real Soc. española de Historia Natural, Vol. XI, 1921.

Another racial element of the Indonesian Archipelago is the Vedda type, which probably arrived there later than the Negritos and which has become known mainly by the explorations of the Sarasins, Rudolph Martin, and Skeat and Blagden.

Paul and Fritz Sarasin have made a careful study of the Vedda tribes of the island of Ceylon. In their excellent book Die Weddas von Ceylon und die sie umgebenden Völkerschaften (Wiesbaden, 1892 and 1893), one can find a very extensive description of those tribes, both from an ethnographical and anthropological angle. The Veddas of Ceylon are a very rare racial element /107/ who lived in the

131 eastern part of that island in separate hordes and families. Nowadays, these Veddas can only be found in the plains of East Ceylon which territory is bordered in the south by the Arukan Aru River: it is commonly called "Mahaweddarata" meaning "Great Vedda Land." This name, however, has at present very little meaning because one can hardly find any real Veddas in that part of the country [144] but rather a population having more Singhalese than Vedda blood in their veins.

177 The Veddas of our times have for the greater part adopted the culture of the higher civilized population of the island of Ceylon. Really primitive Veddas hardly exist any more.

141 The Sarasins describe the Vedda people as one of short 131 stature; for the Veddas of the central districts they found an average height of 155.4 centimeters, for the tribes of the east coast one of 155.8 centimeters, and for the Veddas of the Wewatte territory one of 160.7 centimeters. However, 144 if from the number of Veddas of the central districts those 141 individuals are eliminated which show signs of interbreeding with other elements or can be regarded as such, then one will find a much shorter stature for those Veddas who seem to be of purer race; their average male's height is 153.3 centimeters, /108/ with a minimum of 146.0 centimeters and a maximum of 160.0 centimeters. On the average, the women are about 10 centimeters shorter than the males.

006 Characteristic physical features of the Veddas are:

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 while the Wila-oya and Kulapan-oya convey the waters from the eastern limits of the Buttala-Wedirata to the sea through the Panawa Pattu.

The chief mountains are Wadinagala (2,414 ft.), "Westminster Abbey" (1,830 ft.), Degalhella, Nilgala, Hibitalanagala, Kiripokunagala, "Chimney Hill," and Obbekota in the Monaragala range.

Most of these mountains rise abruptly from the plains below, and terminate in high masses of rock. There are, in some cases—particularly on the summit of "Westminster Abbey"—small patches of vegetation, but in the majority the summits of the more conspicuous hills are bare. The country described, therefore, may, broadly speaking, be considered as flat, broken by a few low undulations, the whole being dotted over irregularly with abrupt mountainous masses of rock.

132 The rainfall of this area is comparatively low, and probably does not exceed an average of 60 inches for the year, nearly the whole of which falls in the north-east monsoon, thus involving a period of extreme drought during the south-west monsoon, when for months there is not a drop of rain, followed by torrential showers of variable intensity and uneven distribution.

I am indebted to Mr. Balfour, the Director of Irrigation, for the details of rainfall at Ampari and Rotawewa,* well outside the area I refer to, and to the Surveyor-General† for the same particulars at Monaragala, these being given in tabular form in the Appendix.

137 As might be anticipated from such variation and extreme, it would follow that the vegetation of the country embraced must be, for the most part, what is called dry-zone flora, but other influences have to be considered in relation to distribution. These may be considered as being affected—

(a) By influence of streams rising in high altitudes, or in moister regions;
(b) By the operations of human beings;
(c) By animal transport of seed;
(d) By wind action.

* Appendix A. † Appendix B.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

●132

APPENDIX A.

Amparai Rainfall.

	1904.		1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.		1913.	
	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.
January ..	—	—	12·23	7	4·97	8	4·32	7	10·36	15	4·85	9	17·70	13	8·82	11	2·24	6	50·06	28
February ..	—	—	2·75	3	0·09	1	1·58	4	7·59	6	7·00	8	4·01	11	2·71	6	0·81	2	7·73	12
March ..	—	—	0·00	0	1·21	4	5·40	5	8·53	8	2·64	4	0·00	0	1·45	2	4·77	6	2·02	5
April ..	—	—	7·41	19	0·53	3	4·72	8	4·37	6	1·77	6	1·07	5	0·00	0	2·52	7	2·80	7
May ..	—	—	5·63	8	1·13	3	1·08	3	1·31	3	0·86	5	1·09	6	1·90	2	1·44	5	0·53	3
June ..	—	—	2·49	7	2·00	3	4·48	4	0·00	0	0·89	1	0·20	3	1·33	4	6·93	4	0·05	1
July ..	—	—	0·10	1	5·66	7	0·23	2	2·55	3	0·00	0	3·18	9	1·69	1	0·03	2	0·76	4
August ..	—	—	3·03	6	8·24	9	3·38	5	2·20	7	5·31	8	5·38	13	7·35	5	2·82	4	1·35	4
September ..	—	—	2·85	4	3·51	5	1·27	5	3·20	9	2·70	6	5·78	9	9·30	10	6·74	5	1·36	3
October ..	—	—	2·02	8	10·84	10	6·52	13	7·11	17	9·56	16	14·66	17	10·41	17	7·32	19	12·17	15
November ..	—	—	23·15	19	10·82	22	9·61	13	9·06	11	4·24	12	11·58	12	22·90	24	12·15	16	11·90	19
December ..	—	—	5·08	10	9·30	9	3·50	5	24·92	25	7·79	19	21·95	19	32·91	24	14·72	19	33·99	19
Total ..	—	—	66·74	92	58·30	84	46·09	74	81·20	110	47·61	94	86·60	117	101·77	106	62·49	95	124·72	130

ROTAWEWA RAINFALL.

	1904.		1905.		1906.		1907.		1908.		1909.		1910.		1911.		1912.		1913.	
	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.	Inches.	Days.
January ..	—	—	4·00	7	2·71	6	6·57	8	8·85	14	6·03	7	32·93	12	5·92	9	5·27	4	58·55	24
February ..	—	—	3·94	5	0·52	1	0·45	4	9·77	7	3·09	4	0·82	2	0·43	2	0·89	2	11·43	8
March ..	—	—	0·00	0	2·17	3	4·26	8	8·82	9	3·81	4	1·95	2	0·32	2	3·15	7	6·49	5
April ..	—	—	10·66	12	1·42	3	6·82	9	1·22	3	0·86	5	1·68	5	0·00	0	2·75	5	0·20	1
May ..	—	—	1·20	4	6·63	4	0·51	2	5·95	3	2·49	4	0·95	2	0·33	1	4·89	7	0·00	0
June ..	—	—	1·67	2	0·00	0	1·88	2	0·00	0	0·00	0	0·23	1	0·15	1	1·20	3	0·00	0
July ..	—	—	0·00	0	1·79	4	0·25	1	0·54	2	1·33	3	0·00	0	0·64	2	0·00	0	0·79	3
August ..	—	—	0·37	2	3·75	7	1·09	5	1·06	2	6·11	9	1·40	2	1·24	5	0·63	2	0·61	3
September .	—	—	0·17	1	0·60	1	0·47	1	6·25	6	0·00	0	2·38	5	4·56	7	4·29	2	0·29	1
October ..	—	—	6·89	9	6·18	8	6·32	10	4·10	9	3·17	6	6·92	6	2·99	7	5·48	14	8·29	8
November .	—	—	24·52	17	11·06	16	11·68	13	3·21	11	4·74	6	8·80	9	20·83	23	6·61	15	6·47	12
December ..	—	—	6·49	11	6·84	8	4·39	6	19·24	15	3·86	10	20·47	14	23·73	22	15·44	16	28·52	15
Total ..	—	—	59·91	70	43·67	61	45·59	69	69·01	81	35·49	58	78·53	60	61·14	81	50·60	77	121·64	80

132

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

APPENDIX B.

● 132

	Monaragala Hospital, 700 ft. altitude. Inches.	Mean for 15 Years. Inches.
January	3·13 ..	7·51
February	·26 ..	3·51
March	3·20 ..	3·78
April	15·07 ..	7·02
May	7·64 ..	8·48
June	1·23 ..	1·72
July	·70 ..	3·09
August	3·33 ..	3·72
September	2·47 ..	4·41
October	4·88 ..	12·72
November	8·74 ..	9·80
December	10·33 ..	10·15
Total	60·99* ..	70·91†

* 110 days for 1912. † 101 days.

APPENDIX C.

136 **List of Birds observed in the Vedda Country during July, 1914, giving Local Distribution.**

1. *Astur badius.* One seen at Guruhela.
2. *Accipiter* sp. (?). The Museum Collector obtained a ♀ Accipiter, which I am inclined to think is a new species to Ceylon. It was one of a pair that were engaged in building at the time it was shot. It possesses the characteristic long central toe, but in size it is much smaller than *A. nisus* or *A. virgatus*, with the breast boldly marked with dark smoke-brown streaks and blotches, and not barred. The second and third primaries also differ from the last mentioned, while the tarsus is also markedly stouter. My example was obtained at Newgala.
3. *Pernis cristatus.* Observed at Panawa and Bargura
4. *Spilornis cheela.* Observed at the base of the Monaragala hills, at Guruhela, Etmole, Panawa, and near Kebilitte.
5. *Haliæetus leucogaster.* Observed at Panawa, Okanda, Lahugala, and Kumuna.
6. *Haliastur indus.* Common at Panawa and at Bargura.
7. *Falco peregrinus.* Nesting in the eastern cliff of "Westminster Abbey."

8: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A 302 man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 755 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarming blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a 252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company G of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike 101 those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the 105 jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night 539 with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of 342 that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a 361 medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

ooo A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the V Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That [132] evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL

THE Vedda country at the present day is limited to a roughly triangular tract lying between the eastern slopes of the central mountain *massif* and the sea. This area of about 2400 square miles is bounded on the west by the Mahaweli Ganga, from the point where, abandoning its eastern course through the mountains of the Central Province, the river sweeps northwards to the sea. A line from this great bend passing eastwards through Bibile village (on the Badulla-Batticaloa road) to the coast will define the southern limits of the Vedda country with sufficient accuracy, while its eastern limit is the coast. So defined it includes the greater part of the Eastern Province, about a fifth of Uva and a small portion of that part of the North Central Province known as Tamankaduwa, and is traversed by a single high road capable of taking wheeled traffic. This runs from Badulla, the capital of Uva, lying at the foot of the central mountain mass of the island, to the coast a few miles to the north of Batticaloa, the capital of the Eastern Province. 131. [491]

Excepting only the mountain scenery of Upper Uva and the Central Province, the Vedda country even in its present diminished form presents every variety of scenery met with in Ceylon, including alike the magnificent Uva park lands and the sandy mangrove-fringed flats of the Eastern coast. Within its borders is situated Mahayangana (Alutnuwara) the ancient assembling place of the Yakkas where, according to the Mahawansa, Buddha appeared and struck terror into their hearts before propounding his doctrines to the hosts of *deva* who 133.

Plate I

133

Fig. 1. View from the P. W. D. bungalow at Nilgala

Fig. 2. The Gal Oya river near Nilgala

[facing p. 2]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133

attended him there. Here was erected the Mahayangana dagaba, the oldest in Ceylon, built over the relics of the very Buddha and from its inception to the present day the goal of countless generations of pious pilgrims reaching it by descending the Gallepadahulla, the pass of two thousand steps, that leads in less than an hour from the breezy uplands of the Central Province to the steamy river valley two thousand feet below. It is from this, the old pilgrim path, wending its way above the pass through the pleasant hills of Uva from the forgotten city of Medamahanuwara, that the best idea of the Vedda country is obtained. A sudden rise in the ground gives the first view of the Vedda country through a V-shaped frame of hills, and from such a spot as this Knox must have looked upon Bintenne. "It (the country of Bintan) seems to be a smooth land and not much hilly, the great river running through the midst of it. It is all over covered with mighty woods and abundance of deer, but much subject to dry weather and sickness. In these woods is a sort of wild people inhabiting, whom we shall speak of in their place[1]."

Continuing along the path a little further, a wider view is obtained where the track seems to end abruptly in a great rock, the Ballangala or look-out rock, upon which the pilgrim halts to gaze reverently upon the ancient dagaba and the flat land spread out before him.

Here flows the Mahaweli ganga, soon to be hidden in the great sea of forest-clad lowland stretching away to the north, from which rise Kokagalla and other hills, the traditional homes of the Veddas, like rocky islands in the distance. To the east tower the Uva Mountains, stretching onwards in a diminishing series towards the uplands of Nilgala. In Bintenne, including in this term parts of both Uva and the Eastern Province, the jungle consists of a forest of great trees without much undergrowth, occasionally interrupted by open spaces, covered with coarse grass, which, however, does not grow much higher than the knee. These open patches are more numerous in the Eastern Province than they are in Uva Bintenne (which is traversed by

[1] *An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon in the East Indies*, London, 1681. Chapter II, p. 3.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

many small streams) and it is generally supposed that they are the sites of ancient cultivation; there are comparatively few streams in this country though swamps and small water holes containing stagnant water are common[1]. 133

Northward in Tamankaduwa (a division of the North Central Province) the great trees give place to poorer growth and a scrubby jungle is found. On the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road lie the Nilgala hills, the best of the Vedda domain and the most pleasing country in Ceylon. Here, broad valleys lie between jungle-clad ranges of much weathered gneiss, among whose rocky crags and rounded domes, *bambaru*, the rock bee (*Apis indica*), builds its combs. Here is no gloomy jungle, but in the valleys are many thickets and small trees growing scattered as in a young orchard, their trunks protected by coarse lalang grass which often attains 5 or 6 feet in 133 137

[1] The character of the Bintenne of the Eastern Province has been well stated by Mr H. Freeman, Government Agent for the Eastern Province, in his Administration Report for 1908, for the following extract from which I am indebted to Mr John Ferguson: "This is an unsatisfactory region; a wretched population of about 3,000 in the largest pattu of the Province has, with the exception of three or four small patches of paddy land, nothing to live on except chenas and jungle produce; they have not the advantage of the hundreds along the coast who can get a sort of living by begging from their neighbours. Necessarily the Bintenna folk are miserable in appearance; nearly all of them are sick. There are many abandoned tanks, but the people have neither the physique nor the will to restore them. There are no coconuts to speak of in Bintenna; the few trees are either infertile or barren. Still we must take the people and the country as we find them, and rather than let the population drift away from Bintenna to the chena country of Uva, I would concentrate them on the more fertile spots about Kallodai, Maha-oya, Pullumalai and Tempitiya, on or near the Badulla road, and endeavour to teach them to do tank work; there are promising, abandoned, tanks, which could be restored, and the land settled on the people on easy terms. Plentiful chenas would be necessary to fill the stomachs of the people to get work out of them; maize grows well in Bintenna; it is now imported in large quantities from Uva; large tracts of Bintenna could be turned into maize fields for the supply of the people on the coast also, while Uva could then keep to itself its supplies of this commodity sent down to this district....In addition to the Sinhalese population of Bintenna there are the Veddas,...and bands of gipsies find a good hunting ground there. Some of these have just been prosecuted and imprisoned for violating the Game Laws, and also made to pay road tax, payment of which they have evaded for years; the gipsies have considerable wealth in cattle and other property; they also drink and steal. Since writing the above on the condition of Bintenna I have explored other and remoter parts of that division, and find that whatever prosperity in paddy cultivation it enjoyed in the distant past must have been due to the Rajakariya system, in the absence of which Bintenna will probably remain a wilderness for an indefinitely long period."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 height. Clear rock-strewn streams abound, their banks
137 brightened by the deep green leaves and the bright red flowers of the *ratwal* (*Ixora coccinea*). Scattered masses of rock often of great size form convenient shelters for the Veddas, and assist the rapid drainage of the country, which does not become water-logged even during torrential rains. This beautiful country is rich in game. To the east, where many Veddas have drifted, the jungle is thicker, the land lies lower, and is generally less healthy. The Nuwaragala Hills to the north of the Nilgala ranges are perhaps the wildest part of the island and are more densely clothed in jungle, but there are plenty of streams, while the slope of the country permits of ready drainage.

The coastal zone north of Batticaloa inhabited by the coast Veddas is flat and sandy, and the vegetation though dense is often less tall and less abundant than in other parts of the country. Salt water marshes are common, and the country is cut into by numerous lagoons and creeks, often bounded by a fringe of mangroves which stretches some distance up the mouths of the rivers. Although this area may now, and
131 for yet a few years, be rightly called the Vedda country it must
161 not be thought that any considerable number of its inhabitants
563 are Veddas, or that they exercise any territorial or political influence; on the contrary, they constitute an insignificant fraction of the Tamil and Sinhalese inhabitants before whom they are rapidly disappearing, partly by intermarriage and absorption, partly owing to misery and a high death rate brought about by sheer inability to cope with the new state of affairs that the increased settlement of this, the wildest part of the island, has brought about.

Formerly the Vedda country is known to have embraced
131 the whole of the Uva, and much of the Central and North
175 Central Provinces, while there is no reason to suppose that their territory did not extend beyond these limits. Indeed there is no reasonable doubt that the Veddas are identical with the "Yakkas" of the Mahavansa and other native chronicles.

175 The seventh chapter of the Mahawansa relates the arrival in Ceylon, B.C. 543, of Vijaya who married Kuweni an aboriginal princess (*Yakkini*) and by her assistance destroyed a great

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
133

Fig. 1. Rough shelter on the Danigala rock dome

142
516

Fig. 2. Veddas of Bandaraduwa

[facing p. 38]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

NOTES ON ANIMAL AND PLANT LIFE IN THE VEDDA COUNTRY.

By FREDERICK LEWIS, F.L.S.

(With one map.)

THE locality to which these notes apply represents the whole of the Maha Wedirata, the eastern half of the Buttala-Wedirata, and the southern half of the Panawa Pattu of the Eastern Province. 131

This large extent of country falls within part of Uva from the Monaragala range eastwards, and, as indicated above, part of the Eastern Province, or more specifically within the following rough boundaries. Starting from the conspicuous needle-pointed mountain called Wadinagala on the north, it follows the provincial limits of the Eastern Province to the point where it crosses the Government cart road from Potuvil to Muppane. From that point the road to Muppane is adopted as far at Potuvil, from thence following the sea-coast to Kumuna on the banks of the Kumbukkan river.

Next the Kumbukkan river is followed to a point called Kobilitte, at the foot of the imposing mass of rock shown on the Admiralty charts as "Chimney Hill." From here, a line drawn to Sirigala and thence to Wadinagala encloses the whole.

Within this area there is only one perennial river—the Kumbukkan-aar, which forms the southern limit of the region in question. The next largest stream is the Heda-oya, which in the north-east monsoon is a wide and formidable river. To the north the Lankiya-oya is an important stream, which is supplemented by several considerable branches that after uniting with it form a great branch of the Namal-oya. 133

The Govindu-oya, rising on the east flank of the "Westminster Abbey," forms a useful branch of the Karandi-oya that drains the eastern half of the Maha Wedirata country,

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 while the Wila-oya and Kulapan-oya convey the waters from the eastern limits of the Buttala-Wedirata to the sea through the Panawa Pattu.

The chief mountains are Wadinagala (2,414 ft.), "Westminster Abbey" (1,830 ft.), Degalhella, Nilgala, Hibitalanagala, Kiripokunagala, "Chimney Hill," and Obbekota in the Monaragala range.

Most of these mountains rise abruptly from the plains below, and terminate in high masses of rock. There are, in some cases—particularly on the summit of "Westminster Abbey"—small patches of vegetation, but in the majority the summits of the more conspicuous hills are bare. The country described, therefore, may, broadly speaking, be considered as flat, broken by a few low undulations, the whole being dotted over irregularly with abrupt mountainous masses of rock.

132 The rainfall of this area is comparatively low, and probably does not exceed an average of 60 inches for the year, nearly the whole of which falls in the north-east monsoon, thus involving a period of extreme drought during the south-west monsoon, when for months there is not a drop of rain, followed by torrential showers of variable intensity and uneven distribution.

I am indebted to Mr. Balfour, the Director of Irrigation, for the details of rainfall at Ampari and Rotawewa,* well outside the area I refer to, and to the Surveyor-General† for the same particulars at Monaragala, these being given in tabular form in the Appendix.

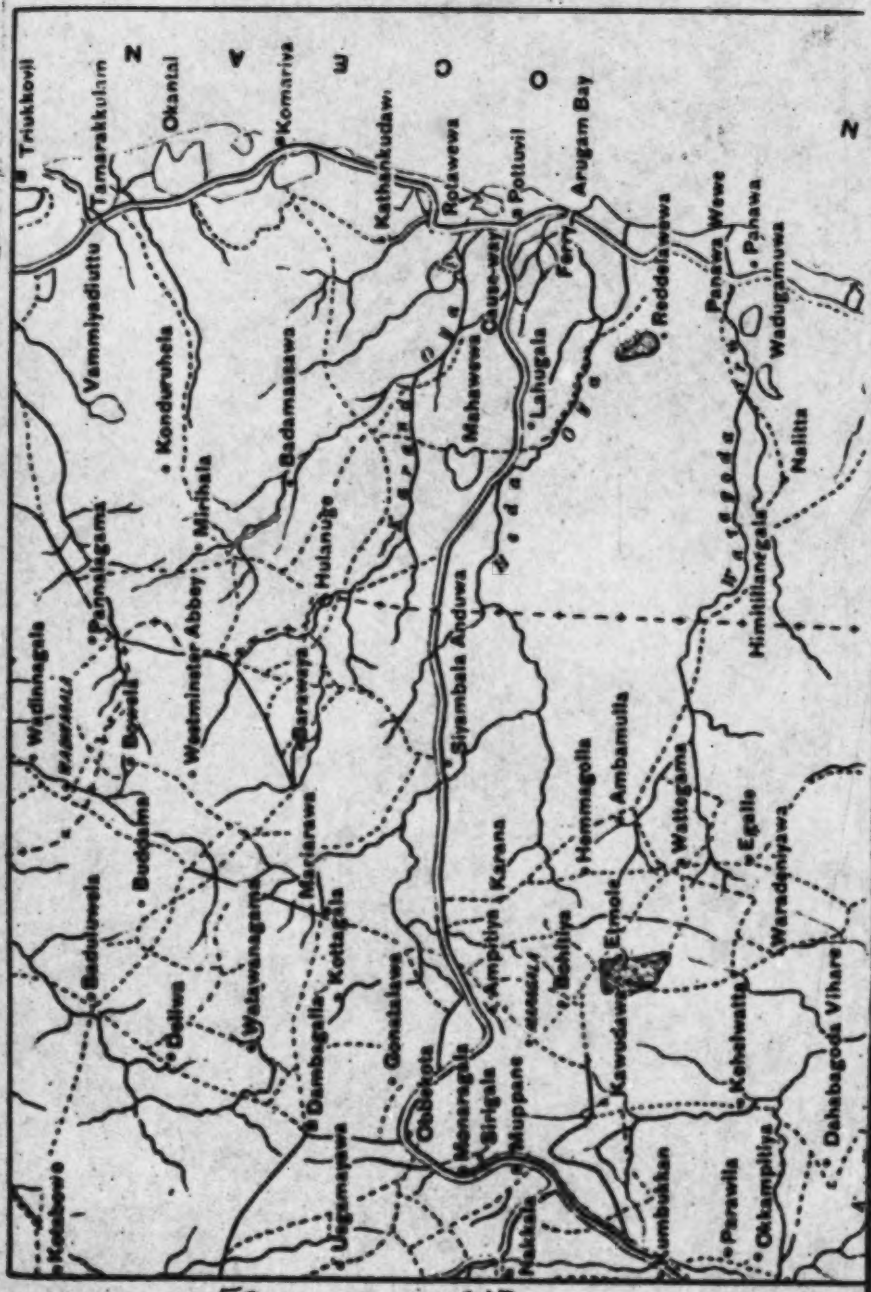
137 As might be anticipated from such variation and extreme, it would follow that the vegetation of the country embraced must be, for the most part, what is called dry-zone flora, but other influences have to be considered in relation to distribution. These may be considered as being affected—

(a) By influence of streams rising in high altitudes, or in moister regions;
(b) By the operations of human beings;
(c) By animal transport of seed;
(d) By wind action.

* Appendix A. † Appendix B.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

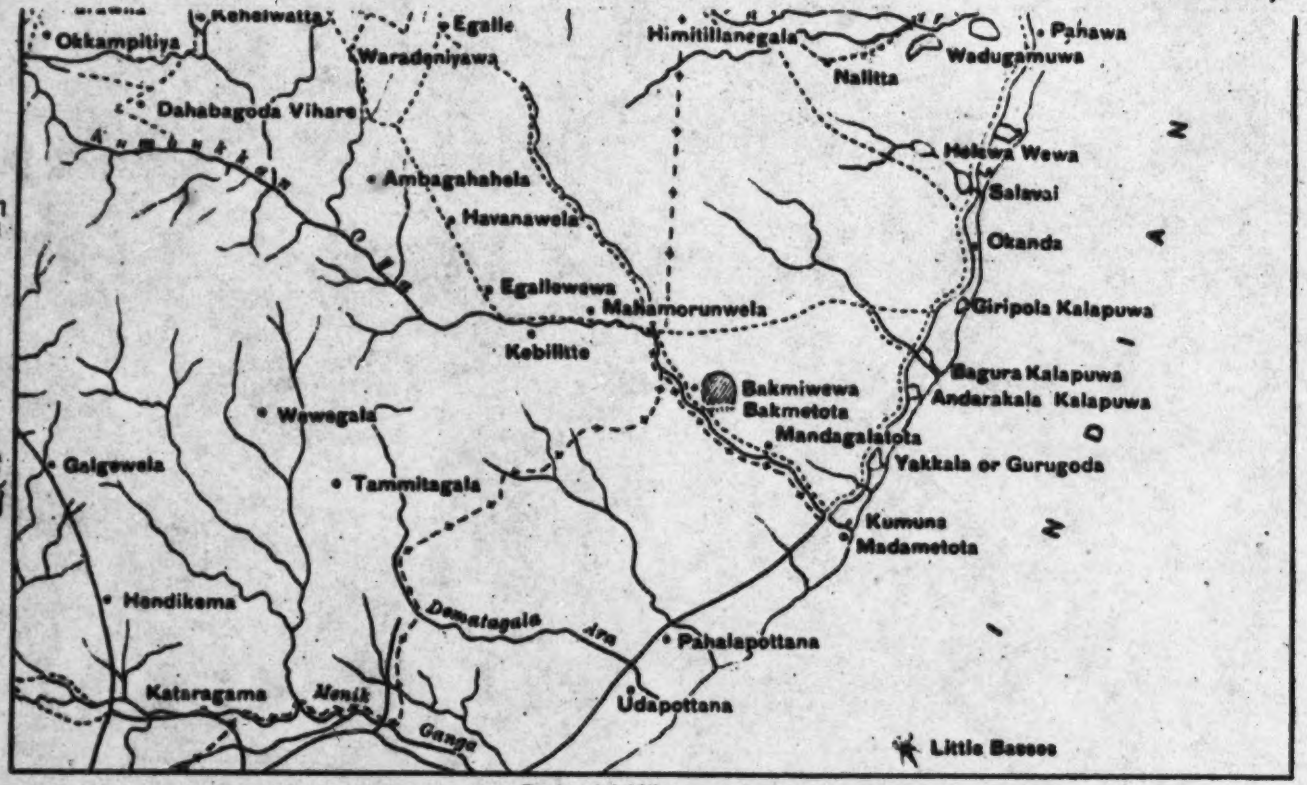
102
133
361



[Facing p. 164(A)]

102
133
361

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5



The Vedda Country.

[facing p. 167 (8)]

342
516

Of no consequence except to each other (Page 5)

133

Gunner's Quoin across Manampitiya tank. (Page 7)

[facing p. 3]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

away more frightened than you. A scratching noise under your pillow may lead to the discovery of a scorpion or a centipede. Beetles, moths, biting ants, and insects of all descriptions investigate and experiment with you. But you soon learn to ignore these little draw-backs and drowse to the lullaby of some wood-land songster.

Tropical Nature is a stern mistress; her favours are never unalloyed. For him who would seek her she holds grievances in store, grievances that enhance the very joy they encumber; toning down ecstasy lest it pall with surfeit; giving to the contemplation of foregone experience that unfettered pleasure the reality denies, prompting us in after years to say, forgetful of all the hardships, "those were happy days we had".

The Verugal where it joined the Mahaweli was at this season an insignificant stream. Quite a colony of tobacco growers flourished here. Very picturesque are these settlements or *thethes* as they are called. Four to six huts stand some distance apart in clearings along the bank, most of them beautifully overspread with melon-creepers. Every hut has its vegetable garden; and standing before them, like sentinels, are the draw-wells, usually in couples, that feed the tobacco plots direct from the river. The lowing of cattle under the superb trees that stud the clearing, the crowing of cocks, the sound of human voices complete the atmosphere of rural domesticity in this wild land and furnish scenes which would rejoice the heart of a painter.

Putting up one evening in a coconut grove owned by a Moor we found an unkempt ill-clad fellow seated on his haunches staring at some simple wares a pedlar was displaying. They told us he was a Vedda from a village some miles away. Becoming restless under our scrutiny he walked off. I followed him to his miserable shelter, where I found his daughter, a puny girl of four, covered with ulcers. Edging up towards her father she stared at us distrustfully with the eyes of a startled doe. A few broken pots were their sole belongings. The bond of tender solicitude that united these human derelicts, of no consequence except to each other, was indeed a touching sight. I asked the man what he did for a living. He said he "earned a rupee for two months work". He knew neither his nor his daughter's age, and when pressed for an answer said irritably, "What do I know of age? Am I a man who knows anything about age?" Blessed mortal!

We gave him a coin which he at first refused, and only accepted with persuasion; he had evidently never handled one like it before, for he looked at it puzzled and suspicious; and when the amount it represented was explained to him he was not enlightened.

"He knows nothing," said the Moor vociferously. "Ask him to count six and see if he can. He's a real bull. What does he know? He's a Vedda. For thirty-six cents he will bring a kerosene-tinful of *bambara** honey, and," he added chuckling with subtle satisfaction, "he does not know what thirty-six cents is!"

The next day we saw in the distance the blue contours of Gunner's Quoin, the goal of our journey. The river had now become considerably shallower with broad stretches of its sandy bed exposed. As we punted along the shady border, we suddenly came upon a most realistic piece of ancient sculpture—the life-sized head of an elephant carved out of a

*Rock-bee, *Apis dorsata*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

3. YAKKURE

This be the verse you grave for me;
Here he lies where belonged to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. STEVENSON

THROUGH a lush meadow studded with fragrant wood-apple, we entered 000
Kalukolu Eba a hamlet of some twenty huts nestling in the picturesque dishabille of a *chena* rank with maize, vegetables and chillies. Here as elsewhere in the Vanni there was much evidence of parangi (framboesia). Fully three-fourths of the people showed active or quiescent traces of the disease. A boy had a necklace of loathsome papules; a woman covered with nodes in practically every bone of her body was boiling a decoction of dry leaves as a salve; another was stewing monitor flesh in chilli-water.

The first sign of our nearness to Yakkure was a cattle-pen stamped clean, 231
where half a dozen boys were securing cows and yearlings for the night. Scratching around the stockade with the tameness of domestic fowls were a jungle cock and his dames, and from every side came the jerky cries of wild chanticleers. A cairn of tumbled stones marked the site of 172
an old *vihare*. Blue in the distance, across a wide lagoon bordered with sedge, lotus and dead trees, stood the long rock called Gunner's Quoin, with a bare patch, high on its tree-mantled flank, pointed out to us as the Maraweethiya, a historic cave.

Yakkure itself was a negligently palisaded hamlet nestling ina grove of 361
tamarinds, in full view of a beautiful tank. We were unfortunate in our choice of a camping place. Five days of seclusion in the forest had made us forget that the immediate proximity to a village always meant flies, smells, and embarrassing attentions from forward men and coy but curious women. There were other draw-backs too. At sunset, from a pool near by, came a low, ominous hum auguring ill for our night's rest. We lit fires, bestowed meticulous care on bed curtains, and bedaubed ourselves with mosquitol. The lapwing's desolate cry, the doleful music of water fowl, the booming of great owls, the distant trumpeting of elephants, and more than all, the baffled mosquito murmur around, soon lulled me to sleep. But my companion who had failed to stop up betimes several holes in his curtain, the inside of which was found at dawn to be plastered with a blood-sodden host, tells a different story!

Three miles from Yakkure are the well-known falls of the Mahaweli. 133
At flood-time their thunder is heard at the village. Once in a decade [731]
the waters reep up to and submerge the huts, sending the people up trees, and their cattle into the forest to be drowned or killed by leopards. With a *kapua* (priest) for guide, for the place is held eerie, we set out to [778]
visit the falls. Skirting an ancient aqueduct (*yoda ella*) which tapped the river a mile above the falls, we came to open jungle bordering the banks, that allowed us free passage through its colonnades of giant

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133

Dastota falls. (Page 39)

291
412
415

Sinna, a Vedda of Gunner's Quoin. (Page 42)

[facing p. 39]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133 timber. Such places are the favourite resort of sambur, of which on this morning we saw no less than six. From great tree-heights came the whirring of strong wings as gibbous-beaked hornbills took alarm. We were perhaps a half-mile from the falls when we first heard them like a pervasive hum of swarming bees. Soon we lost the noise; and turning to our guide for an explanation, learnt, inconsequently enough, that "the water does not cry after the morning; it cries loudest when the cock crows at dawn!" The sound swelled suddenly again as there opened before us, not the turbulent cascade we expected, but placid murmuring rapids that swirled in a wide sheet around and over a thousand sunnied boulders. Such were the falls as we saw them; but on occasion they could be a roaring power leaping over the granite to a wild cataract melody, surging widely to the outskirts of Yakkure itself, and bestrewing the jungle with great wrack that even now lay stranded high on forked tree-trunks. What wonder the place is held in awe and that men have a care how they journey to it, lest they be lost on the way or fall a prey to beast or demon.

172 778 A smooth rock on the bank bore the frettings of ancient craft; the tutelary god's *devale* (temple) it was said to be. Here we were irreverently seated, while our guides sat apart whispering at the profanation. The surface of the rock was socketed presumably to hold strong stanchions which in the old days supported a bridge across the water; while small [782] oval pools, reputed to contain a mint of wealth from the accumulation of years of propitiatory and votive offerings, showed to our pagan vision nothing more than a few potato-like pebbles and sportive water beetles.

000 A few months before our visit, Yakkure was the setting of a gallant episode:—On the bund of the Polonnaruwa tank stands a shanty for forest-officers on circuit. Here one evening a wiry man of forty-five was amusing himself with his rifle. Placing a rupee against a tree fifty yards away he fired, holing it in the centre. He next made his targets a variety of live things that flecked the smooth surface of the tank, such as a cormorant or the barely visible head of a submerged crocodile. Every time his aim was true. The shots attracted a friend. "Testing your nerves as usual before an adventure?" he asked, walking up. "What is it this time? The Yakkure rogue* I'll bet."

"Yes, to-morrow I hope to get him," was the confident response. "You haven't seen *this* before, have you?" said the hunter handling his new rifle.

"You know best," said his friend; "but I should have brought a tried weapon if I were you, especially against such a beast as the Yakkure rogue is said to be. Only yesterday he smashed a boy to pulp. The villagers are too scared to leave their homes."

"This gun is all right. I've tested it. See," said he, indicating his hits, "I've been warned time and again against the use of light arms for elephants, but they have never failed me so far. Once, though," he continued thoughtfully "I had a near shave..... You know, I sometimes wonder whether the villagers appreciate what I do for them."

"They look on you as their greatest benefactor," replied his friend.

"It is good to know that," said the hunter. "For the last fifteen years, whenever I heard of a rogue in my province, I've gone after him; often at great trouble and expense."

*A dangerous elephant ostracised by the herd, and a menace to human life and property.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER V

WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND FRIAR'S HOOD

I. WESTMINSTER ABBEY

I know not where the white road runs,
nor what the blue hills are,
But a man can have a sun for friend,
and for his guide a star;
And there's no end of voyaging when once
the voice is heard,
For the river calls and the road calls, and oh!
the call of a bird.

GERALD GOULD

133 FROM some dominant height in the central uplands of Ceylon one can survey, to east and south, a vast sea of hill-studded forest. The scene, when glowing with the hues of evening, might well take its place among the panoramas of the world. In this medley of mountains there is one, a long ridge rising at one end to a square tower, which seldom fails to arrest the fancy. Westminster Abbey it is called by those who view it from afar, Govinda Hela by those with closer acquaintance of it. Well to the north of this is a peak, tall and lonely, known as Friar's Hood —the *Capello de Frade* of the old Portuguese mariners to whom it was a land-mark by which to evade their mortal foes the Dutch, "the rebels from Europe" as their despatches called them. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est*, says Tacitus; but does near knowledge always rob reality of romance? We shall see.

776 The inhabitants of Siyambala Anduwa, half way between Muppane and Pottuvil, are a simple folk ingrained with jungle superstition: That river beneath the bridge was haunted by demons; it was not safe to go there alone at night, or to bathe there by noon especially with scented soap, for this attracted devils who showed their displeasure by hammering on the bridge or throwing sand; a small boy digging in the river-bed was swallowed into the earth and rescued only to die of a fever a few days later. Apparitions were seen in the form of dwarfs who shot up to the proportions of trees and suddenly disappeared, striking the beholder with terror. As for children you could not bring up "those things" in these parts. The *gawara* was a buffalo-like beast possessed of a tongue so horny that when it licked man or animal the flesh dissolved away leaving only the bones. The *Nittaewo* were a pigmy race, that lived at one time in the Kattragam country of Lenama not far away. These hairy cannibals attacked in companies, driving their long nails into the

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree
that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of
the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of
brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pine-
apple.

The height was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the
superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then
the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There,
crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadina-
gala; to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thanagoda* (breast
mounds) and behind them *Thanakirigoda* (breast milk mound) with
wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks
driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the
summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach
of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale:
A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a
ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing
daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by
just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within
reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it.
When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep
into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards
it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge
collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year.
On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor
fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife
who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena kalangkal-
angme popekorai*," which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 535
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were
hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with
slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose
and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that
these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted
by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with
great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that [534]
studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch
perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For
a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step
dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they out-
distance us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

1 [the hill called Westminster Abbey. – Analyst]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

CHAPTER VII

BINTENNE

THE pass at Kadugannawa was thronged with bartering humanity. Being Sunday, it was market day, and the occasion served well to help us lay in a good stock of tobacco and betel, the best passport to the wild interior.

On through Teldeniya, whose cocoa plantations teem with snails that straggle over the road to explode under our car-wheels, and then, after Urugalla, we climb the Nugatenne gap and, skirting the Dumbara valley, attain beautiful wind-swept Madugoda. So far among the hills. From here it is a sudden drop to the Mahaweli and the wilderness beyond. We have left Madugoda but a little way when, at a turn, there suddenly opens before us a magic sea of misty greenery broken by hill ranges; there stand many blue mountains we know, Kokagalla, the dancing rock of the Veddas, and Friar's Hood faint and far; and there gleam a river and a tank; the former the Mahaweli, the latter placid Horabora Wewa traditional lake of Vedda lands.

The descent from the hills here is perhaps the most precipitous in all Ceylon; we drop some two thousand feet, and negotiate eighteen elbow bends within four miles; then, skirting the base of the mountain we come to the ferry of Weragantota and cross the Mahaweli in canoes to Alutnuwara, a fever-stricken place; whoever sojourns here even a few days invariably pays the penalty.

A quaint old town is Alutnuwara, or Bintenne as the jungle dwellers call it. Cosy homes and boutiques nestle under shady trees. Chained monkeys and caged parrots are ubiquitous and may be purchased for a song. Laden *tavalam* teams rest here on their way to the interior. It being April, every tree has its nesting bird—bee-catchers, bulbuls, drongos, coppersmiths and all the rest of them; hungry little squirrels cheep spasmodically for food; song fills the air.

Scattered about the place one is surprised to find old cannon. Those who see them for the first time frame visions of an era when ancient Sinhalese kings built these in foundries, and fed them with powder made from sulphur and nitre available in the neighbouring hills. But we may safely assume that firearms were unknown in Ceylon prior to the coming of the Portuguese. What then is the story of these brave things that lie in a ditch here, set off a doorway there? They were brought here, according to some, from the East coast by the English in their attempts to take Kandy; but finding the mountain barrier impassable they abandoned them here. The more likely explanation, however, is that they are a survival of the time when Alutnuwara was a military station after the Kandyan rebellion of 1817, "the last great occasion on which the English forces were arrayed in hostility against the natives of any portion of Ceylon."* To prevent a repetition of rebellion, a

*Emerson Tennent.

[p. 91]

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

caloa and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.* 131 [177] [184]

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt. [137] [136]

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in *their* barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other. 184 361 342 224

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡ 161

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter 177

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenna. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited. [177]

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 422 [685]

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days. 648 685 [754]

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in goal, he might carry back with him some little civilization to his own people. 648

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist. [301]

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pengolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, 262

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Samba deer (*rusa Aristotelis*). [136]

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

235 Of fowls, I observed a remarkable diversity of breed. They may be classed as—

(a) The Bantam type, with the medium length of saddle and conspicuous *erect* tail.

(b) The wild type, with long saddle and large *drooping* tail.

(c) The Cochin-China type, with feathered tarsi.

In the first of these the crow of the cocks is quite distinct, it being what I call a shrill falsetto. In (b), what I call the wild type, the plumage of the males approximates that of our jungle fowl, both in its beauty of colouring and in the disposition of the tail feathers. The hens, too, were more commonly brown than in the Bantam type, where white is the prevailing colour of this sex. In (c) the feathered leg is the outstanding characteristic. Here the size of bird is larger than in the first group, but shorter in the back than in what I call the wild type. In no case did I find birds with yellow combs, though the early presence of the comb in cock chickens is particularly noticeable. It would appear, therefore, that the domestic fowl has here developed characteristics that would imply crossing from three stocks, one of which is analogous to, if not identical with, the wild bird. On the other hand, the unmistakable crow of the wild bird is different from that of any of the village races.

136 Of wild animals, the following is a brief list of observed mammalia:—

(1) *The Gray Wanderoo.*—Scarce in the Maha Wedirata, plentiful towards the sea coast in the Panawa Pattu and in the valley of the Kumbukkan river. Probably this species was common all through the Vedda country, but as its flesh was eaten it became exterminated, except in uninhabited places.

(2) *The "Red Monkey" or Rilawa* (Macacus pileatus).—Not common. I found a few in the valley of the Heda-oya and near Lahugala.

(3) *The Loris* (Loris gracilis).—Very rare. I did not see a single example, but I was told by the people that it was known near the "Westminster Abbey" range of hills, and again near Monaragala.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

(4) *Leopard* (Felis pardus).—Common. I constantly came upon the tracks of the leopard in all parts of the Vedda country, except very far away from water. 136

(5) *Indian Civet* (Viverricula malaccensis).—Occasional.

(6) *Mungoose* (Herpestes mungo).—Very common, usually pale coloured.

(7) *Jackal* (Canis aureus).—Very common all through the Vedda country, and probably crosses with the domestic dog. It is commonly believed that the jackal conveys rinderpest, owing to its devouring cattle that have died of that disease. I secured a jackal pup out of a hollow scrapod at the foot of a Mustard tree (*Salvadora persica*). The little creature at first showed considerable timidity, but rapidly got over this shyness. Finding a difficulty in providing it with food I had it put back at the place where it was captured. It soon ran off, apparently led by its mother, as I found the spot afterwards to be completely unoccupied.

(8) *Indian Otter* (Lutra nair).—I found the marks of this animal on the Kumbukkan river, but nowhere else. It is well known by the name of Diya-balla, so that I cannot suppose it is rare.

(9) *Bear* (Melursinus ursinus).—Common. I found footprints of bear in the driest parts of the country that I explored, and in places where I could find but few other traces of animals. The fruits of the Palu (*Mimusops hexandra*) and Wira (*Hemicyclia sepiaria*) are readily devoured by bears, who in this way to some extent spread the growth of these plants. I am informed by the people that direct attacks upon human beings by bears are uncommon, and that when injuries have occurred the animal has invariably been startled. Thus, I was told that hollow trees should be approached with caution, as a bear roused suddenly from its sleep within might with equal likelihood spring upon, as away from, its disturber.

Near Nahmaluwahela, on a rocky mass, I found a dead bear. He appeared to have fallen from the rock above on to a ledge below which there was a still larger drop, and being maimed was unable to get up or down from the spot where I found the body.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 (10) *Musk Rat* (Crocidura ocerulea).—Very uncommon. I found it at Potuvil only.

(11) *Flying Fox* (Pteropus medius).—I can only remember seeing this bat once in the Buttala-Wedirata.

(12) *Bats.*—I did not shoot any, so am unable to specifically name those that I saw, which included—

(a) The cave bat;
(b) The house bat;
(c) A small brown bat, locally called "Kiri-wawula"—a most active species; and
(d) A gray bat—probably the Indian Vampire.

The first of these is found in great abundance in caves, but I did not find them as widely distributed as the last three.

I noticed when lying on my camp bed at night under trees that the brown bat would hover quite close to my face. I tried the experiment of lying still with my feet uncovered, to see if they would attack the exposed limb, but beyond hovering within a few inches of me they did no harm.

(13) *The Rock Squirrel* (Sciurus macrurus).—Common, away from habitations, as it has been shot down for food. On the Kumbukkan I found it plentiful, while at Bowela, Danakirigama, and Manawela it is distinctly rare. The black variety is perhaps a little more rare than the gray.

(14) *Palm Squirrel* (Sc. palmarum).—Not generally common, and appears to follow human distribution. It is more plentiful near Muppane than at Bowela.

(15) A *Jungle Squirrel*, probably Sc. tristriatus, was seen by me at the base of the "Westminster Abbey" hills. It is readily distinguishable from the last by being a dark slate-coloured animal, with bright chestnut stripes. It is usually solitary.

(16) *Rats* are not very plentiful from my observations, except at Kumuna.

(17) *Bandicoot* (Nesocia bandicota).—I repeatedly heard of this animal as being very destructive to chena crops, but I did not actually see one. It is said to be eaten as freely as the mouse deer.

(18) *Porcupine* (Hystrix leucura).—Uncommon. I found traces of it on the banks of the Kumbukkan river and at

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Siyambala-anduwa, but the people do not speak of it as common. 136

(19) *Hare* (Lepus nigricollis).—Common.

(20) *Elephant* (Eliphas maximus).—I came on elephants frequently, but as regards their abundance or the reverse, it appears to be a matter of water distribution; thus, near the Kumbukkan river, the Heda-oya, and Kurapan-oya one would find abundant traces, or, as I did, the animals themselves. As soon as the country gets dried up in the south-west monsoon the distribution ceases to be general, and the places where elephants will be found is only within reach of water. Directly the rains begin and the fresh grass springs up—as it does do with remarkable rapidity—elephants may be found in all parts, so that it might be said that there is a distinct symptom of migration. I entirely disagree with the opinion, frequently expressed, that "elephants are on the increase"; on the contrary, I believe the opposite to be the case. The elephant has to-day a much more restricted area to wander in than it had a hundred years ago. This area, by the cultural operations of man, is yearly being shrunk up, while shooting for "sport" and kraaling still further lessen the numbers of these magnificent animals. The ease with which one can get an elephant proclaimed a "rogue" adds another to the many causes of its destruction, not to mention the facilities that have in the last twenty years been offered to certain Chiefs to have kraals, the few survivors of which do not breed in captivity. It is only a matter of time for the elephant to be completely exterminated in Ceylon, unless steps are taken, with the aid of suitable sanctuaries, in addition to the complete prohibition of kraaling, except at intervals of, say, twenty years, to prevent this disaster. The actual damage done by elephants is not to be compared with their value as transport animals, and nothing can be more deplorable than allowing such valuable creatures to be shot in the cause of so-called "sport."

(21) *Buffalo* (Bos bubalus).—I found these to be generally distributed in the country I traversed, but not nearly in the same numbers as I found them in 1906. I found many skeletons—usually much devoured—of buffaloes, all pointing

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 to the fact that rinderpest had destroyed numbers of these creatures. I am informed that in the Panawa Pattu alone that disease killed the wild and tame buffalo alike, and that thousands died in a few months. I found one herd on the Kumbukkan in which I counted some thirty individuals, while in 1906, on the Gajabahu plain, I counted in a single herd over one hundred.

(22) *Sambur* (Cervus unicolor).—Moderately common.

(23) *Spotted Deer* (C. axis).—Common, especially in the valley of the Kumbukkan river. I repeatedly came on herds in this river, in one case finding over 200 drinking in the stream at noon.

(24) *Mouse Deer* (Tragulus meminna).—Moderately common, but more so in the south.

(25) *Wild Pig* (Sus cristatus).—Fairly common, but much less abundant than in 1906, owing to their having been killed out by rinderpest.

(26) *Pangolin* (Manis pentadactyla).—I found traces of this animal occasionally, and by inquiry I heard frequently of its occurrence. It is, however, not common near the coast.

Of reptiles, the crocodile is plentiful where there is water, either in tanks, rivers, or backwaters towards the sea, as, for instance, at Setawe, and all up the Kumbukkan river I found these creatures in abundance.

The *Monitor* or *Talla-goya* is fairly plentiful. It is eaten by both Tamils and the Sinhalese of this locality. I am inclined to believe that there is a dark and a pale race of this species, as I remarked that the latter were much more numerous towards the sea coast, and much lighter coloured than examples obtained near Muppane.

The *Kabaragoya* is comparatively rare. I only saw one or two examples near Muppane. This scarcity I attribute entirely to the absence of water all the year round.

On the north bank of the Kumbukkan I found a (?) Ceratophora in considerable abundance. These animals are protectively marked, and usually select trees with dark rugged bark to take up their position upon, their own colouring assimilating precisely with that of the bark. Under sexual stimulus in the males the lips become a rich crimson red, with

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

large rhomboidal dorsal patches of the same bright colour. On the stimulus diminishing, these points of colour become a dull ashen gray, turning to a pale horny gray with death. The females have similar markings, only in a very inconspicuous degree. 136

I failed to find any examples of this reptile in the north or west of the country to which this Paper refers.

The so-called Chameleon I found no examples of. I obtained a green Calotis, and two examples of Gecko, one about seven inches in length.

Of snakes I only saw three species, viz., the Rat Snake (*Zamenis mucosus*), Russell's Viper (*Vipera russelli*), and the Green Whip-snake (*Dryophis mycterizans*). I specially looked for Cobras, but without success. Russell's Viper, on the other hand, is comparatively common.

As regards the bird distribution, I have thought it desirable to supply a list* in which I have detailed the distribution, as it is of interest to note the exact localities for future reference.

Before passing to this list I would draw attention to certain points of special interest that appear to me to be worthy of more than a brief catalogue notice.

The curious distribution of one Fan-tailed Flycatcher (*Rhipidura albifrontata*) is singular. I found it did not occur east of Monaragala or north of Kebilitte, though in 1906 I found it breeding freely at Pottuvil. On my present exploration I observed it at a place called Kobaragoda, south of Okanda in Panawa Pattu, and from thence still further south to Kumuna, on the Kumbukkan river. It was not seen north of Siyambala-anduwa, nor in any part of the country round the "Westminster Abbey" hills, thus indicating a piece of country of limited extent touching the sea south of Okanda and forming a strip running into Monaragala. From here it passes to the Lunagalla hills, and thence right up to Bandarawela and into Haputale, where it may be found up to 4,000 feet.

I have found it resting at Miriabedde estate, at about 3,800 feet altitude. Again I have found it in abundance in the

* Appendix G.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 Wallawe valley below Kaltotta, and from there it spreads into the Tangalla District, and again at Tellijjawella and Henegama in the Matara District, where the rainfall exceeds 100 inches per annum. Briefly, therefore, it is to be found both in the dry and wet zones. It breeds at sea level, and at over 3,500 feet it is common in "park" country as well as in "chena" country. I am not acquainted with a more remarkable distribution—remarkable for its contradictions—of any Ceylon land bird.

Of the Woodpeckers—*Pici*—both *Chrysocolaptes stricklandi* and *Brachypternus erythronotus*—are common in the Vedda country, but chiefly in damp forest areas, where owing to the presence of moisture the trees are large. Away from the damp forests the little *Iyngipicus gymnophthalmus* is common right to the coast at Kumuna.

At Galamuna, on the Kumbukkan river, I secured a *Brachypternus* that may prove to be a new species. It resembles *erythronotus*, except that the inner hind toe is only rudimentary, forming only a minute dactyle projection, terminating in an apiculate point that serves as a claw. My example—an adult ♀—measured 10½ in. in length: wing 5½ in., tail 3½ in., bill (along ridge) 1½ in., tarsus 1 in. Unfortunately the skin of this bird got destroyed, so that I have been unable to compare it with Museum examples.

I have already hinted that the presence or absence of water governs the question of human distribution within the area under consideration, and I venture to think that the same applies, in some particulars, to the distribution of birds; thus, for instance, the common Black Crow (*Corvus macrorynchus*) occurs only where there are villages; nowhere did I find it in uninhabited forest areas. It was equally common at Kumuna on the sea coast and at Muppane—far inland—in a hilly country. The same might, with some curious exceptions, be said of our Sparrow, that I noticed was common at Pottuvil, Panawa, and Okanda on the east coast, but was absent at Kumuna, and equally absent from many of the smaller villages in the interior of the Vedda country.

The drying up for several months of the year of most of the streams naturally causes a restricted distribution among the

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136

Kingfishers, but it is conceivable that this periodical flooding and drying of these streams initiates a form of migration that on a more extended scale, brought about by weather fluctuations in geological times, might indicate the impulse of migration in birds. Thus, reverting to the local migration incident to the drying up of large waterways, I noticed on the Kumbukkan river that *Alcedo ispida*, *Pelargopsis gurial*, and *Halcyon smyrnensis* were plentiful, while not one of these birds could be found on the Heda-oya—a river only a few miles to the north; the explanation being that the former stream is perennial, and the latter dry in the south-west monsoon. For the same reason *Ketupa ceylonensis* occurs at tanks that have water, and is absent where the opposite is the case. *Ketupa* is, therefore, to be found along the valley of the Kumbukkan in both monsoons, but only in the north-east on the Heda-oya.

As the time at my disposal was necessarily very limited I could do no more than note what was then to be found, so that a more studied verification of these observations becomes desirable in order to establish proofs of what might be called a local migration law. It is, however, rather striking that species of wide general distribution in the wet zone should show an erratic distribution in the dry, the key to the explanation being possibly found in water distribution. In that direction therefore we may anticipate room for the development of a definite form of migration, though its range may be comparatively limited.

I observed in the immediate vicinity of the Kumbukkan river that at night numbers of insects were attracted by a light, while in the dry country south-east of "Westminster Abbey" there was a comparative scarcity of what I might call lamp-followers.

At a spot midway between Kebilitte and Ellebubbura I had a unique opportunity of observing the effect of scarcity of moisture and its influence on insect life. I had seated myself under a tree for a few minutes, to rest after a hot march of about 15 miles. The jungle all round me appeared to be utterly faint with the drought, and I may add that I felt much the same myself. I was in a considerable state of perspiration, when I noticed a couple of butterflies hovering

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 quite close to me. Presently one of them lit on my wrist, and began sipping the moisture as it came from my skin. The second insect quickly followed exactly the same procedure on my slowly extending my arm.

At a small puddle, measuring about 2 ft. by 18 in., I found the whole of the damp ground covered with wasps sipping the moisture.

Some idea of the dryness of the locality can be judged from these instances, and I submit that animal distribution must be affected thereby.

137 The distribution of plants, not of direct value to man, moreover shows certain erratic conditions. The most striking instance of this is in the distribution of the Dipterocarps. At Monaragala, and a little to the eastward, our common Hora (*Dipterocarpus zeylanicus*) is moderately plentiful. From Liyangalla onwards towards the east it is absent, but to the north-east of Siyambala-anduwa, near the village of Newgalla, one finds fringes of *Vatica obscura* on the banks of the dry streams; in other words, there is an enormous belt of country the opposite sides of which have representations of this important order of trees, with no examples in the intermediate area.

On the other hand I found no examples of *Vatica obscura* to the south of Siyambala-anduwa on any of the streams I crossed.

Of the Dilleniaceæ, I found *Dillenia indica* on the higher reaches of the Heda-oya, and a few individual examples—probably introduced—towards Waragoda in the north and at Kumuna in the south-east.

Of the Anonaceæ, the usual dry-zone *Polyalthias* are very abundant. Both *Anamirta paniculata* and *Tinospora cordifolia* are abundant representations of the Menispermaceæ.

In the tanks where there was water, both *Nymphæa lotus* and *Nelumbium speciosum* are common Lotuses. Both roots [227] and bulbs of these plants are eaten.

In some of the chenas I found *Brassica juncea* grown with the other crops, but I could get no definite explanation why it was cultivated.

Of the Capparideæ, the typical *Capparis zeylanica* is plentiful. [262] Its fruits are eaten by the Veddas as well as the Tamils. I

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

APPENDIX B.

132

	Monaragala Hospital, 700 ft. altitude. Inches.	Mean for 15 Years. Inches.
January	3·13	7·51
February	·26	3·51
March	3·20	3·78
April	15·07	7·02
May	7·64	8·48
June	1·23	1·72
July	·70	3·09
August	3·33	3·72
September	2·47	4·41
October	4·88	12·72
November	8·74	9·80
December	10·33	10·18
Total	60·99*	70·91†

* 110 days for 1912. † 101 days.

APPENDIX C.

● 136

List of Birds observed in the Vedda Country during July, 1914, giving Local Distribution.

1. *Astur badius.* One seen at Guruhela.
2. *Accipiter* sp. (?). The Museum Collector obtained a ♀ Accipiter, which I am inclined to think is a new species to Ceylon. It was one of a pair that were engaged in building at the time it was shot. It possesses the characteristic long central toe, but in size it is much smaller than *A. nisus* or *A. virgatus*, with the breast boldly marked with dark smoke-brown streaks and blotches, and not barred. The second and third primaries also differ from the last mentioned, while the tarsus is also markedly stouter. My example was obtained at Newgala.
3. *Pernis cristatus.* Observed at Panawa and Bargura
4. *Spilornis cheela.* Observed at the base of the Monaragala hills, at Guruhela, Etmole, Panawa, and near Kebilitte.
5. *Haliætus leucogaster.* Observed at Panawa, Okanda, Lahugala, and Kumuna.
6. *Haliastur indus.* Common at Panawa and at Bargura.
7. *Falco peregrinus.* Nesting in the eastern cliff of "Westminster Abbey."

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136

8. *Ketupa zeylonensis.* Heard at Muppane, Liyangolla, but only near places where there was water.

9. *Huhua nepalensis.* At Panawa I heard the cry of what I believe to be this, but I include it doubtfully.

10. *Scops giu.* Heard at Siyambala-anduwa.

11. *S. bakkamuna.* Heard at Danakirigalla, Ellebubbura, Muduwa, and Kumuna. I think there is no doubt about this being *bakkamuna*, though I did not actually obtain one.

12. *Glaucidium.* I heard these owls repeatedly at Panawa, Bargura, Danakirigalla, Ellebubbura, Muduwa, and Moramalpokunna, but unfortunately obtained none so as to determine the species, but judging by the note I believe the birds I heard were *Castanonotum.*

13. *Palæornis eupatria.* Distinctly scarce. Occur in the valley of the Kumbukkan.

14. *P. torquatus.* Kumbukkan valley, Uva boundary, Siyambala-anduwa, Manawela, Ellebubbura, and Liyangolla.

15. *P. calthropæ.* Common at Danakirigalla, some at Liyangolla, Muduwa, and Panawa.

16. *Loriculus indicus.* Seen at the Uva boundary near Siyambala-anduwa, and heard in the Kumbukkan valley.

17. *Iyngipicus gymnophthalmus.* I obtained two at Siyambala-anduwa. Common at Ellebubbura, Ampitiya, Kitulana, Kumuna, and east of Panawa. My examples are both ♀, and measure:—

(*a*) Length 4·75 in., tail 1·50 in., wing 3 in., bill ·54 in., tarsus ·50 in.

(*b*) Length 5·00 in., tail 1·50 in., wing 3 in., bill ·50 in., tarsus ·50 in.

18. *Chrysocolaptes stricklandi.* Plentiful at Lahugala. Occurs at Kurapan-oya, in Kumbukkan valley, Heda-oya valley, Danakirigalla, Ellebubbura, Ampitiya, and Etmole.

19. *Brachypternus.* I obtained, while going up the valley of the Kumbukkan river, what I have referred to in the text as possibly a new species belonging to this genus. The short, or, I should say rudimentary, inner hind toe is particularly striking.

20. *B. erythronotus.* Valley of the Kumbukkan, Panawa, and Bargura.

21. *Thereiceryx zeylonicus.* Occurs at Lahugala, Panawa, Kurapan-oya, Okanda, Kumuna, valley of the Kumbukkan, Bowela, and round "Westminster Abbey."

22. *Cyanops flavifrons.* Not particularly common. Found near Degalhela, Ellebubbura, Lahugala, Panawa, Okanda, Kumuna. Plentiful near Monaragala.

23. *Xantholæma rubricapilla.* Common all over the Vedda country.

24. *Cuculus sonnerati.* Observed in the valley of the Kumbukkan river.

25. *Coccystes jacobinus.* Not seen east of Muppana, where it is plentiful.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 26. Without having actually seen the bird, I venture to include a Cuckoo that may be identified by its monotonous and melancholy note, that represents the words "Captain Philpotts." It is common in the dry forests and plentiful near Maha-oya. I have spent considerable time and trouble in trying to obtain it, and while getting to within a few yards of the creature, I have always failed. I found it to occur at Etmole and the dry country towards Chimney Hill. Its exact identity is unknown to me.

27. *Eudynamis honorata.* Heard at Panawa.

28. *Phœnicophæs pyrrhocephalus.* Seen at the Uva–Eastern Province boundary, Kumbukkan valley, Siyambala-anduwa, but not near the sea.

29. *Rhopodytes viridirostris.* Scarce; only near Monaragala.

30. *Centropus sinensis.* Abundant right down to the coast.

31. *Harpactes fasciatus.* Common at Siyambala-anduwa; seen in the valleys of the Kurupan-oya and Kumbukkan river; not elsewhere.

32. *Anthracoceros coronatus.* Common in the valley of the Kumbukkan. Seen at Panawa and Bargura, at which last place I obtained two measuring:—

♂ Length 35·50 in., wing 12·85 in., tail 14 in., bill 7 in., tarsus 2·25 in.

♀ Length 33·50 in., wing 12·25 in., tail 12·25 in., bill 6 in., tarsus 2·30 in.

33. *Tockus singalensis.* At Lahugala, Kurupan-oya, Kumbukkan river. Comparatively a scarce bird.

34. *Ceryle varia.* Occurs at Panawa and the lower reaches of the Kumbukkan river.

35. *Alcedo ispida.* Common at Lahugala, Panawa, Kumbukkan river, Kurapan-oya, and near all the wet paddy fields round Monaragala.

36. *Pelargopsis gurial.* Common on the Kumbukkan river, at Lahugala, Panawa, Okanda, Kumuna, and lower reaches of Heda-oya.

37. *Halcyon smyrnensis.* Common at Pottuvil and down the coast to Kumuna, and in all places where flowing water is present.

38. *Merops philippinus.* These migrants had already arrived, and were plentiful at Lahugala, Kumuna, and at Muduwa. In the early part of August they had reached Muppane.

39. *M. viridis.* Occurs at Ullapola, Bargura, Lahugala, Panawa, Okanda, but is scarce towards the centre of the area involved.

40. *Tachornis batassiensis.* At Pottuvil, Okanda, and Kumuna.

41. *Collocalia fuciphaga.* Abundant, and nesting at Monaragala.

42. *Macropteryx coronata.* Common at Panawa and all down the coast to the Kumbukkan. I also found it sparingly at Siyambala-anduwa.

43. *Caprimulgus telaarti.* Heard in the Kumbukkan valley.

44. *C. asiaticus.* Common down the coast from Pottuvil to Kumuna.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136

45. *C. indicus.* Common down the coast from Pottuvil to Kumuna.

46. *Corvus macrorhynchus.* Common where there are inhabited villages only.

47. *Oriolus melanocephalus.* Common right to the coast.

48. *Graucalus macii.* Found at Ampitiya.

49. *Pericrocotus flammeus.* Common in the Heda-oya valley.

50. *Lalage sykesi.* Found at Muduwa, Kumuna, and plentiful up the Kumbukkan valley.

51. *Tephrodornis pondicerianus.* Heard at Pottuvil and at Lahugala.

52. *Dissemurus lophorhynus.* I suspect that this bird occurs, but not having actually shot one I include it doubtfully from Kumbukkan valley.

53. *D. paradiseus* (locally called Kudamahawaraliya) is very plentiful all through the Vedda country forest area. Unlike its relations in the Sabaragamuwa Province it does not associate with numbers of the *Malacocerci.* The following measurements of examples were obtained :—

♂ Length 17 in., tail 12 in.; wing 5·87 in., bill 1·37 in., tarsus 1 in.

♀ Length 13½ in., tail 8 in., wing 5·25 in., bill 1 in., tarsus 1 in.

54. *Bucanga leucopygialis.* Plentiful west of Siyambalanduwa.

55. *Terpsiphone paradisi.* Seen at Pottuvil, Panawa, Okanda, and in Kumbukkan valley.

56. *Hypothymis azurea.* Common. I found a nest of this species on the summit of "Westminster Abbey." It occurs comparatively sparingly in the Eastern Province.

57. *Rhipidura albifrontata.* See text.

58. *Cyornis tickelli.* Common at a place south-east of Kotiyagoda, and at Ellebubbura, Liyangolla, Etmole, and the base of "Westminster Abbey."

59. *Copsychus saularis.* Common up to the Heda-oya, but not seen east of "Westminster Abbey." Few at Lahugala, plentiful south of Pottuvil.

60. *Cittocincla macrura.* Abundant right to the coast. The local name is Sudu-waraliya.

61. *Thamnobia fulicata.* Comparatively scarce. Found breeding at Lahugala; occurs down the coast to Kumuna.

62. *Turdus spilopterus.* Heard in the high forest south of Degalhela, but nowhere else.

63. *Hypsipetes ganeesa.* Plentiful at Kotiyagoda, Heda-oya valley, Bowela, Etmole, and towards Monaragala.

64. *Iole icterica.* Common in the Heda-oya and Kurapan-oya valleys, but scarce north and east of Degalhela. Not seen west of Kodiyana.

65. *Pycnonotus luteolus.* Common right to coast.

66. *P. melanicterus.* Common in the river valleys, especially near Kumuna westwards.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 67. *P. hæmorrhus.* Common right to the sea.

68. *Chloropsis jerdoni.* Very scarce; only near Monaragala hills and at Pottuvil.

69. *Ægithina tiphia.* Not very common. Seen near coast line.

70. *Crateropus.* Common down the coast, but comparatively rare towards Siyambala-anduwa. I found a few at Bowela and towards Buddama.

71. *Pomatorhinus melanurus.* Heard at Panawa, Himitillanegalla, round "Westminster Abbey" and Muduwa, but *not* in the Kumbukkan valley.

72. *Alcippe nigrifrons.* Common at Lahugala, Kumuna. Breeding near Panawa and on summit of "Westminster Abbey," extending south to the Kumbukkan valley.

73. *Pellorneum fuscicapillum.* Common, but the birds from the region under consideration are distinctly paler than those from the wet districts.

74. *Orthotomus sutorius.* Common everywhere right down to the sea-side.

75. *Prinia valida.* Seen at Bowela, and in a piece of grass land at Karane. Heard at Lahugala and Okanda.

76. *Drymœca insularis.* (I am retaining Legge's species and name.) Seen only in the park lands south of Etmole.

77. *Cisticola cursitans.* Only seen at Newgalla in an abandoned field and at Panawa.

78. *Citta frontalis.* Heard at Siyambala-anduwa.

79. *Cinnyris lotenius.* Seen at Wattegama, Siyambala-anduwa, Pottuvil, down the coast to the Kumbukkan.

80. *C. zeylonicus.* Seen all down the coast from Panawa, but few only observed near "Westminster Abbey."

81. *Dicæum erythrorhynchum.* Seen at Lahugala, Ketulana, Pottuvil to Kumuna, but becoming distinctly scarce between the Kumbukkan valley and Monaragala.

82. *Zosterops palpebrosa.* Heard at Siyambala-anduwa.

83. *Hirundo hyperythra.* Common. I found its nest at Kebilitte. It is quite plentiful at Okanda.

84. *Passer domesticus.* Not generally common. I found it at Pottuvil, Panawa, Okanda, but not at Kumuna, on the coast; again at Bowela and Nambanna (few), while it is plentiful at Etmole and Muppane.

85. *Alauda gulgula.* Common.

86. *Ploceus baya.* Near Okanda I found several trees in which the familiar pendulous nests were in abundance, but in all cases these were last year's work. I looked in vain for this bird in the northern part of the Wedirata, where I suspect it occurs when the rice fields are in cultivation, but as that is not of regular occurrence, I assume that a local migration takes place.

87. *P. manyar.* I found this species at Lahugala, where, the tank being full all the year round, both rushes and sedges are available for nesting in.

88. *Uroloncha kelaarti.* Occurs near Monaragala, but I have no notes of it eastward of that place.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

89. *U. malabarica.* Seen at Kumuna.

90. *U. striata.* Common. Plentiful in the Panawa rice fields, Kumbukkan valley, Wattegama, and Muppane. 1360

91. *Artamus fuscus.* Common at Barawaya, Ellebubbura, abundant at Pottuvil.

92. *Acridotheres melanosternus.* At Panawa and near coast, and plentiful at Monaragala, Wattegama; not generally common.

93. *Eulabes religiosa.* Common up the Heda-oya valley. Plentiful at Ellebubbura, Liyangolla, and the Kumbukkan valley, down to the coast.

94. *Columba intermedia.* From a description given to me I think this bird occurs at Okanda, but personally I did not observe it.

95. *Turtur suratensis.* Common throughout the whole of the Vedda country where there is any open land; especially common in fields.

96. *Chalcophaps indica.* Common. The variability of the bearing of the tail feathers is striking.

97. *Carpophaga ænea*, locally called Godabowa, is fairly common, especially in the valleys of the larger streams, such as the Heda-oya, the Kurapan-oya, and the Kumbukkan river.

The following measurements I took from examples shot at Newgala and the Kurapan-oya, respectively:—

♂ Length 15 in., tail 5·75 in., wing 8·25 in., bill 1·25 in., tarsus 1·12 in.

♂ Length 15·25 in., tail 6·00 in., wing 8·00 in., bill 1·25 in., tarsus 0·87 in.

98. *Oenotreron bicincta.* Common right down to the coast line, especially where ripe Banyan fruit is plentiful.

99. *O. pompadora.* Common like the last, but, perhaps, more abundant.

100. *Pavo cristatus.* I did not see a single trace of Peafowl in Uva. All down the coast from Pottuvil to the Kumbukkan it is common over a belt of country varying from 6 to 15 miles in width, but these birds appear to exclude themselves from high forests.

Near Lahugala I found cock birds more plentiful than hens, and at Bargura I saw a procession of eleven cock birds walking in single file down to a pool. Hens appear to be either solitary or more shy than the males, hence their seeming rarity.

101. *Gallus lafayetti.* Exceedingly common, and, like the last, the males are seemingly more common than the females.

There is much reason to believe that this species crosses with the village fowl, but evidence as to further intercrossing is obscure, as no definite examples of connected history can be obtained from a people to whom such a subject is of no interest. In the text reference has been made to distinct strains of domestic fowls that, it may be assumed, have developed without any definite human intervention, and it is beyond demonstration to show how these strains came to be established; but whether the variation arose from the cross-breeding of domestic birds with

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 others of their own species, or by crossing an inbred stock with the wild bird, is equally open to question.

I am inclined to believe that the inbreeding of the domestic bird has been an important factor in the forming of specific strains, and these have again been varied by the crossing with the wild bird; hence in one strain we find a distinct difference in the *note*, while in another we find a close identity of general "build."

102. *Galloperdix bicalcarata*. I was able to make careful notes of the distribution of our Spur-fowl. I found it to occur at the foot of some low hills west of Siyambala-anduwa; again at the foot of Digalhella, at Danakirigalla, at the base of Westminster Abbey, near Ullapola, Nambana, Monaragala hills, Ampitiya; plentiful at Lahugala and at Kumuna. This last named place is the nearest point to the sea that I have traced this species. It is remarkable that in the plains the Spur-fowl does not appear to occur unless at the base of small hills; thus, while it is common at the foot of the Lahugala hills, it appears to be absent between that point and Siyambala-anduwa, where the country is flat.

103. *Turnix taigoor*. At Kumuna and in park lands near Etmole.

104. *Erythra phœnicura*. Common where there is water. I found it at Newgalla and Wattegama, confining its movements to small tanks in each instance. Plentiful at Monaragala.

105. *Porphyrio poliocephalus*. At Lahugala tank.

106. *Totanus stagnatilis*. Common in small numbers near backwaters and pools right through the country I explored.

107. *Numenius arquata*. I found it in the neighbourhood of the sand dunes near Panawa, where it might be considered plentiful.

108. *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*. On the tank at Lahugala.

109. *Himantopus candidus*. Very numerous round shallow lagoons at Okanda and near Panawa.

110. *Lobivanellus indicus*. Common, especially in flat damp ground.

111. *Glareola lactea*. I only once met with it at Panawa, where it appeared to be very plentiful.

112. A Tern, which I take to be *Sterna media*, is common along the coast. I found it frequenting both Arugam and Okanda bays.

113. A smaller species than the last, that I presume to be *S. sinensis*, I saw at Panawa only.

114. *Nettapus coromandelianus*. Abundant at Lahugala only.

115. *Dendrocygna javanica*. Plentiful at Lahugala and Panawa tanks. Breeding near Kumuna.

116. *Phœnicopterus roseus*. When I was surveying near the coast south of Panawa in March of 1907 I found a large flock of these Flamingos at one of the shallow lagoons, but on the occasion of my present visit in July I did not see a single example.

117. *Platalea leucorodia*. Seen at Okanda.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136

118. *Tantalus leucocephalus.* Seen at Kumuna.

119. *Anastomus oscitans.* Along the coast south of Pottuvil. Local name Gonbeli-kokka.

120. *Dissura episcopus.* Seen in numbers at Bargura.

121. A bird locally called "*Māno-kokka*" was seen by me at Lahugala, but I am uncertain if it is identical with *Leptopilus javanicus.*

122. *Xenorhynchus asiaticus.* I watched a pair at the mouth of the Kumbukkan river, seemingly feeding on fish, but I was unable to procure an example for more close identification.

123. *Ardea cinerea.* Near Panawa and at Bargura.

124. *Herodias alba.* Seen at Panawa and at Okanda, but doubtfully included here.

125. *Ardeola grayi.* Plentiful at Newgalla, Wattegama, and in wet fields round Monaragala.

126. *Ardeiralla cinnamomea.* Only seen near wet fields near Monaragala and the margin of the tank at Wattegama.

127. *Phalacrocorax carbo.* Plentiful in Panawa and Lahugala tanks.

128. *Plotus melanogaster.* Common; often found in stagnant river pools right in the heart of the forest.

129. *Pelecanus philippinensis.* Only seen in the large "villu" at Kumuna, where it is very abundant, and breeds there.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Towards evening we came to certain gibbet-like structures which stood out against the sky in strange contrast to their surroundings. These were the draw-wells of a tobacco plantation many more of which we were to see in the course of our journey. Here our guide proposed we should pass the night; but not before he had secured for himself, as he afterwards did at every opportunity, as much tobacco as a campaign of casual, yet dignified beggary brought him.

Taking possession of one of the huts on the settlement we had emptied our boats and begun to cook when a smart shower descended to continue unceasingly throughout the night. We were in a bad way. The nine of us lay huddled in the narrow open shed at the mercy of the wind-driven rain, our nostrils worried by the narcotic odour of tobacco leaves, in all stages of desiccation, that hung from the roof like great bats.

We had but settled down when three dripping figures rushed in seeking shelter. Our boatmen facetiously remarked that they could see for themselves there was no room. But they lingered awhile enjoying the smells of our cooking and soon melted into the night to a kinder reception, we hoped, elsewhere. They were the owners of the shanty with which we had made so free!

It dawned superbly. The banks were covered with long lush grass that grew in a broad strip between the forest edge and the river. Spacious game trails, gashed out of the steep sides, and capable of accommodating even an elephant, led down to the water at intervals of every few yards. There was a patch of grass trodden by one of these monsters as he fed in the moon-lit rain. Even now, perhaps, he rested in the seclusion of some creeper-covered alcove at hand. Who so happy as he? Why, all:

136

A brace of teal flew overhead to some outlying reedy pool; a jungle cock crowed in the distance; from a swamp a cormorant cried; monkeys and large squirrels bustled in the branches; crimson-backed wood-peckers darted from tree to tree; swallows circled twittering melodiously; little birds gave music from every bough. The moan of doves, the boom of coucals, the cackle of king-fishers joined the chorus. And then, like the twang from a golden harp, the voice of the gorgeous oriole thrilled the ear.

Those notes of the jungle, so various, so apparently ill-assorted, withal so harmonious. It seemed as though Nature were but tuning her orchestra to some deep diapason of song the full development of which was not for human ears.

In the evening we found ourselves again in a ramshackle shed in a tobacco garden adjoining a rubber estate. Having bathed at a draw-well that took its water from the river, we settled to thoughts of jungle peace. The air, quick awhile with the vespers of roosting birds, was now hushed save for the trolling of a magpie-robin. Soon he too ceased. Cicadas made the forest hum. Then the night-jars, sweet harbingers of the dark, took up the song.

But what was this disquieting hum about us that momentarily grew? Mosquitoes! They assailed us in legions driving us towards the suffocating fumes of the large log fire we had built to keep off elephants. After a fidgety meal I leapt into bed, hurriedly letting down the curtain—butter-muslin no less—and, sparing a thought of commiseration for my more luckless companions, closed placid eyelids in anticipation of sleep. The servants and boatmen, covered from head to foot, crouched as close to the fire as they dared, talking amiably by way of distraction. Only

But the structure he pointed to was very unconvincing, being riddled with breaches. Familiarity not artifice, we concluded, inured the tobacco-growers of the Mahaweli; and we could not but admire a fortitude that braved annoyance so extreme and sickness so sure in the interests of a little gain.

The advice we received, however, we turned to future account; and the next night found us camped amid the trees close to the water's edge, thereby escaping mosquitoes, it is true, but not elephants; for about midnight we were awakened by the snapping of branches around us. With shouting and shooting we drove the intruders away, but not before our chauffeur, muddled with sleep and terrified out of his wits, had slipped over a rope and nearly drowned himself in the swollen river.

136 Traces of elephants were abundant everywhere. As early as four in the afternoon we would see one or more of them standing out in the tall grass by the river border plucking up great trunkfuls of the luscious food.

In the morning bird life was plentiful. Here were five pea-fowl perched on a half-immersed snag; there a lonely egret in a secluded pool. Imperial pigeons, pied horn-bills, and darters, their eel-necks inelegantly bent at bayonet-like angles, flew about in numbers. Racket-tailed drongoes and scimitar-babblers sang entrancingly; barbets contributed a monotonous refrain. White-necked storks were seated on dead trees with the abstraction of philosophers. Little munias carrying streamers of grass flew across from bank to bank. The nests of noisy bayas hung like fruit from favoured trees.

137 No less interesting were the trees that engirt us. The ubiquity of green was only occasionally relieved by some small flower of vivid hue. Many of the trees were creeper-laden and formed arbours that might have homed the troops of Pan. Great *kumbuks** bent to the water, making delightful retreats for forest-lovers. Often the river eddied round an islet formed around some stricken tree. Massive lianas, heavy as the hawsers of a Titan, swung from dizzy pinnacles holding in twisted grip the fragments of strangled saplings. Everywhere were stark dramas of vegetable life:—Tremendous trees in the grip of some epiphytic *ficus* whose tentacles guttered and clung in live pythonic cords and bands. Yet a few years and the parasite would clasp the crumbling carcase of its host and stand itself a forest monarch. Such sights are perhaps less poignant in their *denouement* than at the inception, when a slender cord, an elfin thing, streaks daintily some magnificent giant whose life, incredible as it may seem, it is destined one day surely to claim.

Nor was there lack of human interest here. A group of trees, their dome-shaped contours, suggesting at a distance masses of tree-covered rock, attracted us one noon to rest in their shade. Exotic *ingasaman* or 'rain-trees' they proved to be, sole monuments of a wasted human enterprise; not another sign was there to show that a score of years previously a young coconut plantation had struggled for existence here. Elephants had destroyed the last of the palms years ago.

A sylvan siesta is no smooth affair. Minute ticks swarm in the dry leaves and getting on to you bide their time. At some untoward moment, on the march perhaps or in the dead of night, an agonising pain as from the stab of a red-hot needle will tell you that Mr. Tick has begun to feed. A snake may fall on you, leap towards your face, and wriggle

*Terminalia glabra

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

DDD The next noon we were on the river making easy passage with the current all in our favour, and travelling at ten times the speed we had laboured up. The boatmen who had spent the night on the bank looked as if they were afflicted with measles, so remorselessly had the mosquitoes handled them; and already one of them was shivering with malaria.

The heat of noon on the river was intense; and the splash of the oars or the sight of boys bathing at the draw-wells gave little appeasement. No bird had the heart to sing. As we passed, king-fishers flashed out of their cool retreats, coveys of stove-curlew ran up the shoals, and submerged wild buffaloes floundered up the bank. Clusters of yellow butterflies sipped moisture from the wet sand. A brahminy kite, its feet immersed in the shallows, whistled a warning to its mate that answered from afar.

621 At Kandakadu, where we met the first Vedda and his child, we spent the night; and, having two hours daylight to spare, decided to visit his village, in spite of being advised against it at that hour, as elephants were plentiful. The place was disappointing as regards Veddas; for, [342] instead of the crude huts we hoped to see, we found well built houses with cattle and fowls in plenty; and the inhabitants, though they called themselves Vedda, were Tamils to all appearance. Nevertheless, we 136 saw here a sight we would not have missed. In a field in full view of the village, and bordering a pool where women went for water, were three elephants belly-deep in the tall grass feeding with the indifference of cattle. The forest between this village and the river veritably teemed with traces of elephants.

DDD At the Verugal junction we were greeted by a fine old Arab in baggy breeches and skull-cap. His house, a stout three-storied structure, was designed to stand the stress of floods. When the lower floors were submerged he would remain islanded on the upper which had mud floors to permit of cooking. On the rich silt left in his garden when the waters ebbed, he planted tobacco and the luxuriant vegetables he was now selling our boatmen. A stern man was Mohamed Sultan as he was called. When one of our party cut more sugar-cane than he intended taking, he was brought to his senses quickly enough with a single sentence. The aggrieved one afterwards confided to me that Mohamed was once a notorious robber of Kiniyai where he lived killing and eating other people's cattle!

We rapidly drifted toward the end of our journey, having done in a day and half downstream what we had taken seven days upstream to accomplish. As we reached the river-mouth the mosquito hosts were abroad, a storm threatened, but the fishers of the estuary were unconcernedly hauling their nets to a song.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathes kukula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *bowa-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way,
231 we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
[281 open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats.
362] Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[84] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda,
[171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *henda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

with men astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalistic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 [191] 142 301 412

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen floated away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing 136 825

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 136 825 to something; but it was long before I saw the bird, a veritable leaf among the leaves and more motionless than they.

The hilly jungles of central Ceylon echo, during certain seasons of the year, to this bird's incessant cry, the popular onomatopoeic renderings of which are, in English, "Captain Philpotts" and "Bring the tappal" and in Sinhalese "*Botuahappan*." Most people have heard, but very S 539 few seen, the shy author of these dolorous notes. There is a gruesome story associated with the bird:—A Sinhalese king once asked his dhoby, in order to test his marital fidelity, whether he would cut his wife's neck and bring him her head! "Oh! king," said the man falling at the monarch's feet, "even if you behead me I cannot do such a thing." The following day the king called up the dhoby's wife and made a similar request of her. She replied that she would do it. Going home she helped her husband with his bath, rubbed boiled limes on his head, and cooked him a good meal. Like a good wife she asked him to lay his head on her lap where he soon fell asleep. Then, with a knife she had in readiness, she cut his throat; and severing his neck, put the head into a pot, covered it with a cloth and carried it to the king. On the way she met a man who, singing, asked her, "What do you carry in the pot on your head?"

"I am taking *mes amba** to the king," answered the woman.

"Why cover it so carefully?" sang he.

"If I take them uncovered, wayfarers will ask me for them," she replied. "It is on a fine journey I go."

When she brought her gift to the king, he was incensed at her cruelty, and ordered her head to be struck off instantly. Ever after, has she gone about in the form of this bird, crying *botua-happan* (cut the throat), as her one refrain.

While making our way through a tree-studded glade, we surprised two men carrying sacks of dried meat on their shoulders; through rents in the bags peeped unsavoury scraps of sambur, monkey and pig. Their first impulse on seeing us was to escape; for to shoot sambur legitimately, gun and game licences are necessary; and what money have they for these, who have barely the wherewithal to purchase the ammunition for their ramshackle muzzle-loaders.

V 533 When we camped, Kombua regaled us with Vedda songs of questionable taste chanted rapidly in a high nasal monotone, lengthened indefinitely by endless repetition, and accompanied in the last staves with a clapping V 411 of hands. To the suggestion that he should show his skill in archery he responded with alacrity; jumping up, he seized his weapons as if confident of skill. A fragment of paper, six inches square, placed fifteen paces away, was the mark. At the word he loosed his arrow. A clean miss! He walked up to the target and dashed it down in dudgeon, and nothing would induce him to shoot again. Archery is a lost art to the Veddas, though they still have considerable skill in fashioning bows and arrows. Jungles that echo to guns are no places for bowmen.

V 576 Kombua's farewell was as bizarre as his greeting of us. Tossing head and hands in the direction we were taking, and tapping us on the chest, he wished us good going in tones more peremptory than complaisant.

V 515 Quite a number of our carriers were half-Veddas. There was one whose constant occupation was to run his fingers comb-fashion through his upstanding hair scraping out vermin. His expression was of that thoughtful seriousness which is the surest mark of profound vacuity.

*A species of mango.

5: Spittel D-5 (da. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

flesh which they tore out and ate. They were afraid only of the buffalo and the dog. The Veddas, not very long ago, are said to have herded the last of them into a cave and destroyed them. Brute or man, persistent rumour in jungle countries brings the *Nittaiwo* within the realm of the probable. 776

Entering the forest at Siyambala Anduwa, and working north, we strove to maintain a route as far removed as possible from civilisation represented by the coast road on the one hand, and the Badulla-Batticaloa road on the other. 550

Two miles within the jungle was the old path, now over-grown and abandoned, from Badulla to Pottuvil. It led hereabouts through a narrow pass guarded, it is said, a few generations ago by the Karande Hela Vedda who, having fenced it across, levied toll on travellers. Intercepting, as he did, a trade route from the interior to the coast, we may be certain he made a good thing of it, getting his share both of the *kurrukkan*, maize, vegetables and fruit of the *Vanni*, as well as of the paddy, salt and dry fish of the Coast. 173

Kandanketiya, nine miles from Siyambala Anduwa, boasts an ancient temple of the era of Dutugemunu. We found it in the keeping of a doddering priest of eighty, who showed us round, all the while muttering "hu-hu, hu-hu," his only form of comment. His bed-room, dark, airless and dirty, was better adapted to mice and spiders than human beings. A great brass spittoon, emptied he told us once in two weeks, was the proudest thing there. A stupendous bo-tree, planted by himself, mocked with its vigour the withered frame of him who had tended it. Throwing open the doors of his little temple, without much ado he bade us enter the holy of holies, and pointed proudly to pictures of *devas* and harpies, half spurred-fowl half woman, who he confidently asserted lived in the Himalayas. Incidentally he indicated a money-box on the altar. But no sooner were our donations secure than his interest in us rapidly declined, reaching its climax when we told him we were going: "All right, go," he said, settling down comfortably on his bed. 172

A hornbill flying repeatedly to a large tree attracted our attention. Perching itself wood-pecker-wise on the trunk, it fed the occupant of a hole there with berries which it brought out of its crop one by one. We were told this was the male feeding the female he had deprived of feathers and shut up in the hole. We suggested there might be young. "Not so," said a woman; "where then are the feathers and droppings at the root of the tree?" Here was an opportunity to test the truth of gossip we had heard regarding the domestic amenities of hornbills. A man was sent up to the nest. Squeezing his hand through the narrow opening he produced an egg; then seized something by the beak, and unsuccessfully tried to pull it through. With an axe he enlarged the hole and soon handed down to us a veritable travesty of a bird. Scared out of her wits, voiceless, featherless, with half-opened beak, she flapped pathetic wings and tumbled ludicrously about in attempts to escape. She was obviously unfit for existence in the outer world and we returned her to her dark abode. Rumour was right, the male hornbill took no risks. 136

Bowala village lies at the northern end of Westminster Abbey. Buried as we were in the forest depths, we had not seen the hill since leaving the heights of Haputale. Suddenly the leviathan bulked over the trees. "There, that is why it is called Govinda Hela*," said our guide pointing 361 [103]

*Goa inda hela—rock where the monitor lizard is.

361 [103] to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though [262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287 287] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and [534] manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothurupathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

5. NESTS AND HIVES

This is the time to climb the steep;
Up through the shadowy woods to grope,
Over the stones where the lichens creep,
On to the crag that crowns the slope;
To the wild bees stronghold hushed in sleep.

J. STILL

NESTS

136 222 IN dark fearsome caverns, and down the sides of dizzy ravines, the little edible-nest swiftlet builds its dainty nest fashioned of hardened saliva and moss. Those who think they know better will tell you that the all but invisible specks, sometimes seen high away in the empyrean at dusk, are flights of these birds on their way to the sea to gather salt foam with which to build.

222 One of the favourite pursuits of the Veddas is the collecting of these nests for barter. They call the birds *kuduharayas* (nest-makers) and their [439] nesting caves *kudu galges*. These caves are often deep gloomy recesses only entered with lighted candles (made by squeezing a column of bees-[373] wax round a central wick of cloth or bark) to scare away the scores of poisonous snakes (*karawalas* and *mapilas*) that gather there to eat the eggs and young. Sometimes the nests stud the steep sides of narrow [417] gorges, and are then taken by the aid of cane ladders let down from above.

The nesting-places are a secret the Veddas guard closely. When they took me on one of their expeditions it was on the condition that no bearers came. A hard climb brought us to near the summit of the tree-covered mountain side. "*Cho-ho-ho*," shouted the Veddas as a warning to possible bears. The approach to the cave was over-run with *aralu-wel* (used for bows) and *niyande* (of which waist strings are made). The cave itself, surmounted by an enormous rock the fall of which seemed imminent, was dark and stifling; and it was quite a time before one could discern the cup-shaped nests that clung in clusters to the vaulted roof. A Vedda handed me a parent bird he had trapped, a tiny-beaked, brownish thing, with sweeping wings, black feet and unswallow-like tail. It was quite a time too before one realised that there was a commotion in the air, and that little wraith-like forms were flitting in and out in sore distress "Swish, swish; wing, wing; twit, twit; kisiri, bisiri; takara, takara; kata, kata, kata," as from fairy castanets, came the barely audible sounds. Outside, these were louder, "Chara-chiris, chara-chiris; che-week, che-week, che-week," they twittered in futile resentment. But to these sounds the ruthless despoilers were deaf, as, mounted on heaps of stones, they scraped away with knife or arecanut cutter the trim nests from their tenacious attachments, leaving only those with eggs behind, lest the colony be killed outright. On a boulder near by [252] was a fire-place where the young had been roasted, as Kauwa of Divulana had described.

[p. 86]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

HIVES

There are five varieties of honey bee in Ceylon :—The large *bambara* (*Apis dorsata*) that builds huge combs of very pure wax on bare hill sides and the large branches of lofty trees ; the *mee massa* (*Apis indica*) sweetest honey bee of all, whose combs are to be found in hollow trees, rock-clefts and within ant-hills ; the *dandual massa* (*Apis florea*), the smallest honey-bee in the world, that hives on rocks and boughs ; the *kanava massa* (Rosin or Dammar bee) a docile, stingless, friendly little creature whose long black combs within tree crevices yield a delicious, if heady, honey ; the *hotha massa*, an even smaller species, whose puny comb is hardly worth the taking. 222 136

Kanava and *hotha* combs are available all the year round ; they are the *pathinchiharayas* or stayers. If the Vedda is hungry it is for one of these he goes at a pinch. The *bambara* and *mee massa*, the most abundant honey makers, are seasonal in their habits ; and June and July are the great honey months ; the fruit season synchronising with this, marks these months as the festive time of the jungle ; then the Veddas leave their homes for caves and stream beds, take their fill, and have a surplus for barter. 222 [439]

On the flavours of honey the Veddas are connoisseurs. They can tell by tasting a comb the flower or medley of flowers that contributed to its making. That honey is relished most which prevails when the *mora*, *veera* and *galseembela* are in bloom. [151 262]

Honey gathering is the master art of the Vedda. Supreme as he is in other jungle crafts, he is supremest in this. As he travels through the forest he is alive to the faintest hum, and no hive, however concealed, escapes him. His adroitness in tracking a bee to its lair is well described in a delightfully euphonious song they have (beginning, *Thomba, thomba Gomba me-na-na*), that tells of a Vedda Thutha who goes on the honey quest with his brothers Gomba and Naga. Thutha leads in the trail of a particular bee ; and as he goes he sings to his brothers, indicating various trees in which bees are busy ; but not decoyed by these, and with his eye steadily on the bee he first sighted, he follows it, till eventually it guides him to its hive within the skull of an elephant—*kolanathe gatche* (tree without leaves) as he quaintly describes. [533]

The taking of any hive, other than that of the rock *bambara*, is a very simple thing for the Vedda. All he does is to climb the tree, steady himself at the hole containing the comb, and blow into it to drive the bees away. Then with his axe he enlarges the opening sufficiently to enable him to introduce a hand and secure the cache, stopping every now and then to blow inside or to slap an offending bee. He eats the comb at his perch, grubs and all, throwing down fragments to those below.

The *bambara* comb is quite a different proposition. These great bees build high on the precipitous sides of rocks ; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only. A dangling cane at Westminster Abbey gave us some idea of the daring of the enterprise. To reach the combs ladders of vines are lowered from the summit of the rock ; and down these the collector descends ; as this does not bring him within arm's length of the hives, he has usually to rely on the use of a long stake. Sometimes [417 481]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

CHAPTER VII

BINTENNE

THE pass at Kadugannawa was thronged with bartering humanity. Being Sunday, it was market day, and the occasion served well to help us lay in a good stock of tobacco and betel, the best passport to the wild interior.

On through Teldeniya, whose cocoa plantations teem with snails that straggle over the road to explode under our car-wheels, and then, after Urugalla, we climb the Nugatenne gap and, skirting the Dumbara valley, attain beautiful wind-swept Madugoda. So far among the hills. From here it is a sudden drop to the Mahaweli and the wilderness beyond. We have left Madugoda but a little way when, at a turn, there suddenly opens before us a magic sea of misty greenery broken by hill ranges; there stand many blue mountains we know, Kokagalla, the dancing rock of the Veddas, and Friar's Hood faint and far; and there gleam a river and a tank; the former the Mahaweli, the latter placid Horabora Wewa traditional lake of Vedda lands. V 133

The descent from the hills here is perhaps the most precipitous in all Ceylon; we drop some two thousand feet, and negotiate eighteen elbow bends within four miles; then, skirting the base of the mountain we come to the ferry of Weragantota and cross the Mahaweli in canoes to Alutnuwara, a fever-stricken place; whoever sojourns here even a few days invariably pays the penalty.

A quaint old town is Alutnuwara, or Bintenne as the jungle dwellers call it. Cosy homes and boutiques nestle under shady trees. Chained monkeys and caged parrots are ubiquitous and may be purchased for a song. Laden *tavalam* teams rest here on their way to the interior. It being April, every tree has its nesting bird—bee-catchers, bulbuls, drongos, coppersmiths and all the rest of them; hungry little squirrels cheep spasmodically for food; song fills the air. V 103 136

Scattered about the place one is surprised to find old cannon. Those who see them for the first time frame visions of an era when ancient Sinhalese kings built these in foundries, and fed them with powder made from sulphur and nitre available in the neighbouring hills. But we may safely assume that firearms were unknown in Ceylon prior to the coming of the Portuguese. What then is the story of these brave things that lie in a ditch here, set off a doorway there? They were brought here, according to some, from the East coast by the English in their attempts to take Kandy; but finding the mountain barrier impassable they abandoned them here. The more likely explanation, however, is that they are a survival of the time when Alutnuwara was a military station after the Kandyan rebellion of 1817, "the last great occasion on which the English forces were arrayed in hostility against the natives of any portion of Ceylon."* To prevent a repetition of rebellion, a S 174

*Emerson Tennent.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

and terrified they stood around the border. Then did the Saviour cause the pleasant Giridipa (Highlands) to come here near to them, and when they had settled there, he made it return to its former place. Then did the Saviour fold his rug of skin; the devas assembled, and in their assembly the Master preached them the doctrine. The conversion of many kotis of living beings took place and countless were those who came into the precepts of duty. The prince of the devas craved of him something to worship. The Conqueror, who had pure and blue black locks, passing his hand over his head, bestowed on him a handful of hairs. And he, receiving this in a splendid golden urn, when he had laid the hairs on a heap of many coloured gems, seven cubits round, piled up at the place where the Master had sat, covered them over with the thupa of sapphire and worshipped them.

"When Sambuddha had died, the thera Sarabhu, by his miraculous power, received, even from the funeral pyre, the collar bone of the Conqueror and brought it to Lanka and laid it in that same cetiya.

"The king Dutthagamini, dwelling there while he made war upon the Damilas (Tamils) built a mantle cetiya over it eighty cubits high. Thus was the Mahiyangana-thupa completed."

Barely four miles from Alutnuwara is the beautiful tank of Horabora Wewa whose vast waters have been cunningly trapped by a great earth work or bund, amidst a natural barrier of surrounding hills. As one sits here of an evening and looks across with field-glasses to the wilder opposite shore, small herds of deer may be seen feeding on the grassy edge between forest and lake; and in the drought, herds of elephants come to the water. White cranes fly overhead to roost on the bordering trees at dusk. Placed as it is in the heart of the Vedda country, this tank has long been associated with the Veddas. To-day only a few very destitute families of half-Veddas are to be found at Malgoda on the borders of the tank, living in the crudest of shelters, and feeding for the most part on the seeds of lotus pods (*ola*).

By an ancient sluice cut out of stone,* the tank-water is conducted along a channel to a wide stretch of paddy fields, now mostly in disuse owing to the paucity of the population. This brimming waterway, its grassy banks studded with beautiful trees, affords many a delightful picture, especially where the lotus thrives with its large, snow-white blossoms and no less beautiful leaves be-diamonded with sparkling droplets of water. Here halcyons fish all day. Up to recent years the tank itself was covered with lotus; but now, for some reason or other, there is none; and when no breeze stirs the glassy waters at midday, they reflect an ever changing panorama of dazzling clouds only broken where a darter or cormorant gambols.

It is not surprising that so beautiful a tank should have inspired a fine poem, of which I have attempted a poor translation that does scant justice to the euphonious idioms, the long vowel cadences, the alliterations, and rhymes of the Sinhalese original.

*Tradition has it that two giants (*yodhayas*) sat here on opposite sides of a crack in the great rock, and each, seizing that part on which he was seated with his hands, and thrusting with his foot against the other, wrenched the rocks apart, making an outlet for the water!

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

many small streams) and it is generally supposed that they are the sites of ancient cultivation; there are comparatively few streams in this country though swamps and small water holes containing stagnant water are common[1]. 133

Northward in Tamankaduwa (a division of the North Central Province) the great trees give place to poorer growth and a scrubby jungle is found. On the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road lie the Nilgala hills, the best of the Vedda domain and the most pleasing country in Ceylon. Here, broad valleys lie between jungle-clad ranges of much weathered gneiss, among whose rocky crags and rounded domes, *bambara*, the rock bee (*Apis indica*), builds its combs. Here is no gloomy jungle, but in the valleys are many thickets and small trees growing scattered as in a young orchard, their trunks protected by coarse lalang grass which often attains 5 or 6 feet in 133 137

[1] The character of the Bintenne of the Eastern Province has been well stated by Mr H. Freeman, Government Agent for the Eastern Province, in his Administration Report for 1908, for the following extract from which I am indebted to Mr John Ferguson: "This is an unsatisfactory region; a wretched population of about 3,000 in the largest pattu of the Province has, with the exception of three or four small patches of paddy land, nothing to live on except chenas and jungle produce; they have not the advantage of the hundreds along the coast who can get a sort of living by begging from their neighbours. Necessarily the Bintenna folk are miserable in appearance; nearly all of them are sick. There are many abandoned tanks, but the people have neither the physique nor the will to restore them. There are no coconuts to speak of in Bintenna; the few trees are either infertile or barren. Still we must take the people and the country as we find them, and rather than let the population drift away from Bintenna to the chena country of Uva, I would concentrate them on the more fertile spots about Kallodai, Maha-oya, Pullumalai and Tempitiya, on or near the Badulla road, and endeavour to teach them to do tank work; there are promising, abandoned, tanks, which could be restored, and the land settled on the people on easy terms. Plentiful chenas would be necessary to fill the stomachs of the people to get work out of them; maize grows well in Bintenna; it is now imported in large quantities from Uva; large tracts of Bintenna could be turned into maize fields for the supply of the people on the coast also, while Uva could then keep to itself its supplies of this commodity sent down to this district....In addition to the Sinhalese population of Bintenna there are the Veddas,...and bands of gipsies find a good hunting ground there. Some of these have just been prosecuted and imprisoned for violating the Game Laws, and also made to pay road tax, payment of which they have evaded for years; the gipsies have considerable wealth in cattle and other property; they also drink and steal. Since writing the above on the condition of Bintenna I have explored other and remoter parts of that division, and find that whatever prosperity in paddy cultivation it enjoyed in the distant past must have been due to the Rajakariya system, in the absence of which Bintenna will probably remain a wilderness for an indefinitely long period."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 height. Clear rock-strewn streams abound, their banks
137 brightened by the deep green leaves and the bright red flowers of the *ratmal* (*Ixora coccinea*). Scattered masses of rock often of great size form convenient shelters for the Veddas, and assist the rapid drainage of the country, which does not become water-logged even during torrential rains. This beautiful country is rich in game. To the east, where many Veddas have drifted, the jungle is thicker, the land lies lower, and is generally less healthy. The Nuwaragala Hills to the north of the Nilgala ranges are perhaps the wildest part of the island and are more densely clothed in jungle, but there are plenty of streams, while the slope of the country permits of ready drainage.

The coastal zone north of Batticaloa inhabited by the coast Veddas is flat and sandy, and the vegetation though dense is often less tall and less abundant than in other parts of the country. Salt water marshes are common, and the country is cut into by numerous lagoons and creeks, often bounded by a fringe of mangroves which stretches some distance up the mouths of the rivers. Although this area may now, and
131 for yet a few years, be rightly called the Vedda country it must
161 not be thought that any considerable number of its inhabitants are Veddas, or that they exercise any territorial or political
563 influence; on the contrary, they constitute an insignificant fraction of the Tamil and Sinhalese inhabitants before whom they are rapidly disappearing, partly by intermarriage and absorption, partly owing to misery and a high death rate brought about by sheer inability to cope with the new state of affairs that the increased settlement of this, the wildest part of the island, has brought about.

Formerly the Vedda country is known to have embraced
131 the whole of the Uva, and much of the Central and North
175 Central Provinces, while there is no reason to suppose that their territory did not extend beyond these limits. Indeed there is no reasonable doubt that the Veddas are identical with the "Yakkas" of the Mahavansa and other native chronicles.

175 The seventh chapter of the Mahawansa relates the arrival in Ceylon, B.C. 543, of Vijaya who married Kuweni an aboriginal princess (*Yakkini*) and by her assistance destroyed a great

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

calcoa and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.* 131 [177] [184]

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt. [137] [136]

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in *their* barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other. 184 361 342 224

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡ 161

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter 177

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenna. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited. [177]

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 while the Wila-oya and Kulapan-oya convey the waters from the eastern limits of the Buttala-Wedirata to the sea through the Panawa Pattu.

The chief mountains are Wadinagala (2,414 ft.), "Westminster Abbey" (1,830 ft.), Degalhella, Nilgala, Hibitalanagala, Kiripokunagala, "Chimney Hill," and Obbekota in the Monaragala range.

Most of these mountains rise abruptly from the plains below, and terminate in high masses of rock. There are, in some cases—particularly on the summit of "Westminster Abbey"—small patches of vegetation, but in the majority the summits of the more conspicuous hills are bare. The country described, therefore, may, broadly speaking, be considered as flat, broken by a few low undulations, the whole being dotted over irregularly with abrupt mountainous masses of rock.

132 The rainfall of this area is comparatively low, and probably does not exceed an average of 60 inches for the year, nearly the whole of which falls in the north-east monsoon, thus involving a period of extreme drought during the south-west monsoon, when for months there is not a drop of rain, followed by torrential showers of variable intensity and uneven distribution.

I am indebted to Mr. Balfour, the Director of Irrigation, for the details of rainfall at Ampari and Rotawewa,* well outside the area I refer to, and to the Surveyor-General† for the same particulars at Monaragala, these being given in tabular form in the Appendix.

137 As might be anticipated from such variation and extreme, it would follow that the vegetation of the country embraced must be, for the most part, what is called dry-zone flora, but other influences have to be considered in relation to distribution. These may be considered as being affected—

(a) By influence of streams rising in high altitudes, or in moister regions;
(b) By the operations of human beings;
(c) By animal transport of seed;
(d) By wind action.

* Appendix A. † Appendix B.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 commodities which would produce both directly and indirectly its effect upon local plant life, either by the introduction of species of economic value, or by the direct export of woods found at hand.

137 In support of this it is noticeable that to the north-west of Pottuvil, Palu (*Mimusops laxandra*) and Satinwood (*Chloroxylon swietenia*) are comparatively abundant, as contrasted with the scarcity of the same species on the banks of the Kumbukkan river. Again, while Mi (*Bassia longifolia*) is abundant on the Kumbukkan, it may be called rare west of Pottuvil. As this last-named is an introduction of great value, it was spared where it existed near towns, but was neglected in those localities where the population had no permanent settlement, as we find is the case with the majority of the Maha Wedirata "villages" of the present day, and it is only in some places of old establishment that we find the Mi tree now.

361 The present population is very much scattered, its distribution being undoubtedly governed by the presence or absence of water; hence it will be found that the so-called villages are at considerable distances apart, and only where a supply of water can be got, however small or impure, all the year round. On the other hand, one finds the example of an unpopulated area bounded by a perennial stream, as in the case of the valley of the Kumbukkan river for the last thirty miles of its course. Here, however, we have the instance of a stream that rises to an enormous flood that inundates the country to a depth of many feet on both its banks, thus drowning out, in the wet season, any annual cultivation, and leaving the place parched and dry during the periods of drought—two factors sufficient to keep back a people unprepared to establish strong measures to secure permanent occupation.

Nor is this all. The Kumbukkan river, after it passes the foot of the isolated mass of the Monaragala hills, enters a country that afforded the Veddas their best hunting ground, and the Veddas appear in their early history to have been a race of people who depended almost entirely on the chase, using for their dwellings the rudest shelters of caves and temporary branch huts. They had no inducement to build

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Musronia pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
824 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 quite close to me. Presently one of them lit on my wrist, and began sipping the moisture as it came from my skin. The second insect quickly followed exactly the same procedure on my slowly extending my arm.

At a small puddle, measuring about 2 ft. by 18 in., I found the whole of the damp ground covered with wasps sipping the moisture.

Some idea of the dryness of the locality can be judged from these instances, and I submit that animal distribution must be affected thereby.

137 The distribution of plants, not of direct value to man, moreover shows certain erratic conditions. The most striking instance of this is in the distribution of the Dipterocarps. At Monaragala, and a little to the eastward, our common Hora (*Dipterocarpus zeylanicus*) is moderately plentiful. From Liyangalla onwards towards the east it is absent, but to the north-east of Siyambala-anduwa, near the village of Newgalla, one finds fringes of *Vatica obscura* on the banks of the dry streams; in other words, there is an enormous belt of country the opposite sides of which have representations of this important order of trees, with no examples in the intermediate area.

On the other hand I found no examples of *Vatica obscura* to the south of Siyambala-anduwa on any of the streams I crossed.

Of the Dilleniaceæ, I found *Dillenia indica* on the higher reaches of the Heda-oya, and a few individual examples—probably introduced—towards Waragoda in the north and at Kumuna in the south-east.

Of the Anonaceæ, the usual dry-zone *Polyalthias* are very abundant. Both *Anamirta paniculata* and *Tinospora cordifolia* are abundant representations of the Menispermaceæ.

In the tanks where there was water, both *Nymphæa lotus* and *Nelumbium speciosum* are common Lotuses. Both roots [222] and bulbs of these plants are eaten.

In some of the chenas I found *Brassica juncea* grown with the other crops, but I could get no definite explanation why it was cultivated.

Of the Capparideæ, the typical *Capparis zeylanica* is plentiful. [262] Its fruits are eaten by the Veddas as well as the Tamils. I

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

found that towards the coast *Cratæva roxburghii* occurs, but it is by no means plentiful, as in the Hambantota country. 137

Of the Bixaceæ, I found a few examples of *Cochlospermum gossypium*, but clearly these were introductions connected with Buddhistic places of worship. It may be safely assumed that where an "escape" of this species is found, one may look for temple "remains," and the same may be said of Ironwood, *Hibiscus ficulneus*, or *Balsamodendrum caudatum*.

Scolopia gærtneri is a wild and plentiful representation of this order, and abundant round "Westminster Abbey" and Degalhela. *Hydnocarpus venenata* occurs in abundance by stream sides, and is probably more plentiful than *H. alpina*, which is confined to the dry low-country, notwithstanding its inappropriate specific name.

Passing over unimportant orders to the Guttiferæ the following claim notice: *Garcinia spicata* is very common and widely distributed; *Calophyllum burmanni* is occasional; *C. tomentosum* occurs at "Westminster Abbey" and near Degalhela; *C. inophyllum* is practically confined to the coast, though not entirely so, while a further example of this genus (the identity of which has yet to be determined) I have referred to already in an earlier Paper, published in the Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, as being a probable foreigner.

Ironwood—*Mesua ferrea*—occurs in quite a forest form round the base of Himitillanegala, where, I suspect, it was introduced. It occurs at all the old temples, but is otherwise scarce.

Of the Malvaceæ, *Sidas* and *Abutilons* are exceedingly common. *Urenas*, on the other hand, are to be looked for in damp waste places, where they attain to considerable size. *Thespesia populnea* is an introduction, and not particularly common. *Hibiscus tiliaceus* occurs near backwaters, but it is not generally plentiful. *Bombax malabaricum* occurs in the form of immense individuals, but it is certainly not plentiful; while *Eriodendron anfractuosum*, on the other hand, is a plentifully introduced garden plant.

Among the Sterculias prominence should be given to *S. fœtida*, well known to the Tamils as the Katu-tengai or forest cocoanut, *S. colorata*, and *S. thwaitesii*. I obtained a

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 few solitary examples of *S. urens*, but I feel confident that this last is an introduction. *Pterospermum suberifolium*—the Welanga of the Sinhalese—is very abundant.

824 372 411 The young straight shoots of this plant supplied the Vedda arrow, while the wood was employed by them for the manufacture of "fire drills."

The distribution of *Helicteres isora* is curiously restricted to what might be turned "patches," the largest of which I found at Etmole. *Heritiera littoralis*—the Chomanturai of the Tamils—is scarce, but occurs near Panawa and Pottuvil.

Of the Tiliaceæ, I noticed that the distribution of Halmilla (*Berrya ammonilla*) was not very general, while its abundance or scarcity appeared to be a matter of its easy access or the reverse. This is to be expected of so valuable a timber tree.

"*Vidpani*" (Tamil) (*Pityranthe verrucosa*), so plentiful in the Trincomalee District, is comparatively scarce in the Vedda country. Of the Grewias, *G. tiliæfolia*, *G. microcos*, and *G. polygama* are the commonest, but the first of these is not so abundant here as in the dry zone of the Ratnapura District.

As representing the Linaceæ, *Erythroxylon monogynum* may be taken as an abundant typical example. It is alleged in the Panawa Pattu that meat hung in the smoke from burning wood of this plant, if eaten produces a purgative action.

Both *Hiptage madablota* and *H. parvifolia* of the Malpighiaceæ occur in the Vedda country, but in no abundance.

The bright, but pestiferous, *Tribulus terrestris*, is to be found near Pottuvil and at Panawa, in places where the soil is not too dry, but its distribution does not spread far inland.

Of the Geraniaceæ I found very few examples. In some slightly moist spots, west of "Westminster Abbey," I observed *Biophytum sensitivum*, and in some of the tanks I got *Hydrocera triflora*, but in other respects, except the introduced *Averrhoa bilimbi* and *A. carambola*—common in gardens—this order is poorly represented. The Rutaceæ is not well represented in wild species, if we except the well-known *Feronia elephantum*, *Murraya kœnigii*, and *Toddalia aculeata*. In the gardens oranges, lime, and pummalo have been introduced, but with no marked success either in the matter of quality or quantity

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137

of fruit, an insipid fibrous product being the usual type of Vedda-country orange.

In dry rocky ground *Ochna wightiana* is to be found in some abundance, as exemplifying the small order of the Ochnaceæ.

Of the Burseraceæ, I have already pointed out that *Balsamodendrum cordatum* may be taken as indicating some place of veneration. I found in many cases where there were ruins, [172] or abandoned monastic caves, this plant would be sure to occur. On the summit of "Westminster Abbey" it is comparatively abundant, as also at Nuwaragala—another ancient fort. Doubtless the fragrant smell of the wood led to its use as an incense, and, thus, to its cultivation. *Canarium zeylanicum* occurs very sparingly west of Bowela, and *Filicium decipiens* may be found in the forest valleys, though it does not attain any striking proportions.

The Maliaceæ is very well represented. The Margosa, however, as typical of this order, is an introduction, and where it is found under semi-wild conditions the inference is that that particular spot was once inhabited. This beautiful tree, however, is afflicted with a disease that kills back the young twigs, and I remarked that this sickness is very widespread. *Melia dubia*, often called Wal-kohomba, occurs in the western part of the Vedda country, but in no great abundance. *Walsura piscidia* and *Dysoxylum binectariferum* are both common, while the famous Satinwood is, of course, very fairly abundant, except in what might be called wet forest. The abundance of Satinwood has, as I have hinted, doubtless from very early times been influenced by human operations, as the value and quality of this excellent wood is widely known. That being so, its spread has been materially governed, with the result that in a great deal of the country where it once must have been plentiful there are now only isolated examples.

Munronia pumila occurs in tolerable abundance round Bowela, Waragama, and Danakiria. It is medicinal.

Of Celastraceous plants, *Elæodendron glaucum* is very common near the coast, and attains a large size. A *Kurrimia*, probably a variety of *K. zeylanica*, is found occasionally in the northern half of the country I explored, but does not appear to attract native attention.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 It is almost superfluous to remark that the Rhamnaceæ are abundantly represented by various forms of *Zizyphus*, both as an abominable thorny climbing bush, or in the more elegant *Z. jujuba*. *Scutia indica* is plentiful near damp spots, while *Ventilago maderaspatana* is most abundant.

Vitis quadrangularis is, perhaps, the most common example of the Ampilidea, while *Leea sambucina* is specially noticeable in the vicinity of large streams.

The Sapindaceæ afford plentiful examples in *Allophylus cobbe*, *Sapindus emarginatus*, or soap-nut, *Nephelium longana* (*Mora*, Sinhalese), *Schleichera trijuga* (*Kon*, Sinhalese), and *Glenica zeylanica*, all of which are about equally distributed.

[824 278] In waste ground the creeping *Cardiospermum halicacabum* is plentiful; its use as a tonic appears to have been known to the Veddas.

I also observed *Dodonæa viscosa* in a few isolated places, particularly near Wattegama, but to my surprise its use as an embrocation was apparently unknown.

Of the Anacardiaceæ, if we except cultivated species, few occur. The wild mango (*Mangifera zeylanica*) is to be found near or in the Heda-oya valley, but not in great profusion. *Odina wordier* is to some extent cultivated, as it is frequently to be found preserved where there are fields. *Nothopegia colebrookiana* is seemingly unknown to the people, though I found it frequently. *Spondias mangifera* I believe to have been introduced.

Passing to the Calycifloræ, the small order of Connaraceæ finds as its best representative the widely distributed *Connarus monocarpus*, that appears to thrive equally well in the wet and dry zones. I found it in abundance in some of the driest [824] situations. It is said to be of use for buffalo ropes.

Of the Leguminosæ, space considerations oblige me to make but the briefest reference to the better known examples in a list form :—

Crotalaria retusa. In open waste places.
C. striata. Occasional, in dry fields.
Indigofera pauciflora. In abandoned fields.
I. hirsuta. In waste places and road sides.
Æschynomene aspera. In damp places or puddles.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137

Abrus precatorius. Very common in scrub jungle.
Mucuna (?) pruriens. Moderately common (in fruit).
Erythrina indica. In gardens—occasional.
E. ovalifolia. Near streams and tanks—uncommon.
Butea frondosa. In the park country near Etmole.
Clitoria ternatea. Common; not seen in forest.
Flemingia strobilifera. Near streams and cool spots.
Pterocarpus marsupium. In park country—common.
Pongamia glabra. Common near water.
Dalbergia lanceolaria. Moderately common; of large size.
Derris scandens. Common all over the country.
Cæsalpinia bonduk. Occasional; possibly introduced.
Cassia fistula. Moderately common.
C. marginata. Common, even close to the sea.
C. auriculata. Commoner near the coast than inland.
Dialium ovoideum. Common on the summit of "Westminster Abbey."
Saraca indica. Occasional in damp forests.
Tamarindus indica. In gardens, abandoned or otherwise. An introduction.
Bauhinia tomentosa. Plentiful.
Entada scandens. Generally near streams.
Dichrostachys cinerea. Moderately common in bush land.
Mimosa pudica. Occasional.
A. leucophlœa. Comparatively rare.
A. eburnea. Common near the coast.
A. caesia. Very common, especially near damp forests.
A. pennata. Less common, generally locally plentiful.
Albizzia odoratissima. Moderately abundant in the west.
A. stipulata. Occasional.
Pithecolobium geminatum. Locally abundant.

Of the Rosaceæ, I noticed a Pygeum near Bowela, in a valley, but procured no examples for identification. On the banks of the Heda-oya I also secured another, probably an escape from higher altitudes.

Bryophyllum calycinum, as representing the Crassulaceæ, is probably an introduction. It infests places where the soil is not deep, as, for example, near slab rocks, but generally in these cases near habitations or places once inhabited.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

●137 Of the Droseraceæ, *Drosera burmanni* is to be found on the edges of tanks where the soil is damp, and again I have found it on thin soil on rocks. This plant appears to be equally at home at all altitudes in Ceylon, both in the wet as well as the dry zone. I failed to find it near the sea, though it occurs at no great distance inland.

The Rhizophoraceæ are well represented by Mangroves that occur in tidal estuaries. Of these, *Rhizophora mucronata* is by far the most common. *M. candaria*, with its large leaves, is also often found along with the last, and with *Bruguiera gymnorhiza*. I also observed a *Ceriops*, but not in flower. In a valley south of "Westminster Abbey" I saw *Anisophyllea zeylanica*, but this plant appears to belong to a higher altitude. *Carallia integerrima* is to be met with in the Kumbukkan valley.

The Combretaceæ afford magnificent examples of Kumbuk (*Terminalia glabra*), that are to be found on the banks of all the streams in the Vedda country. The "Aralu" (*Terminalia chebula*) is also common in the "park country" near Etmole, while its close ally, *T. belerica*, is frequently to be met with right through the Maha Wedirata. Again, in the "park country" *Anogeissus latifolia* is fairly common. *Combretum ovalifolium* occurs in rocky places in some abundance. The gaunt *Gyrocarpus jacquini* is very common; it forms a characteristic tree in this dry locality.

Of the Myrtaceæ, I found the most abundant examples in *Eugenia jambolana*, that occur in tank beds, while *E. bracteata* occurs in all the dry forests. By the sides of backwaters, or where the soil is damp, *E. corymbosa* forms a common bush.

I noticed a few examples of our common Guava (*Psidium guajava*) in some of the old gardens, but nobody could tell me how it came to be introduced. *Barringtonia acutangula* is moderately common in and about tanks, where it attains a considerable size. On the banks of the larger streams I obtained *B. racemosa*, but it is not plentiful. *Careya arborea*, however, is moderately common in the northern part of the country I am treating of.

Of Melastomaceæ plants, I found very stunted forms of *Osbeckia* (?) *aspera* growing in most impossible places. Near

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bowela I found, in a damp valley, a *Sonerila* growing in a rocky crevice. *Memecylon umbellatum*, *M. grande*, and *M. capitellatum* are all very common in the forest areas. 137

Of the Lythraceæ, I found *Lagerstrœmia flos-reginæ* not uncommon on the banks of the larger streams, where it frequently occurs as a large tree. *Lawsonia alba* is cultivated at Panawa. In the "park country" I found a few examples of *Woodfordia floribunda*, but this is far more common near Passara and Bandarawela.

The poisonous *Modecca palmata* is often to be met with, but is not common. I was surprised to notice that it was little known to the people. *Passiflora fœtida*, however, appears to be well known, though its distribution is probably more restricted. The Papaw has been introduced here, and is to be found in some of the gardens, but sparingly.

Of the Cucurbitaceæ, I found *Trichosanthes integrifolia* to be fairly common, its brilliant red billiard-ball-like fruits being very conspicuous. I suspect that it is eaten by monkeys, as I frequently found fragments of the fruit. *Cephalandra indica* is often to be seen in dampish forests. In all the chenas Cucumbers of sorts are grown, and appear to find a considerable market demand. [241]

Possibly these may have originated in the well-known cucumber, but owing to degeneration and environment have changed their form, for certainly the average shape of Vedda-country "Kekiri" is more round in outline than ovate. The "rind" is remarkably bitter to the taste.

Of the Begonias, I found a few examples of what I take to be *B. malabarica* not far from the base of Westminster Abbey, but it may have been an "escape."

Our monotypic *Tetrameles undiflora* occurs but sparingly in the north of the Maha Wedirata, while the individual trees are immense.

Of the Cactaceæ, *Opuntia* (*?*) *dillenii* is frequently to be met with, both in a semi-wild state and in hedges. I found it growing in profusion at Okanda, and all down the coast where there were, or had been, gardens. I am unable to say if the Veddas know it, though the name Katu-patuk is well known. I am inclined to suppose that it was spread by the Tamils.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 Considerations of space oblige me to avoid more than a passing reference to the larger Gamopetalous plants, hence my having unnoticed several of botanical interest. I therefore select of the Rubiaceæ the following :—

Sarcocephalus cordatus. Moderately common in beds of tanks and by river sides.

Anthocephalus cadamba. Rather rare, but occurs towards Muppane.

Adina cordifolia. Locally plentiful.

Stephegyne parviflora. Rather common, and valued for its timber.

Wendlandia notoniana. Occasional, towards the Monaragala hills.

Mussenda frondosa. Not uncommon near streams.

Gardenia latifolia. Plentiful in rocky ground.

Canthium didymum. Common, especially near rocks.

Ixora parviflora. Common.

Morinda tinctoria. Common, especially near the coast, and often found in gardens.

Webera corymbosa. Exceedingly common.

Of the Compositæ :—

Vernonia cinerea. Exceedingly common.

Elephantopus scarber. Plentiful in the whole country, but avoids deep shade.

Ageratum conyzoides. Everywhere an abundant introduction.

Sphæranthus indicus. Common in fields.

Bidens ? Not uncommon near abandoned villages, and occasionally on river banks.

Of the Gordenoviaceæ, I found *Scævola lobelia* common at Okanda on the sea coast, the only place I have found it in Ceylon.

Of the Plumbaginaceæ, our only Plumbago is occasionally found in most unexpected places, but nowhere in abundance.

Of the Myrsinaceæ, I found an *Ardisia* in many of the forests near rivers, but I am uncertain of its identity. The leaves are large and grow in verticils.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Of the Sapotaceæ, by far the most important is the Palu (*Mimusops hexandra*), but its distribution is erratic. It is plentiful between Lahugala and Pottuvil, but the individual trees are not large. Towards the Heda-oya, and in the arid country west of Panawa, it also occurs plentifully, but towards the Kumbukkan valley it again ceases to be abundant. This erratic distribution in a country that favours the growth of Palu is probably, as suggested earlier in this Paper, the outcome of early trade in this valuable timber. 137

Munamal (*Mimusops elengi*) occurs very frequently, but does not become very large. *Bassia longifolia* I have already referred to. It is very plentiful up the Kumbukkan river, the trees there attaining an enormous size; elsewhere it is practically rare.

Of the Ebenaceæ, perhaps the most common is *Diospyros embryopteris*, that occurs where there is moisture near at hand. [262] The Veddas eat its fruit.

D. ebenum, like "Palu," appears to have been largely exploited, with the result that it is only in remote spots that it is to be found in any abundance. *D. ovalifolia* occasional, growing in patches.

Both *Salvadora persica* and *Azima tiracantha* are abundant, the former being common near the coast, but neither in real forests.

Of the Apocynaceæ, the most distressingly common is undoubtedly *Carissa spinarum*, that occurs always where treed forest has been cleared. *Cerbera odollam* is fairly plentiful in the Panawa Pattu, and is regarded as useful for fencing fields.

Plumeria acutifolia is always associated with temples, abandoned or otherwise, but I failed to obtain any information regarding its introduction.

Alstonia scholaris is not uncommon, and attains enormous proportions.

Tabernæmontana dichotoma is also to be found sparingly, but generally in damp spots.

Of Asclepiads, *Hemidesmus indicus* is very plentiful in waste land.

Calotropis gigantea is very abundant, especially near the sea.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 *Sarcostemma brunonianum* occurs frequently, especially in the bush country.

Dregea volubilis is also fairly abundant near to Liyangolla and Muppane.

Of the Loganiaceæ, the well known *Strychnos nux-vomica* is most abundant. It is remarkable, in view of its being so common, that cases of children poisoning themselves by eating the seed are rarely heard of.

S. potatorum occurs, but is not abundant. I looked out for cases where the seeds were used for precipitating muddy water, but failed to find an instance of its use in this direction.

Of the Gentianaceæ, *Exacum zeylanicum* occurs in fields, but the flowers are much paler than in wet-country examples.

Of the Boragineæ, *Cordia myxa* is fairly common. *Tournefortia argentea* occurs on the seashore, but is not plentiful. *Heliotropium indicum* is very common in waste ground.

Of the Solanaceæ, mention need only be made of *Datura fastuosa*, which appears in nearly all the more established gardens. The various "Battus" I can pass over, as being common all over the Ceylon low-country, and as probably introduced.

Of the Scrophulariaceæ I desire to draw attention to only one, *Centranthera procumbens*, owing to its presence in a dry country being remarkable. I found it on two occasions only, first between Nangalla and Danakiriya, and the second time about five miles south of Liyangolla. On both these occasions I asked the villagers if they could name it, but without success. Its presence is singular, as it is generally to be found only in the wet zone, or in a country where extremes of drought are not experienced.

Of the Bignoniaceæ, *Oroxylum indicum* is moderately common, but I think there is little doubt that it was introduced for the sake of its medicinal value. *Dolichandrone rheedii* occurs near the coast, near standing water. *Stereospermum chelonioides* is fairly common. Its wood was used by the Veddas for bows. [411 824]

Of the Pedaliaceæ, *Pedalum murex* is common near the coast, and is used by both the Sinhalese and Tamils for a demulcent. *Martynia diandra* occurs on the fringes of villages

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

in waste ground, as if introduced. *Sesamum indicum* is sparingly cultivated. 137

The Verbenaceæ afford, among many others, the valuable Milla (*Vitex altissima*), which is generally plentiful. I am inclined to doubt if var. *alata* can be sustained, as I repeatedly obtained examples of "broadly-winged" petiolated leaves on the same tree that bore normally petiolated leaves. This "winging" of the leaf stalk appears to be a matter of maturity, as in very young shoots the "wings" are often markedly pronounced. *V. leucoxylon* is common about tanks. *Gmelina asiatica* is moderately common in waste ground near habitations. *Premna tomentosa* and *P. serratifolia* are both abundant, the leaves of the latter being eaten. *Avicennia officinalis* is common in wet ground near the coast.

Passing to the Lauraceæ, the most useful is the well known "Ranai" (*Persea semecarpifolia*), fairly common in the forest areas, especially south of Kallu Obba and below Degalhola.

Of the Thymelæaceæ, I repeatedly obtained *Gyrinops walla*, its value as a cordage being known to the Sinhalese Veddas.

With a rapid glance at the Euphorbiaceæ and the Urticaceæ I must conclude my notes on the plants of the Vedda country:—

Euphorbia antiquorum is frequently to be met with, but it does not attain the proportions so marked in the Hambantota District.

E. tortilis, if I may accept a *4-winged* branch as indicating this species, I observed near Buddama.

E. tirucalli is common as a hedge plant, especially near the coast.

Bridelia retusa. Rather common.

Phyllanthus emblica. Occasional, more common towards Monaragala.

Flugea leucopyrus. Very common in land that has been cleared.

Hemicyclia sepiaria. Exceedingly abundant. Its fruits are much relished by the Veddas, and, I might also add, by bears and monkeys. [262]

Mischodon zeylanicus occurs sparingly by the rivers, but is not generally distributed.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 *Aleurites triloba* is to be found in a few village gardens towards the west, but is nowhere cultivated in much quantity. It is an introduction.

Dimorphocalyx glabellus. Exceedingly common, except near the sea shore.

Mallotus albus. Tolerably plentiful, especially in the west.

Macaranga tomentosa. Occasional. There is reason to suppose this has been to some extent introduced merely for the sake of the large peltate leaves, that afford a useful substitute for plates. By tracing a group of these trees I was able to find one of the most important of the caves on the east flank of "Westminster Abbey."

Chætocarpus castanocarpus. Occasional.

Sapium insigne. Common, especially near rocks.

Holoptelea integrifolia, representing the Urticaceæ, is very common up to within a short distance of the coast. It occurs right up the Kumbukkan valley to the foot of the Uva hills, after which it becomes scarce.

Trema orientalis I found to be locally plentiful, but more so towards the hills.

Streblus asper. Very common, and with much variation in the size of the leaf.

Ficus benghalensis (the Banyan of Europeans) is very abundant right down to the coast. It appears in all the old established villages, which leads one to the idea that it was introduced. I have, however, found it in localities where it may have been introduced by birds transporting the seed from the (?) cultivated trees, as the fruits are readily devoured by Barbets and Pigeons.

F. retusa. Very common.

F. arnottiana. Occasional, especially in rocky places.

F. tsjakela. Occasional, and appears to be singularly partial to old ruins.

F. hispida. Not uncommon near rivers and in damp forests.

F. religiosa. Common near any temple. At Kumuna I found some enormous examples, as also at Wattegama.

[824 292] *Antiaris toxicaria.* Rare. I am informed, as stated early in this Paper, that the Veddas use it for making "loin cloths" to be worn on ceremonial occasions.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

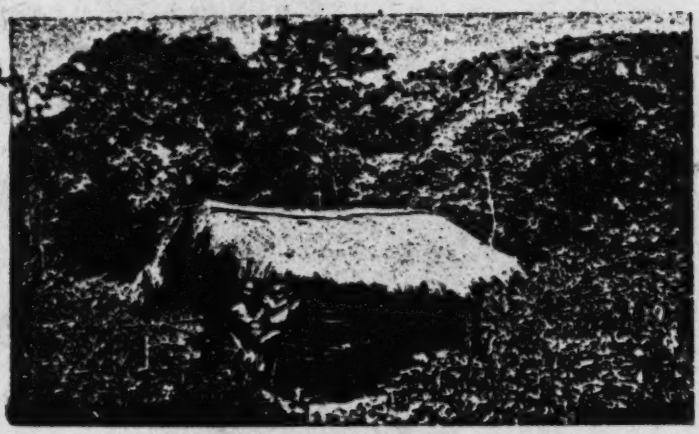
Artocarpus nobilis. Quite rare, and only seen up the Heda-oyá valley. 137

A. integrifolia. Cultivated, but not usually attaining any very large size, unless water is within reach.

A. incisa. At Buddama I was shown a solitary example of our well known Breadfruit tree, and I was informed that it was the only one of its kind to be found in the Vedda country. While this may not be strictly correct, I may mention that I found Breadfruit trees became exceedingly rare east of Monaragala.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342



Poromola's lonely home

291
411

Vedda bowman of Dambana

[facing p. vi]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

But the structure he pointed to was very unconvincing, being riddled with breaches. Familiarity not artifice, we concluded, inured the tobacco-growers of the Mahaweli; and we could not but admire a fortitude that braved annoyance so extreme and sickness so sure in the interests of a little gain.

The advice we received, however, we turned to future account; and the next night found us camped amid the trees close to the water's edge, thereby escaping mosquitoes, it is true, but not elephants; for about midnight we were awakened by the snapping of branches around us. With shouting and shooting we drove the intruders away, but not before our chauffeur, muddled with sleep and terrified out of his wits, had slipped over a rope and nearly drowned himself in the swollen river.

136 Traces of elephants were abundant everywhere. As early as four in the afternoon we would see one or more of them standing out in the tall grass by the river border plucking up great trunkfuls of the luscious food.

In the morning bird life was plentiful. Here were five pea-fowl perched on a half-immersed snag; there a lonely egret in a secluded pool. Imperial pigeons, pied horn-bills, and darters, their eel-necks inelegantly bent at bayonet-like angles, flew about in numbers. Racket-tailed drongoes and scimitar-babblers sang entrancingly; barbets contributed a monotonous refrain. White-necked storks were seated on dead trees with the abstraction of philosophers. Little munias carrying streamers of grass flew across from bank to bank. The nests of noisy bayas hung like fruit from favoured trees.

137 No less interesting were the trees that engirt us. The ubiquity of green was only occasionally relieved by some small flower of vivid hue. Many of the trees were creeper-laden and formed arbours that might have homed the troops of Pan. Great *kumbuks** bent to the water, making delightful retreats for forest-lovers. Often the river eddied round an islet formed around some stricken tree. Massive lianas, heavy as the hawsers of a Titan, swung from dizzy pinnacles holding in twisted grip the fragments of strangled saplings. Everywhere were stark dramas of vegetable life:—Tremendous trees in the grip of some epiphytic *ficus* whose tentacles guttered and clung in live pythonic cords and bands. Yet a few years and the parasite would clasp the crumbling carcase of its host and stand itself a forest monarch. Such sights are perhaps less poignant in their *denouement* than at the inception, when a slender cord, an elfin thing, streaks daintily some magnificent giant whose life, incredible as it may seem, it is destined one day surely to claim.

Nor was there lack of human interest here. A group of trees, their dome-shaped contours, suggesting at a distance masses of tree-covered rock, attracted us one noon to rest in their shade. Exotic *ingasaman* or 'rain-trees' they proved to be, sole monuments of a wasted human enterprise; not another sign was there to show that a score of years previously a young coconut plantation had struggled for existence here. Elephants had destroyed the last of the palms years ago.

A sylvan siesta is no smooth affair. Minute ticks swarm in the dry leaves and getting on to you bide their time. At some untoward moment, on the march perhaps or in the dead of night, an agonising pain as from the stab of a red-hot needle will tell you that Mr. Tick has begun to feed. A snake may fall on you, leap towards your face, and wriggle

*Terminalia glabra

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [164] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and [146] framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even 177 their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 224 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

804 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

† *Eleusine coracana*

‡ *Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

[137]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342

A Vedda home of the Ulpotta. (Page 8)

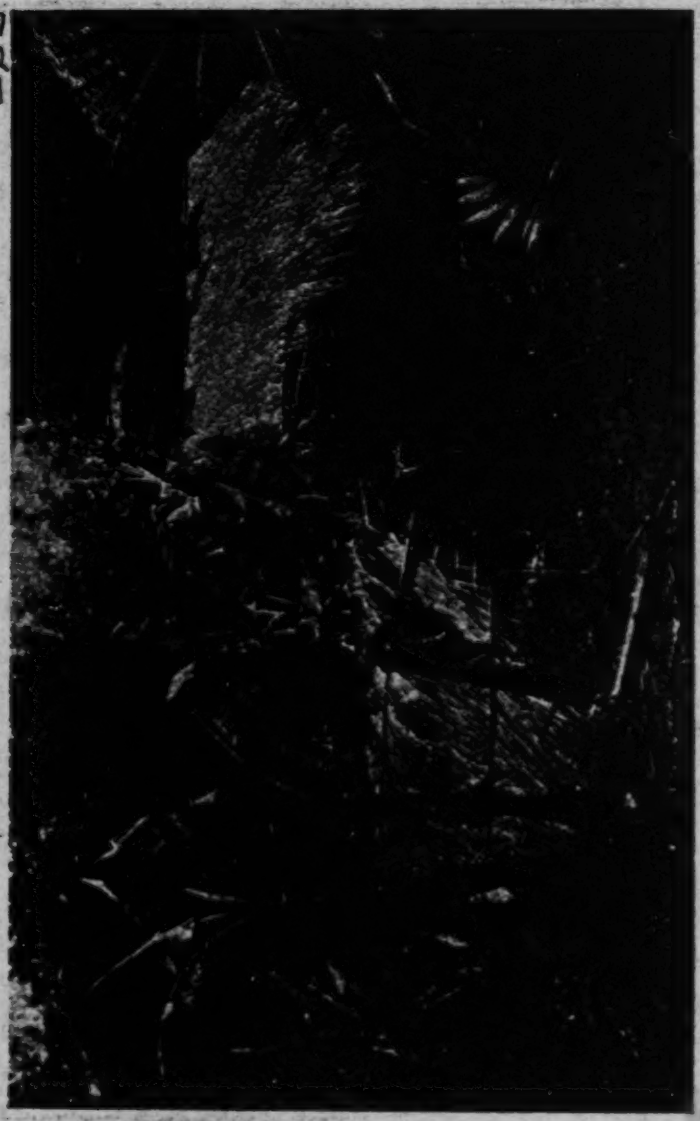
142
291
412

Veddas or Gunner's Quoin. The two to the left (Vela and Sinna) are the most typical. (Page 8)

[facing p. 8]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342
361



Deserted Bowels (Page 48)

[facing p.48]

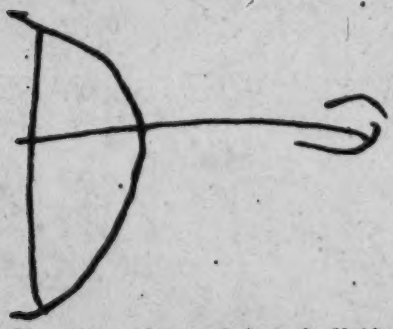
4. VEDDA JUNGLES

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them

ISAIAH.

THE forests we were now in were the immemorial haunts of the Veddas of Bingoda, Galmede and Sittala Wanniya. They stretched from Bingoda to Newaragala, and included such famous Vedda hills as Walimbe (Friar's Hood) and Bandaradua. The Magalavatan Aar cleaves this country on its way to Unichi tank. The jungle is virginal, but one is surprised to find here an occasional guava bearing luscious fruit, and much wild cinnamon. *Palu* and *veera*, so abundant in the more southern forests, is wanting here. 131 [137]

Nowhere is the Vedda more at home than in this wilderness, intersected by game trails only known to him and wild animals, and studded with the rocks that hold his caves. This land is all their wealth. By old Vedda law it is divided into *panguas* or shares, marked off by such natural landmarks as streams, rocks, or conspicuous trees scored with the *dhunu hena* (bow mark) distorted beyond recognition with age. The *panguas* of the Bingoda Veddas are six:—(1) Madana-gama: (2) Marana-pangua: (3) Kumburu-wella-gama (kuda and maha): (4) Bingoda: (5) Kakalana-bokke: (6) Bandaradua. Of these, the first three are included under the name Galmede and are now the property of Suthu Banda; the last three are Kaurala's. Each of these divisions, in days of greater prosperity, had its own chieftain. 423 614



Dhunu-hena or bow mark drawn by Vedda

It is to the credit of these Veddas that they alone of all the Veddas in Ceylon can still name their shares, indicate their boundaries, and observe the traditional law of non-transgression, hunting only in their allotted spheres. Suthu Banda, for instance, would not take the swiftlets' nests on Walimbe because they were Kaurala's by right; nor would he break the hives beyond Newaragala because those lands, once Vedda, have now lapsed to the Sinhalese.

Land goes to the eldest child whether son or daughter; failing them to the nephew. In the old days the proofs of inheritance were a white stone (*kirivanagala*) and molar tooth, bound together with a wisp of human hair; later the *ola* supplanted it; and still later a paper document issued by Government, and so carefully hidden away that it was invariably eaten by termites! These people, it would appear, were wiser than Government in their choice of a seizin. 428

[p. 79]

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

142
302
516
291
411
137

Fig. 16. Veddas from the Nilgala District (Ceylon) *Photo R. Martin.*

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

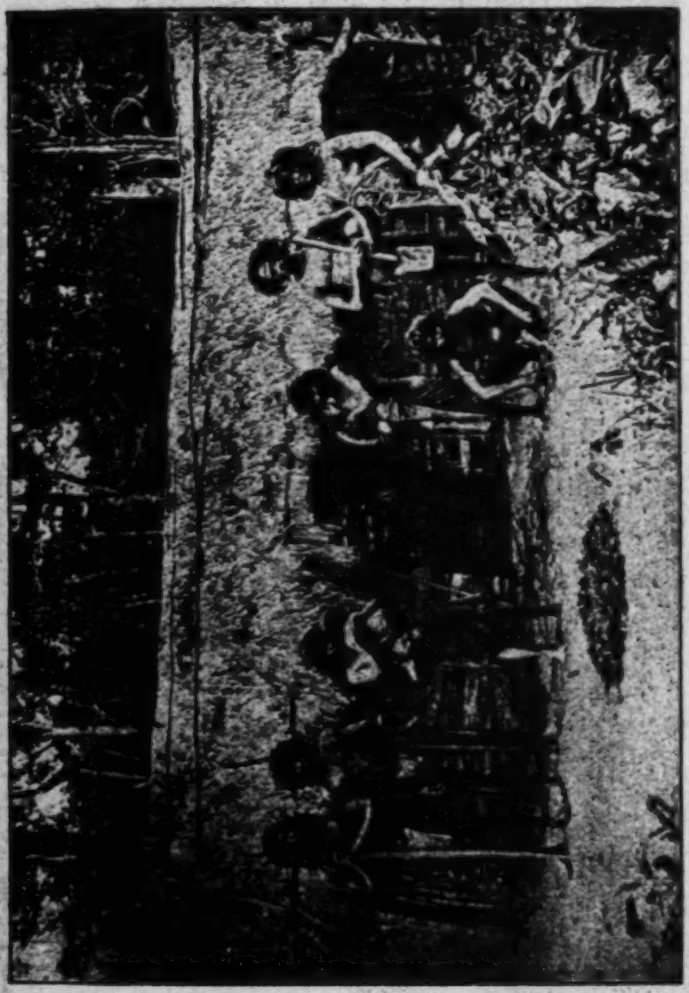


Photo Fr. Sarasin.

342
137
291
516
411
854

Fig. 17. Veddas of the Nilgala Region

140 of the purer Veddas in order that the reader may appreciate the bearing of what will be said in other parts of the book concerning the different groups of Veddas we visited.

The general appearance of the Veddas will be most readily appreciated by examining the photographs of pure, or nearly pure-blooded Veddas reproduced in Plates II and III. The first of these represents four men of Danigala and a half-breed boy. The oldest man is Kaira (1), the "patriarch" or senior of the Danigala group[1]. Of the three other men, his sons, the two in the foreground are Randu Wanniya (2), nearest to the pole supporting the hut, and Tuta (3). Plate III is a group of Henebedda Veddas, the relatively tall man with his hands hanging by his sides is the half-breed Appuhami (4), and the taller of the two men with axes over their shoulders, the Henebedda shaman[2], is also a half-breed. The man to the right of the shaman with bow and arrows in his hands is Kaira (5), the youth in front of him is Poromala (6), on whose left hand Tuta (7) kneels by the side of Kalua who is in the same position. The four men between Appuhami and the shaman all appear to be fairly typical Veddas; the man next to Appuhami is Poromala of Bingoda, upon whose right stand Handuna (8) and Randu Wanniya (9).

141 In stature the Veddas are short: the Sarasins measured 24 men of the "Central Vedda district" whom they considered pure-blooded and obtained an average of 1·553 mm. (60¾ inches) with a minimum of 1·460 mm. (57½ inches) and a maximum of 1·600 mm. (63 inches). There was only one man of 1·600 mm. and 20 of the 24 men measured were below 1·575 mm. (62 inches). Eleven Vedda women of the same district gave an average

[1] Two larger photographs of this man as he appeared some 15 years ago are given by the Sarasins (Plate VII, figure 10), who consider him a "tolerably pure-blooded Vedda." The numbers in brackets refer to the genealogy on p. 60.

[2] Shaman is the title which the Tungus give to their "spirit-conjurers." In *Hobson Jobson* (1903) it is said that the terms shaman and shamanism "are applied in modern times to superstitions of the kind that connects itself with exorcism and 'devil-dancing' as their most prominent characteristic.....The characteristic of shamanism is the existence of certain soothsayers or medicine-men, who profess a special art of dealing with the mischievous spirits who are supposed to produce illness and other calamities, and who invoke these spirits and ascertain the means of appeasing them in trance produced by fantastic ceremonies and convulsive dancings."

2 [ratala – should be 14·; see p. 27. – Ans 7,5]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

height of 1·433 mm. (56½ inches) with a minimum of 1·355 mm. (53⅓ inches) and a maximum of 1·500 mm. (59 inches). The median of the men was 1·545 mm. (60¾ inches), that of the women 1·435 mm. (56½ inches). Although Veddas do not become unduly fat they have, when well nourished, sturdy rather than slight figures, and a few of the older men may present rather prominent abdomens. The hair is wavy, sometimes almost curly, and in old age not rarely turns white. There is little hair upon the bodies of the purer Veddas and the growth of hair upon the face can best be described as slight or moderate, usually consisting of a rather thin moustache and sparse goatee beard.

The skin of the Veddas varies enormously, that of the face being generally somewhat lighter than that of the skin of the chest. But apart from these minor variations, the skin colour of any series of individuals will be found to vary from a deep brown-black, through various shades of bronze, in some of which a definite reddish tone can be detected, to a colour which can only be called yellowish-brown. A medium brown-black is perhaps the commonest, but apart from the darkest brown-black every colour, even the lightest, occurs in individuals whose general appearance suggests that they are pure-, or almost pure-blooded Veddas, and we have no doubt that the bronze shades occur quite as often among pure-blooded Veddas as among the less pure. Indeed our experience suggests that the occurrence of a skin colour of the darker shades of brown-black may be taken as evidence of miscegenation. The eyes are always dark brown. The head is long and narrow, the Sarasins give the average cephalic index of 17 male skulls as 70·5 (minimum 64·9 and maximum 75·9, median 71). The length-height index of the same skulls is 73 (minimum 65·4, maximum 79, median 73·4). Generally the face is long rather than broad, but in this respect there is considerable variation. Twelve skulls gave an average facial index of 88·2 (minimum 77·2, maximum 99·2, median 88·5), but ten of the skulls were over 85, the two lowest both giving an index of about 77.

The brow ridges are well marked so that the eyes appear deeply set or even sunken. The chin is somewhat pointed and

[Veddas should be Mijsen p. 12. - Anal Tr]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142 is rarely prominent. The lips, though well developed, are not tumid (except sometimes in the young); sometimes the mouth is rather flat. This when accompanied by moderately prominent cheek bones gives some faces an expression of considerable energy. The jaw is not prognathous, the nostrils are moderately broad, the root of the nose is depressed but never flattened to any considerable degree. The average of the nasal indices of 17 skulls gave the figure 52·7 (minimum 43·3, maximum 62·2, median 52·3), which is just short of the index (53) at which platyrrhiny is commonly assumed to begin. Nevertheless we believe that the Veddas may more fairly be classed as mesorrhine than platyrrhine, for certainly the impression made on us by the living was that they were not specially broad-nosed. The capacity of the 18 male skulls described by the Sarasins varies from 1012 to 1502 c.c. with an average of 1278 c.c.: none of the three female Vedda skulls from the inner Vedda district have a capacity of less than 1150 c.c., though there is a skull of an adult Vedda woman in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons with a capacity of only 960 c.c.

141

Summing up the physical characters to which we have briefly referred we may define the Veddas as a short, wavy-haired, dolichocephalic race, with moderately long faces and moderately broad noses. Expressing the results of measurements taken by the Sarasins we may say that chamaeprosopes and leptoprosopes occur in about equal numbers, and that the Veddas are mesorrhine or present a low grade of platyrrhiny.

114 The latest Vedda literature of any importance is a volume published by the Sarasins which records the work they did in Ceylon during 1907 when they established the existence of a stone age upon the island. This fact had not been realised before, though two naturalists, Mr E. E. Green and Mr J. Pole, both old residents, had already collected and recognised as artifacts the quartz implements which were the typical product of the stone age in Ceylon, and which, as pointed out by the Sarasins, are most reasonably to be attributed to the Veddas. A number of rock shelters were explored; these were situated at Kataragam in the south of the island where no Veddas now exist, and in other parts of Uva, in the present Vedda country

172

[erratum, see p. xx. – Analyst]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 439 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on 141 which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 m. (60½ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 m. (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 609 576 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

166 Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately pure-blooded. 115 The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very poor chena and, 651 when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

[errata; see p. xx. — Analyst]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours' influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded, since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *hile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanliness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. [361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in [241] wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their [224] chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gâté, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticalao boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

follows, that, till I measured him, I believed him to be not merely comparatively a tall man, was only five feet three inches in height. He was a Veddah of Bintenne, and much more civilized in his life than the rest of the wild tribes there. The shortest man I have measured was four feet one inch. I should say that of men, the ordinary height is from four feet six to five feet one inch, and of women from four feet four to four feet eight inches.* 141

Their features are tolerably regular. The eyes are good, and often full. The nose is generally well shaped, though inclining to be flat; the nostrils wide. The mouth sometimes large, and the lips firm, but rather thick. The beard is short and scant. The hair of the head which is not curly falls in rusty, tangled masses about the face, making the head appear out of all proportion to the lean body, and this leads those who are not close observers to describe the Veddahs as large-headed. Tennent notices this and remarks how perfectly the description of the Besedæ, in the tract *De moribus Brachmanorum*, applies to the Veddahs of the present day. "Pigmies" indeed they are, "stunted and with unshorn dishevelled locks"—but the term *μεγαλακέφαλα* is not appropriate to them; for in point of fact, their heads are remarkably small.† One of their skulls, sent to England by me some years ago, through my friend Mr. Thwaites, the able Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens of Ceylon, to be submitted to the Society, was pronounced to be, in general capacity, smaller than the smallest negro, native Australian, or Esquimaux.‡ But their wild shaggy hair gives such an appearance of undue size to the head that it might well mislead the travellers from Thebes in the fifth and Tennent in the nineteenth century. 142 [141]

When quite in repose, the features of the Veddahs wear a vacant and melancholy expression, which is almost painful to look upon. In speaking to them, I have observed, in some, considerable shrewd- 157

---

* In a list of heights of Veddahs taken lately at my request, I find two Veddahs measuring five feet three inches, and one five feet three inches and four-tenths; but, if these measurements are perfectly accurate, this is much above the average height. Of fourteen Veddahs of Bintenne, lately measured for me, the tallest was five feet three inches and four-tenths, the shortest four feet six inches and a quarter; the average five feet and half an inch. Of twelve women, the tallest was five feet two inches and a half, the shortest four feet four inches and a half; the average four feet nine inches.

† *Vide* the whole passage quoted by Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, note at page 439, 2nd edition, but especially the following: "*εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ οἱ Βεδδεῖς ἀνδρωνύμοι, κολαβὶ, μεγαλακέφαλα, ἄκαρτα, καὶ ἀκλότριχα.*"

‡ It was considered to be that of a female between twenty-two and twenty-eight years of age. The skull came from Nilgala, and was the smallest skull ever measured by Mr. Busk.

131 eastern part of that island in separate hordes and families. Nowadays, these Veddas can only be found in the plains of East Ceylon which territory is bordered in the south by the Arukan Aru River; it is commonly called "Mahaweddarata" meaning "Great Vedda Land." This name, however, has at present very little meaning because one can hardly find any real Veddas in that part of the country [144] but rather a population having more Singhalese than Vedda blood in their veins.

177 The Veddas of our times have for the greater part adopted the culture of the higher civilized population of the island of Ceylon. Really primitive Veddas hardly exist any more.

141 131 The Sarasins describe the Vedda people as one of short stature; for the Veddas of the central districts they found an average height of 155.4 centimeters, for the tribes of the east coast one of 155.8 centimeters, and for the Veddas of the Wewatte territory one of 160.7 centimeters. However, 144 144 if from the number of Veddas of the central districts those individuals are eliminated which show signs of interbreeding with other elements or can be regarded as such, then one will find a much shorter stature for those Veddas who seem to be of purer race; their average male's height is 153.3 centimeters, /108/ with a minimum of 146.0 centimeters and a maximum of 160.0 centimeters. On the average, the women are about 10 centimeters shorter than the males.

105 Characteristic physical features of the Veddas are:

Vedda AX5
Greater India AQ1

Characteristic physical features of the Veddas are: V 142
relatively very long and also thin arms, whereas their lower extremities are also fairly long. The color of their skin varies between brown and dark brown; the women are generally of a lighter color than the men. Their eyes are dark brown or black-brown; their hair is wavy, dark and coarse. Their beard growth is not heavy; it consists of wavy hair. The hair growth on the body is very sparse. Furthermore, they have a very long head with sometimes very marked supraorbital ridges. However, their face is broad and not very long, becoming suddenly very pointed toward the chin. Their flat nose bridge lies deep and recedes sharply under the forehead; the nose is fairly flat with broad nares. The lips are sometimes fairly thick, in other cases fairly thin. The mouth is not extremely wide and the jaw does not protrude (orthognathism).

They found that the capacity of the skull was very small. The cephalic index for the male skull was calculated to be 71.6 and 71.2 for the female skull. /109/ Therefore, the Veddas are to be considered a dolichocephalic people. (Figs. 14,15,16,17) V 141

According to Sarasin, it can be considered certain that there are peoples in India who are related to the Veddas of Ceylon. All those tribes can be considered to be remnants of a very old racial stratum which probably lived all over India in much earlier times. One should not identify them with the Dravidian population since they seem to represent the remnants of a pre-Dravidian population. V GI 144

18: Kleiweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB: Indonesia

Toala OG20
Vedda AX5
Mori-Leki OG7

The following table should prove that the body height of these tribes shows a great similarity to that of the Veddas: T V M 144

71	Vedda men	body height	157.6	centimeters
11	Toala "	"	157.55	"
4	Tomuna "	"	157.6	"
10	Tokea "	"	157.0	"
28	Vedda women	"	147.3	"
8	Toala "	"	147.7	"

Although the skin color of the Toala tribes is somewhat lighter than that of the Veddas, it is indeed darker than of the surrounding peoples in Celebes, such as the Toradja and the Buginese. Furthermore, both the Vedda and the Toala have wavy hair; they have the same beard growth, nearly the same form of the face, the same shape of the nose /116/ and the same everted lips (Fig. 18). T V 142

Yet, there are also various differences between the Toala tribes and the Veddas. First of all, as already mentioned, there is the difference of head shape; the Veddas being dolichocephalic, whereas the Toala's skull structure lies between mesocephaly and brachycephaly. However, Sarasin does not believe that this discrepancy is of much importance, since the Veddas themselves show a great variety of skull structures while, among them too, mesocephaly was found to be not infrequent. This could perhaps be attributed to a free variability which would rather be the case with the Toala, who have been separated from the Veddas by such T V [141]

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Sakai AN6
Vedda A×5

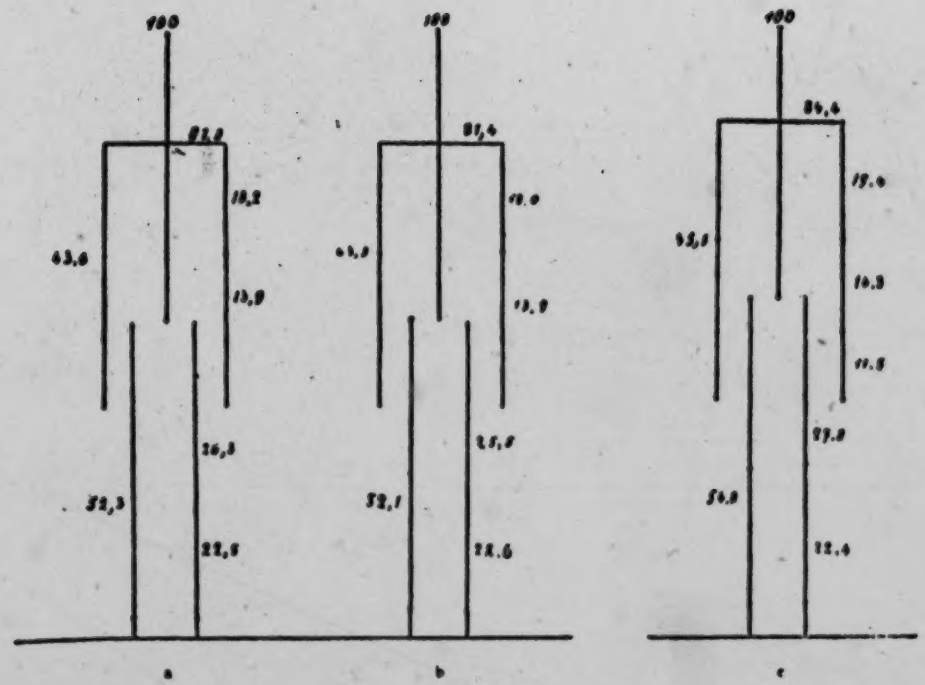


Fig. 24. Diagram of Proportions (body height = 100). Of a Senoi man (a), of a Senoi woman (b), and of a Vedda man (c).

Depiction by R. Martin.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

So wrote John Bailey in 1863 in a footnote to the paper in which his own observations are reported, and no one who knows the Veddas will disagree with him. Indeed, Bailey's paper is a remarkably careful and critical piece of work, concerning which all must agree with Nevill who recognised it as the first scientific account of the Veddas[1]. 114

It was succeeded in 1881 by a summary by Virchow of what was then known of the Veddas, and measurements were given of a number of Vedda skulls. This paper was translated into English and published in 1886 in Vol. IX of the *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. But no original detailed study of the sociology of the Veddas appeared until the extremely valuable observations of the late Hugh Nevill, to which we shall frequently refer, appeared in the *Taprobanian*, to be followed in 1893 by a magnificently illustrated work *Die Weddas von Ceylon und die sie umgebenden Völkerschaften*, published by the Doctors Paul and Fritz Sarasin, which however deals less fully with the sociology than with the physical anthropology of the Veddas[2].

Three articles by Dr L. Rutimeyer, published in 1903[3], describe the author's impressions of parties of Danigala and Henebedda Veddas who visited him at Bibile Rest House and review the then existing condition of our knowledge concerning the ethnology of the Veddas, finishing with a summary of the views expressed by the Sarasins concerning the relationship of the Veddas to other races.

As this volume will scarcely touch on physical anthropology we now give a short account of the chief physical characteristics 142

[1] *Taprobanian*, 1887, Vol. I, p. 175.

[2] It must not be thought, however, that the period from 1863 to 1893 was absolutely barren; Mr B. L. Hartshorne published a paper dealing with the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1876, and papers on the Veddas continued to appear in the *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. One paper, that by C. Stevens (*Proc. Roy. As. Soc. Ceylon Branch*, 1886), must be regarded as absolutely misleading, and the value of many of these communications is reduced by the absence of data concerning the origin and mode of collection of the information given. Thus in Volume VII, 1881, Mr Louis De Zoysa published a number of Vedda songs which would be of great value if a single word were said of where, how, or by whom they were collected. This literature will be found in a bibliography given by the Sarasins on p. 594 of their work.

[3] *Die Nilgalamuddis in Ceylon*. Globus 1903.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
342
516

Plate II

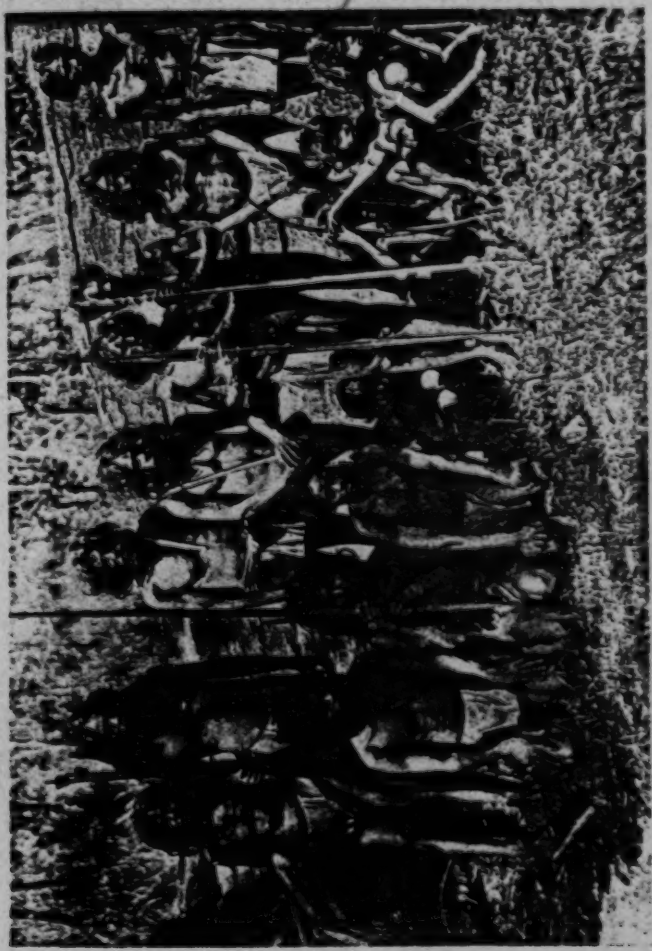
Damigala Veddas on look-out rock

[facing p.16a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
302
411

Plate III



Group of Veddas of Henebedda and Bingoda

[facing p.16 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate IV

142

Peremain (Waisha), headman of the Kandaddu Veddas

[facing p. 16C]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
302

Plate V

Sita Wannigya of Hanbokkle

[facing p. 16d]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate VI

142

Sita Wanniya of Hanabadda

[facing p. 16 e]

Plate VII

142

Perumin, a Henebedda youth

[facing p. 16 f]

142 of the purer Veddas in order that the reader may appreciate the bearing of what will be said in other parts of the book concerning the different groups of Veddas we visited.

The general appearance of the Veddas will be most readily appreciated by examining the photographs of pure, or nearly pure-blooded Veddas reproduced in Plates II and III. The first of these represents four men of Danigala and a half-breed boy. The oldest man is Kaira (1), the "patriarch" or senior of the Danigala group[1]. Of the three other men, his sons, the two in the foreground are Randu Wanniya (2), nearest to the pole supporting the hut, and Tuta (3). Plate III is a group of Henebedda Veddas, the relatively tall man with his hands hanging by his sides is the half-breed Appuhami (4), and the taller of the two men with axes over their shoulders, the Henebedda shaman[2], is also a half-breed. The man to the right of the shaman with bow and arrows in his hands is Kaira (5), the youth in front of him is Poromala (6), on whose left hand Tuta (7) kneels by the side of Kalua who is in the same position. The four men between Appuhami and the shaman all appear to be fairly typical Veddas; the man next to Appuhami is Poromala of Bingoda, upon whose right stand Handuna (8) and Randu Wanniya (9).

141 In stature the Veddas are short: the Sarasins measured 24 men of the "Central Vedda district" whom they considered pure-blooded and obtained an average of 1·553 mmt. (60⅞ inches) with a minimum of 1·460 mmt. (57½ inches) and a maximum of 1·600 mmt. (63 inches). There was only one man of 1·600 mm. and 20 of the 24 men measured were below 1·575 mmt. (62 inches). Eleven Vedda women of the same district gave an average

[1] Two larger photographs of this man as he appeared some 15 years ago are given by the Sarasins (Plate VII, figure 10), who consider him a "tolerably pure-blooded Vedda." The numbers in brackets refer to the genealogy on p. 60.

[2] Shaman is the title which the Tungus give to their "spirit-conjurors." In *Hideous fakeer* (1903) it is said that the terms shaman and shamanism "are applied in modern times to superstitions of the kind that connects itself with exorcism and 'devil-dancing' as their most prominent characteristic.....The characteristic of shamanism is the existence of certain soothsayers or medicine-men, who profess a special art of dealing with the mischievous spirits who are supposed to produce illness and other calamities, and who invoke these spirits and ascertain the means of appeasing them in trance produced by fantastic ceremonies and convulsive dancings."

[illegible] – should be [illegible]; see p. [illegible]. – [illegible]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

height of 1·433 mm.[a] (56⅜ inches) with a minimum of 1·355 mm. (53⅜ inches) and a maximum of 1·500 mm. (59 inches). The median of the men was 1·545 mm. (60⅞ inches), that of the women 1·435 mm. (56½ inches). Although Veddas do not become unduly fat they have, when well nourished, sturdy rather than slight figures, and a few of the older men may present rather prominent abdomens. The hair is wavy, sometimes almost curly, and in old age not rarely turns white. There is little hair upon the bodies of the purer Veddas and the growth of hair upon the face can best be described as slight or moderate, usually consisting of a rather thin moustache and sparse goatee beard.

The skin of the Veddas varies enormously, that of the face being generally somewhat lighter than that of the skin of the chest. But apart from these minor variations, the skin colour of any series of individuals will be found to vary from a deep brown-black, through various shades of bronze, in some of which a definite reddish tone can be detected, to a colour which can only be called yellowish-brown. A medium brown-black is perhaps the commonest, but apart from the darkest brown-black every colour, even the lightest, occurs in individuals whose general appearance suggests that they are pure-, or almost pure-blooded Veddas, and we have no doubt that the bronze shades occur quite as often among pure-blooded Veddas as among the less pure. Indeed our experience suggests that the occurrence of a skin colour of the darker shades of brown-black may be taken as evidence of miscegenation. The eyes are always dark brown. The head is long and narrow, the Sarasins give the average cephalic index of 17 male skulls as 70·5 (minimum 64·9 and maximum 75·9, median 71). The length-height index of the same skulls is 73 (minimum 65·4, maximum 79, median 73·4). Generally the face is long rather than broad, but in this respect there is considerable variation. Twelve skulls gave an average facial index of 88·2 (minimum 77·2, maximum 99·2, median 88·5), but ten of the skulls were over 85, the two lowest both giving an index of about 77.

The brow ridges are well marked so that the eyes appear deeply set or even sunken. The chin is somewhat pointed and

[a] [cannot be m.; see p. 16. - Anal'ysis]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142 is rarely prominent. The lips, though well developed, are not tumid (except sometimes in the young); sometimes the mouth is rather flat. This when accompanied by moderately prominent cheek bones gives some faces an expression of considerable energy. The jaw is not prognathous, the nostrils are moderately broad, the root of the nose is depressed but never flattened to any considerable degree. The average of the nasal indices of 17 skulls gave the figure 52·7 (minimum 43·3, maximum 62·2, median 52·3), which is just short of the index (53) at which platyrrhiny is commonly assumed to begin. Nevertheless we believe that the Veddas may more fairly be classed as mesorrhine than platyrrhine, for certainly the impression made on us by the living was that they were not specially broad-nosed. The capacity of the 18 male skulls described by the Sarasins varies from 1012 to 1502 c.c. with an average of 1278 c.c.: none of the three female Vedda skulls from the inner Vedda district have a capacity of less than 1150 c.c., though there is a skull of an adult Vedda woman in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons with a capacity of only 960 c.c.

141

Summing up the physical characters to which we have briefly referred we may define the Veddas as a short, wavy-haired, dolichocephalic race, with moderately long faces and moderately broad noses. Expressing the results of measurements taken by the Sarasins we may say that chamaeprosopes and leptoprosopes occur in about equal numbers, and that the Veddas are mesorrhine or present a low grade of platyrrhiny.

114 The latest Vedda literature of any importance is a volume published by the Sarasins which records the work they did in Ceylon during 1907 when they established the existence of a stone age upon the island. This fact had not been realised before, though two naturalists, Mr E. E. Green and Mr J. Pole, both old residents, had already collected and recognised as artifacts the quartz implements which were the typical product of the stone age in Ceylon, and which, as pointed out by the Sarasins, are most reasonably to be attributed to the Veddas. A number of rock shelters were explored; these were situated at Kataragam in the south of the island where no Veddas now exist, and in other parts of Uva, in the present Vedda country.

172

[Kataragam, see p. xx. —Analysis]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
133

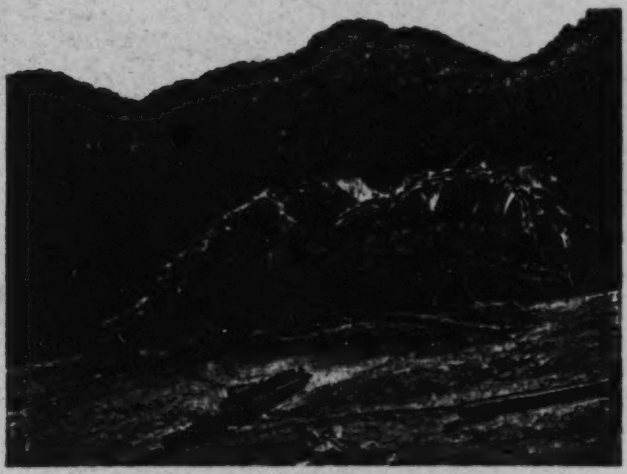


Fig. 1. Rough shelter on the Danigala rock dome

142
516

Fig. 2. Veddas of Bandaraduwa

[facing p. 38]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XIII

142
291
854

Women and girls of Sitala Wanniya

[facing p. 44]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to
439 take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

●142 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on
141 which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 mm.[a] (60½ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 mm.[a] (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they
609 stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and
576 did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

166 Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately
115 pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very
651 poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

[a] [Correction; see p. xx. = Analyst]

142
144
141
291

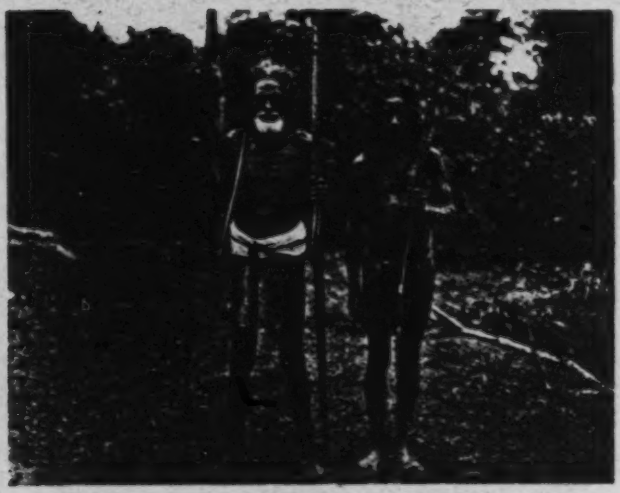


Fig. 1. Men of mixed Sinhalese and Vedda blood from the neighbourhood of Maha Oya.

142
291
854

Fig 2. Women of Omuni

[facing p. 46]

months previously to wander into Tamankaduwa where they 511
hoped to get yams and perhaps some game. A number of women left the village immediately after our arrival, explaining that if they did not go and find some yams they and their children would get nothing to eat that night. Some of the men possessed bows and arrows but game was scarce, and their [262]
living was obviously precarious, yams, monitor lizards, honey and berries forming their staple diet. Fowls were kept and were 231
taken down to the road (10 miles distant) to sell. Like all Veddas they possessed dogs, invaluable to them in catching monitor lizards when there is no bigger game to hunt, and their care for them was shown by a small shelter which they had b[illegible] in order to shade a bitch with a litter of puppies.

In physical characters these Veddas[1] somewhat resembled the 142●
neighbouring Sinhalese, but were less stoutly built; this appearance may however in part have been due to malnutrition. Their headman is a short, well-nourished, exceedingly active and intelligent individual, whose only Vedda characteristic is his short stature. Plate XIV, figure 2, represents a number of Omuni women.

Unuwatura Bubula. The position of the Unuwatura 101
Bubula Veddas is extremely difficult to understand, they occupy 177
two small groups of huts (one of which is shown in Plate XV, figure 1) a little distance from the huts of some peasant Sinhalese. They formerly lived at Mudugala and have doubtless been in close contact with the Sinhalese for many generations, but whether they are the remains of village Vedda settlements or are settled wild Veddas cannot be stated with certainty, though the latter seems more probable. It must be explained that though this community has mixed much with the Sinhalese and has doubtless been much influenced by them, they have their own shamans and they perform their own rites quite apart from their Sinhalese neighbours. Unfortunately the shaman of these people who knew most about the customs and rites of this community was ill, having overtaxed his strength at the first ceremony performed for us, and was not able to talk much, but he was present at most of our conversations and was thus a check on the younger man, but for the reason indicated many

[1] [i.e., Veddas of Omuni. – Analyst]

Plate XV

342
361
417

Fig. 1. Vedda settlement at Unuwatura Bubula

142
342

Fig. 2. Village Veddas of Dambani

[Facing p. 48]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is evidence that a hundred years ago there were organized communities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century. 184 361

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the surrounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure 2), though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility. 621 [177] [142] [609]

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been [197] 622 156

142
291
[854]

Fig. 1. Men of Yakure

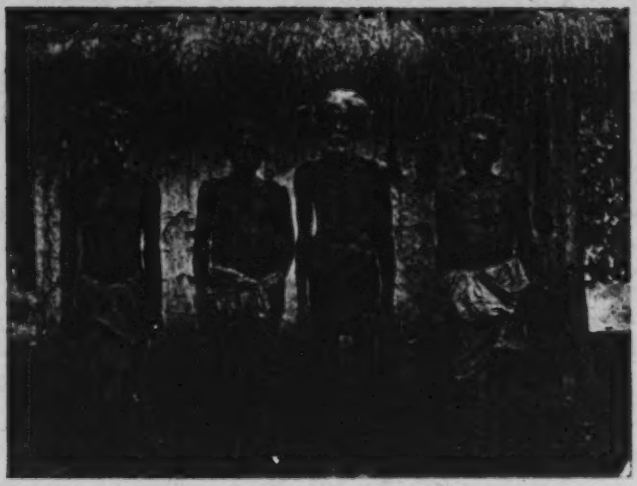


Fig. 2. Veddas of Ulpota

[Facing p. 56]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

men explained that though the ceremonies themselves might be performed anywhere the women would not come to our camp, so the dances must take place at the usual dancing ground in the jungle. The day after hearing the phonograph at our camp, the men came to us to request that we should take it to the cave as they had told their wives about it, and they all wanted to hear it too. From these examples the position of Vedda women will be understood.

Writing in 1887 Nevill notices a similar state. "As a rule, among the purer Veddas, the younger women are rigorously excluded or rather protected from contact with strangers. They occupy, however, an honourable and free position in the society of their relations. I only once saw the good-looking girls of the pure Vedda family. My guide was then ahead of our party with me, and abruptly, without explanation further than the word 'my house,' dived into the forest, beckoning me to follow. We had only gone a few hundred yards from the path, when we reached a glade with a little shed. Here a party of girls and women and children were collected, and at sight of us the younger women began to slip away into the woods, but at a word from my guide stopped. They then advanced and one by one stepped up to me with graceful courtesy, each making a Sinhalese bow with both hands when quite close to me, and then stepped aside, with or without a few words of simple welcome. There was no haste or reluctance, nor any approach to curiosity shown. I stopped talking with some of the elder women for a short time, and then went on. Three or four of the women had most exquisite figures, like statues of Psyche, and a clear brown skin. They were bare to the waist, and from the knees down. I never saw Vaedda women at all comparable to these, and then only did I realise the stories I had heard from Sinhalese, of the former great beauty of the Vaedda women. On our return, the clan met us by official appointment; but these girls, and one equally statuesque young mother, were conspicuously absent, and I saw it was understood I should regard my interview as a confidential honour, intentionally arranged to make me feel I was personally trusted and distinguished."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
411
516
•142
787

Plate LV

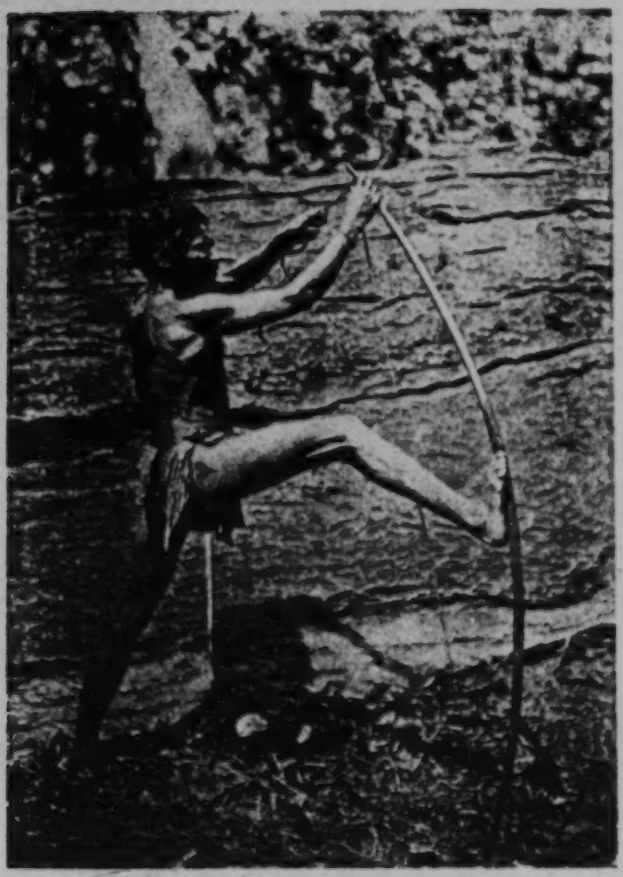
Nila holding bow while reciting invocation No. XXIII. When the name of the *yaka* causing the illness is spoken the bow swings to and fro

[facing p. 290]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXIII

411
142
291
516



Handuna of Henebedda stringing his bow

[facing p. 326 a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
113 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda marriage, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
•142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

241 The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
342 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

415 They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
534 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

Plate LXVIII

142
291

Fig. 1. Coast Veddas.

534
482
516

Fig. 2. Coast Veddas of Vakarai

[facing p. 332a]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 those only who are the most barbarous, who have preserved in all essentials their isolation from other races intact, that we must expect to find the most marked peculiarities.

101 The term Veddah—or Weddah—in itself, indicates no particular race. It simply means "a hunter", and is, in India, applied to aboriginal or barbarous tribes generally.*

In this sense, a great portion of the population of the eastern parts of Ceylon appears, at some period or another, to have been so called. There are still extensive districts known as "Weddirata", or the country of the Veddahs, the inhabitants of which, although they are, owing to the remoteness of their situation, less civilized than the bulk of the people of the island, are not Veddahs, but Singhalese, in kindred, religion, and customs.

101 It is highly probable that the people of these remote districts and of others, where Veddah descent is still claimed, are more 174 directly derived from the race which originally stocked the island than those who inhabit such parts of it as were more accessible to the settlers from Continental India, who, in process of time superseded the aborigines.†

But the people distinguished in Ceylon, by the name of Ved- 131 dahs—wholly distinct, as I have said, even from those who, though now Singhalese, yet describe themselves as descended from Veddah ancestors, are to be found in the districts of Batti-

---

* Weddá (Singhalese) an archer; some trace it to Bedda (Jungle). Introduction to Alwis' Sidath Sangarawa.

Vedán (Tamil), a hunter—one who lives in the woods; a name given to rude tribes, aborigines in the Indian peninsula. Vedan (Tamil), corruptly Vaidan, Veddah, also Beddah, or Weden—a hunter, a fowler; a name given to wild tribes, inhabiting the hills and forests of the south of India almost in a state of nature—probably the aboriginal race of the peninsula. Prof. Wilson's *Glossary of Revenue and Judicial Terms.* The word Veddah is still used in Ceylon as a hunter, and so applied to persons, not "Veddah" in the limited sense of the word.

† The Weddirates were, under the native government, exempted from 648 all service save military—the most honourable; and rendered tribute to the king, of beeswax, dried flesh, and honey, which was continued for some time after we obtained possession of the Kandyan provinces. But the inhabitants of these districts marry and associate with those of the adjoining districts, and are apparently the same people. There may exist some eth- 142 nical difference; indeed, I think even an unscientific eye can detect a difference in the appearance, not only of these people, but of the Wanniahs of the northern and central parts of Ceylon, when compared with the ordinary natives. I have tried to obtain skulls of the different races, of which there are many in the island, viz., Tamils, Moors, Singhalese of the low country and of the Kandyan provinces, the people of the Weddiratas—Wanniahs of Neweraka lawiya and Batticalas—Mookwas of the north-west and east provinces, Malays, Goorowas, Rhodias, etc., but it is most difficult to obtain them. The subject may be worthy of the attention of the Ethnological Society, though beside the object of this paper.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilised. [361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their [241] chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; [224] and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 134 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gátó, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticaloa boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

follows, that, till I measured him, I believed him to be not merely 141
comparatively a tall man, was only five feet three inches in height. He was a Veddah of Bintenne, and much more civilised in his life than the rest of the wild tribes there. The shortest man I have measured was four feet one inch. I should say that of men, the ordinary height is from four feet six to five feet one inch, and of women from four feet four to four feet eight inches.*

Their features are tolerably regular. The eyes are good, and often 142
full. The nose is generally well shaped, though inclining to be flat; the nostrils wide. The mouth sometimes large, and the lips firm, but rather thick. The beard is short and scant. The hair of the head which is not curly falls in rusty, tangled masses about the face, making the head appear out of all proportion to the lean body, and this leads those who are not close observers to describe the Veddahs as large-headed. Tennent notices this and remarks how perfectly the description of the Beseda, in the tract *De moribus Brachmanorum*, applies to the Veddahs of the present day. "Pigmies" indeed they are, "stunted and with unshorn dishevelled locks"—but the term μεγαλοκέφαλα is not appropriate to them; for in point of fact, their heads are remarkably small.† One of their skulls, sent to England by me some years ago, through my friend Mr. Thwaites, the able Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens of Ceylon, to be submitted to the Society, was pronounced to be, in [141]
general capacity, smaller than the smallest negro, native Australian, or Esquimaux.‡ But their wild shaggy hair gives such an appearance of undue size to the head that it might well mislead the travellers from Thebes in the fifth and Tennent in the nineteenth century.

When quite in repose, the features of the Veddahs wear a vacant
and melancholy expression, which is almost painful to look upon. In 157
speaking to them, I have observed, in some, considerable shrewd-

---

* In a list of heights of Veddahs taken lately at my request, I find two Veddahs measuring five feet three inches, and one five feet three inches and four-tenths; but, if these measurements are perfectly accurate, this is much above the average height. Of fourteen Veddahs of Bintenne, lately measured for me, the tallest was five feet three inches and four-tenths, the shortest four feet six inches and a quarter; the average five feet and half an inch. Of twelve women, the tallest was five feet two inches and a half, the shortest four feet four inches and a half; the average four feet nine inches.

† *Vide* the whole passage quoted by Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, note at page 430, 2nd edition, but especially the following: "*eisi* δὲ καὶ οἱ Βεδδεῖς λεπτοκέφαλοι, πολλοὶ, μεγαλοκέφαλα, βραχυ, καὶ ἀκλόνριχε."

‡ It was considered to be that of a female between twenty-two and twenty-eight years of age. The skull came from Nilgala, and was the smallest skull ever measured by Mr. Busk.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

142 The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

291 Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable. A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garmenta.† Indeed, almost the only difference [304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have [301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

515 Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

302 Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait, 114 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking [276] gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smoking is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

181 When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*antiaris innoria*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

it is only because, after repeated and careful inquiry, I cannot establish the fact of such a marriage now actually existing, that I am inclined to consider that it is becoming obsolete. But I should be almost justified as describing it as an existing custom, for many of the young men are the offspring of such connections. The practice is spoken of by them in the present tense, and alluded to as a matter of course, without the smallest repugnance.* 582 835

Amongst the Bintenne Veddahs, then, it may be said to have been, for perhaps two generations or so, extinct. Amongst those of Nilgala it is, at most, only becoming so. And it has, undoubtedly, been the custom among both from time immemorial. Utterly revolting as it is to us, we must remember that with them it was a custom sanctioned by the practice of ages. It is not the consequence of a "poor community," nor the growth of mere barbarism. If it were, the elder sister would be equally sought after; if it were, polygamy in all its forms would be found among them. There would, in fact, be no restraint.†

I have before described the short stature of the Veddahs—their weak and vacant expression, their striking resemblance to each other, characteristics much more marked upon the Veddahs of Nilgala than those of Bintenne. The practice I have just noticed is quite sufficient to account for these. 142 143

It might naturally be supposed that such marriages would produce, besides a stunted growth, insanity, idiocy, and epilepsy. But I find few traces of these maladies. Madness rarely occurs, idiocy still less frequently; though dogged stupidity is not at all uncommon amongst them.‡ But in other respects the injurious effects of this custom would seem to be plainly discernible. The 143 158 000

* I am not surprised that Tennent should be ignorant of this custom. It is a most difficult task to obtain intelligible answers to the commonest questions from these ignorant creatures; and unless a clue to some subject is accidentally found, the inquirer would learn little. There are practices as revolting, though not so peculiar, among some of the Indian tribes.

† It is curious that the only trace I can find of anything approaching to a belief in retributive justice is a tradition of a man, whose name even has been preserved, and whose family still exists, who, they say, was eaten by worms for having exceeded the authorized limit, and formed connections with his elder sisters and aunts. By whom this punishment was inflicted they do not pretend to say; but the painful death they regard as the direct consequence of his incest.

‡ Madness is by no means common among them. They believe if one man curse another, the man who is cursed becomes mad. This is evidently the same superstition as is common among the Singhalese, and known as the "Kata waha," "the evil mouth," or "poison of the mouth," equivalent to the prevalent faith in the "Ess waha," "the evil eye," or "poison of the eye." Burton, in his *El Medinah Mecca*, says, "the national type has been preserved by systematic intermarriages. No evil results are anticipated from the union of first cousins; and the experience of ages and of a nation may be trusted." 754

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 effectual so long as there were no influences to weaken it, but when once a preponderating force came to surround these clans, their chance of survival was small, and to prevent individual extinction amalgamation presented the path of minimum resistance.

The effect of this amalgamation was to break down the primitive methods, and concurrently to infuse new blood, and with it to stay, or lessen, the forces that were weakening an already over-inbred stock.

101 If we refer to certain statistics, as recently as 1840 we find
161 that a rough enumeration of the so-called Rock-Veddas disclosed that only thirty families in Bintenna then existed.

Since then the increase of civilized races pressed with yearly greater insistence, till we are forced to conclude that the primitive Vedda is now no more, or nearly so.

●142 In my Paper read at the meeting of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society on September 19, 1914, I have described the features of the Vedda family I found at Setawa, but I venture here to repeat it for easy reference.

The man Dissan Hamy is about 5 ft. 10 in. in height, thin, small round the chest, with rather short arms, slender legs, with hardly any calf development. He does not know his age. His head is small, with small dark-brown beady eyes
[302a] set far back in their sockets. His hair is short, not tied in a knot, staring, and frizzy. His younger brother is shorter in stature, but with the same character of hair on the head. The elder has short, scanty, and bristly moustaches, but in both brothers there is a marked scarcity of hair on the face and body. Dissan Hamy's two sisters are both of normal height, and dress like the other women of the country. They are about 5 ft. 3 in. in height, with slender limbs. Both women are mothers, and both indicated the small breast development that appears to be characteristic of women residing
[302 in the arid parts of the country I explored. In both women
854] the hair is short and frizzy. Their infants had shaved heads.

I remarked that the skin of Dissan Hamy's body is darker than that of the other members of the family. The nose is strongly formed, with thin dilated nostrils. The mouth is rather wide, with lips of no unusual thickness.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 . AX5 Vedda AX5

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THERE is little of hunting in these pages, much of the forest-folk and their ways. I have purposely refrained, except in one section, from introducing incidents of sport—of which, truth to tell, I have had small share—into a narrative primarily designed to describe the more human and homely aspects of jungle life, especially where as it concerns the Veddas—the last remnant of Ceylon's aboriginal race. 121

Regarding the origin of the Veddas, I incline to the view that they are an off-shoot of one of the wild, autochthonous tribes of India, who crossed over to Ceylon, in prehistoric times, when the two lands were one, and subsequently got cut off by the inroad of the sea. They appear to be very akin to the Gonds of India. Indeed, the description of a present day Gond might just as well apply to the Vedda :—" A man of small sturdy build, with piercing eyes and a free athletic carriage..... axe hitched on shoulder, bow and arrows in hand ".* 174 [142]

I must acknowledge help I have received from many friends. Apart from those to whom reference is made in foot-notes in the text I am indebted to Mr. F. Lewis for much valuable advice in the planning of some of our journeys ; to him and Mr. C. Drieberg I owe the botanical names of trees. Three of the trips described here were made in the company of Mr. Leigh Smith, to whom, I take this opportunity, of expressing my gratitude for much valuable help in the preparation of my manuscript for the press. 000

The pen and ink illustrations are by Mr. E. F. Van Dort.

Colombo R. L. SPITTEL

[p. v]
[p. vi is blank]

* " Rifle and Romance in the Indian Jungle ", by A. I. R. Glasford

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

804 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

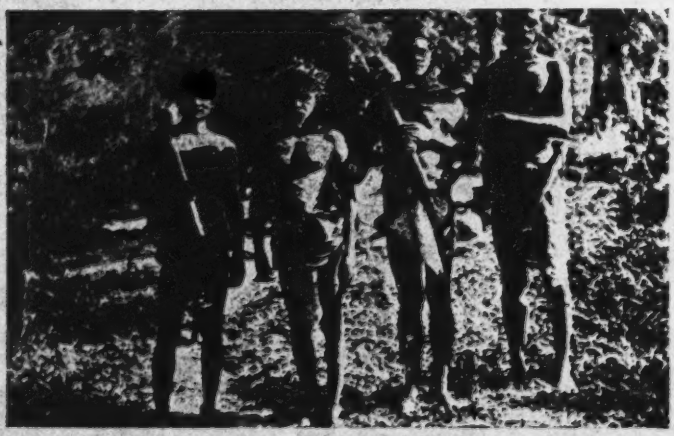
‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, *respectively*.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342

A Vedda home of the Ulpotta. (Page 8)

142
291
412



Veddas of Gunner's Quoin. The two to the left (Vela and Sinna) are the most typical. (Page 8)

[facing p. 8]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
301
415
516

"Their homes, the shelter of the trees." (Page 9)

142
291
622

Naida and his family. (Page 9)

[facing p. 9]

2. FOREST CHILDREN

621 THE village of Potuliyadda lies in the heart of the country of the Henebedde Veddas. We had hoped to take these people unawares in their homes some three miles away; but it was not to be; for a Vedda boy who had witnessed our arrival had forestalled us.

We were at lunch, when my friend, whose seat commanded a view of the jungle, quietly remarked, "Hullo; who are these? Veddas without a doubt."

142 157 [411] [622] Five men, armed with bows, arrows and axes, strode in single file under the leadership of a small one-eyed man, half of whose face was covered by an awful scar which puckered an eyeless socket, giving a touch of pathos to an otherwise harsh expression. Such was Poromola, chief of the Henebedde Veddas also called *Walaha* (bear) for obvious reasons. Then there was Handuna a fine type of wild man; though close on fifty his figure was well-knit, and this combined with his goatee beard and tousy head gave a strength and rugged dignity to his bearing. There were also a tall bearded man of forty, loquacious and sophisticated enough when you knew him; a lanky, slouching, beady-eyed fellow; a robust, curly-haired bumpkin; and lastly, the snub-nosed little mischief-maker to whom we owed the honour of this visit.

123 As the Veddas came up to us, they uttered some fierce jargon we did not understand. It was pretty obvious they were acting; and not caring to encourage them in this, I casually motioned them away. They retired mumbling. We recalled them later to find them in dudgeon, evidently not being used to such treatment. They stared mutely at us affecting not to understand a word of the Sinhalese in which I addressed them. I tried again and again, but not by the flicker of an eyelid did they signify comprehension. Civility and persuasion having failed, I tried the effect of candour, telling them that we were not gullible strangers and knew all about them. This also was without effect.

Opening Seligmann's book, which contained the portraits of these very Veddas taken ten years previously, we suited picture to prototype. They gazed uncritically with stolid intentness showing no surprise or enthusiasm. I asked them whether they remembered the author and his wife who had spent so much time with them and been so kind to them. One nodded, and the others' faces betrayed interest. Thus was the first barrier carried.

Gradually we won them over one by one; but despite our best efforts the conversation flagged. And we, tired of making all the advances simulated an indifference we far from felt, and took to our books.

"We are hungry," said Handuna after a while. "Will you not give us food?"

We could only offer them money, an almost useless thing to the Vedda. We had made the serious mistake of coming unprovided with a surplus of rice, betel, arecanut and tobacco; for the surest way to the heart of the Vedda is through his stomach. We

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

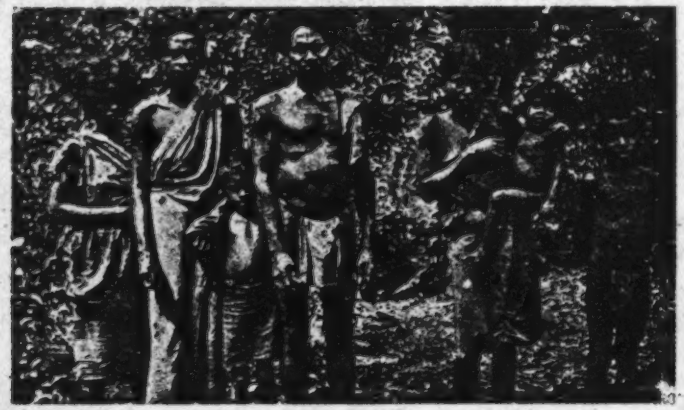
The best of the Hennebedde Veddas.—Porumola and Handuna (Page 16)

Handuna strings his bow (Page 16)

[FACING P. 16]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854



Handuna's household. (Page 18)

142
291
224
411
482

Hennebedde Veddas (Page 16)

The iguana hunter. (Page 17)

[facing p. 17]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854

"Sedate, wistful children." (Page 36)

[facing p. 36]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

with men astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalastic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

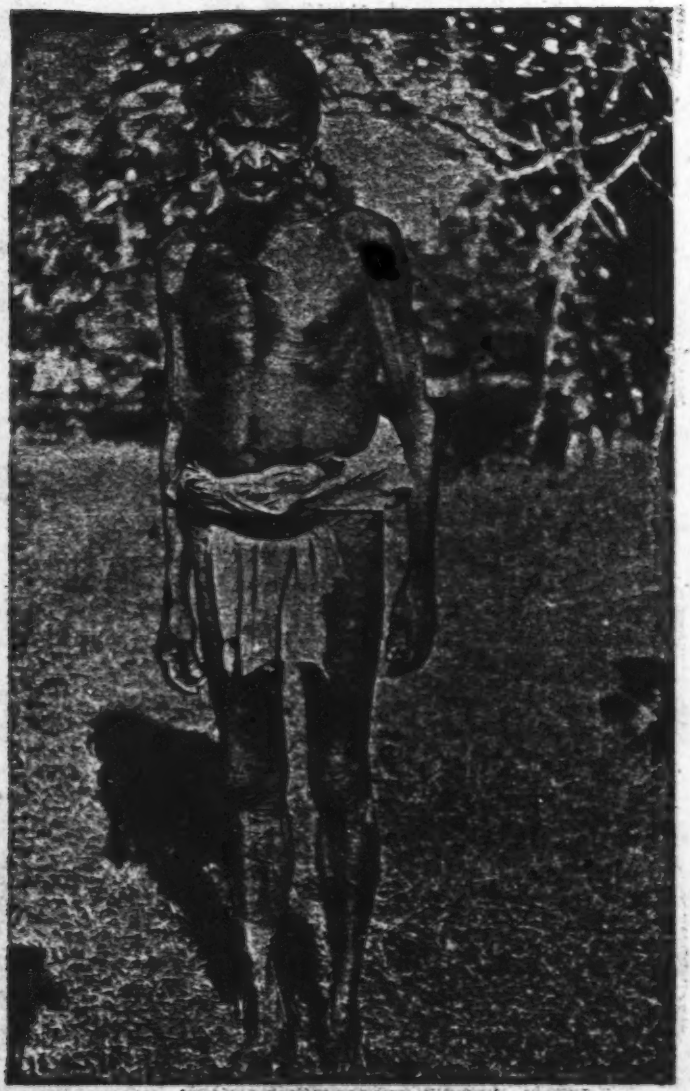
We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 [191] 142 301 412

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen floated away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing 136 825

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
301



Kombas of Dambana. (Page 37)

[FACING p. 37]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

942
291
301

A Vedda girl of Dolagalwella (Page 35)

312

Yakkure tank (Page 39)

[facing p. 38]

3. THE MARAWEETHIYA

Far or forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear
And one to me are shame and fame.

EMERSON

13 FROM Yakkure to Horiwila is six miles. The first part of the journey is through marsh; here the Mahaweli make a bend which all but encroaches on the path. The place is rank with vegetation. Tall grass thrives amidst sombre trees that stand apart, clothed out of all recognition in stoles of trailing mycania. The air is humid and oppressively still. One is glad to be rid of the swampy luxuriance with its strong suggestion of malaria.

Beyond a pleasant stretch of paddy, closer than we had ever seen it before, stood Gunner's Quoin. Tinkling cow-bells and the mournful cries of peafowl welcomed us to Horiwila.

361 144 The racial types we have passed, will repay review. Omuna, Dolagalwella and Kalukolu Eba were shifting *chena* settlements inhabited by Veddas with a large proportion of Sinhalese blood. Yakkure was a permanent village with the *chenas* apart; here the people called themselve Veddas but showed strong Tamil traits. The folk of Horiwila were not sure whether to call themselves Tamils or Veddas; while Manampitiya, beyond Horiwila, was a purely Tamil village. So does propinquity shape the type of Vedda, and forest penetration by the Sinhalese on the one hand and Tamils on the other, tend to obliterate the aboriginal race.

000 Decoyed by its beauty, we camped on a rock on the bund of the Horiwila tank, soon to learn that a stone exposed all day to the sun, was not the most desirable of camping places even at night. The stored heat radiating from the rock kept us awake till morning, and we rose quite unrefreshed for the good day's work before us, for to-day we would climb the Quoin, which, ever since we saw it across the marsh at Yakkure, beckoned us on. The Tamils of the place could only take us to the base of the hill; from there a Vedda of the Ulpotta must guide us. It was 115 quite an hour before we found him. I recognised him at once as Sinna an old friend; there were the bunions on his shoulder from carrying loads of lizards and yams, and there the hooked finger caused by a snake-bite when plucking a *hanava* comb from a creviced tree. A dwarf, with [N2 15] frizzly upstanding hair and wild eyes, and shy almost to timidity, Sinna had nothing of the sophisticated Vedda about him. He lived alone with [166] his small family at the end of the rock. The rest of his people had left when the *kurrukkan* crop failed: but Sinna remained to gather a precarious living from the scanty pickings of the field. We came on him searching for food in the forest.

The poor fellow was in great distress that morning, his favourite dog having been taken by a leopard the previous night. Hearing the animal's

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of 342 a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, 114 to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aralchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy 224 group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and 482 *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the 142 picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as 609 our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

600 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291

Sotha Banda, Gama and their families. (Page 65)

[facing p. 64]

2. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

244 THE genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark
181 by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a *chena* than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas
[184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a
222 large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much
177 to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his
142 outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature—
[326] and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a date, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
224

An ape for dinner. (Page 82)

342

Alu-gaige, a Vedda cave. (Page 84)

[Facing p. 86]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
516
854

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

142
291
351

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

[Facing p. 94]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
411
415
482

The finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. (Page 95)

[facing p. 95]

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

142
302

Fig. 14. Vedda of the Nilgala Region (Ceylon)

Photo Fr. Sarasin.

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5
142
302

Fig. 15. Vedda Woman of the Nilgala Region

Photo Fr. Sarasin.

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

142
302
516
291
411
137

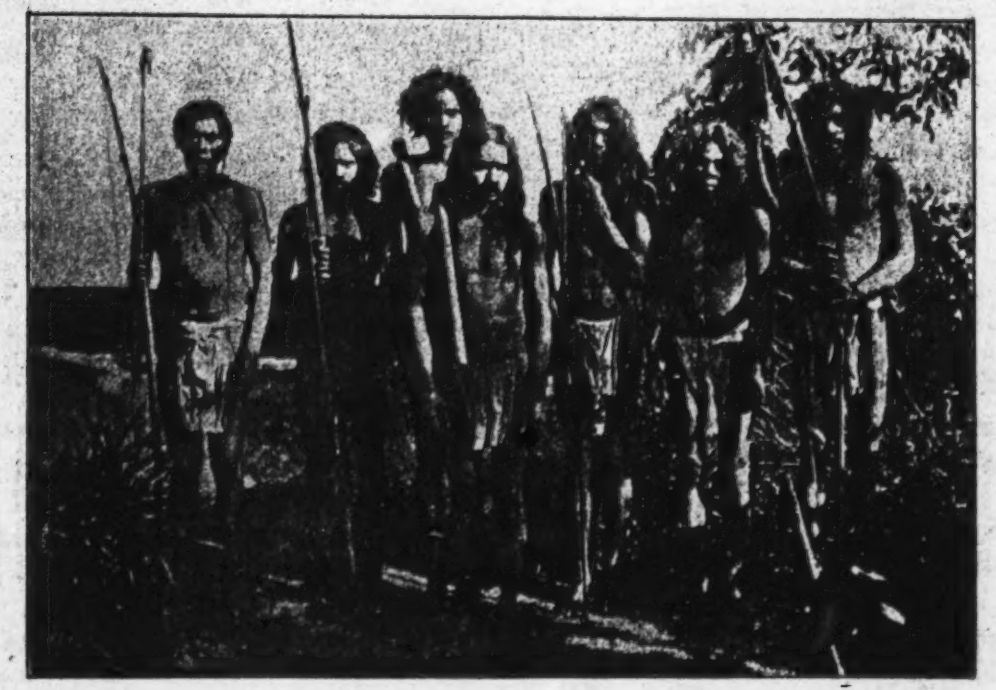


Fig. 16. Veddas from the Nilgala District (Ceylon) *Photo R. Martin.*

18: Kleiweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia

Vedda AX5
Greater India AQ1

Characteristic physical features of the Veddas are: V 142
relatively very long and also thin arms, whereas their lower extremities are also fairly long. The color of their skin varies between brown and dark brown; the women are generally of a lighter color than the men. Their eyes are dark brown or black-brown; their hair is wavy, dark and coarse. Their beard growth is not heavy; it consists of wavy hair. The hair growth on the body is very sparse. Furthermore, they have a very long head with sometimes very marked supraorbital ridges. However, their face is broad and not very long, becoming suddenly very pointed toward the chin. Their flat nose bridge lies deep and recedes sharply under the forehead; the nose is fairly flat with broad nares. The lips are sometimes fairly thick, in other cases fairly thin. The mouth is not extremely wide and the jaw does not protrude (orthognathism).

V 141
They found that the capacity of the skull was very small. The cephalic index for the male skull was calculated to be 71.6 and 71.2 for the female skull. /109/ Therefore, the Veddas are to be considered a dolichocephalic people. (Figs. 14,15,16,17)

V GI 144
According to Sarasin, it can be considered certain that there are peoples in India who are related to the Veddas of Ceylon. All those tribes can be considered to be remnants of a very old racial stratum which probably lived all over India in much earlier times. One should not identify them with the Dravidian population since they seem to represent the remnants of a pre-Dravidian population.

18: Kleiweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia

Toala OG10
Vedda AX5
Mari-Leki OG7

The following table should prove that the body height of these tribes shows a great similarity to that of the Veddas: T V M 144

71	Vedda men	body height	157.6	centimeters
11	Toala "	"	157.55	"
4	Tomuna "	"	157.6	"
10	Tokea "	"	157.0	"
28	Vedda women	"	147.3	"
8	Toala "	"	147.7	"

Although the skin color of the Toala tribes is somewhat lighter than that of the Veddas, it is indeed darker than of the surrounding peoples in Celebes, such as the Toradja and the Buginese. Furthermore, both the Vedda and the Toala have wavy hair; they have the same beard growth, nearly the same form of the face, the same shape of the nose /116/ and the same everted lips (Fig. 18). T V 142

Yet, there are also various differences between the Toala tribes and the Veddas. First of all, as already mentioned, there is the difference of head shape; the Veddas being dolichocephalic, whereas the Toala's skull structure lies between mesocephaly and brachycephaly. However, Sarasin does not believe that this discrepancy is of much importance, since the Veddas themselves show a great variety of skull structures while, among them too, mesocephaly was found to be not infrequent. This could perhaps be attributed to a free variability which would rather be the case with the Toala, who have been separated from the Veddas by such T V [141]

Toala 0620
Vedda AX5
Sakai AN6

T V 142 far distances and such long periods of time and who, therefore, may have differentiated in certain respects.

There is another difference, viz., in the physical proportions. As we have seen, the Veddas are characterized by relatively long arms, whereas the Toala have relatively short upper extremities. It seems that the Toala's lower extremities, too, are shorter than those of the Veddas. On account of those differences of physical proportions, existing between Toala and Veddas, the former seem more closely related to the Senoi of the Malacca Peninsula, who have been measured by Rudolph Martin. /117/ He found that the average arm index of the Senoi is very similar to that of the Toala; however, the former are somewhat shorter than the Toala and Veddas.

T V 5 142 144

T 177 Undoubtedly, the Toala tribes of Celebes have lost much of their originality through Buginese influence; their language has become a Buginese dialect. Still, they show in many respects a similarity to the Veddas of Ceylon and, as we will see later, also to the Senoi of the Malay Peninsula. Until recently, also the Toala were cave dwellers. They have no metal or ceramic industries. They are strictly monogamous; their veracity has been praised, whereas thefts hardly ever occur.

T 171 T 342 582

T 174 [241] The present Toala are engaged in agriculture. However, the exploration of their (former) caves has proved that they were originally a people of hunters who also made a living by collecting various forest products. Nowadays, the Toala

18: Kleiweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia

Malaya AN1
Sakai AN6
Toala OG10
Vedda AX5

River, in Tschangat Gulugoa and Bungka in the central mountains, west of Tapah. S 101

The Senoi III group inhabits the Ulu Kampar territory (where the Kampar River finds its source) and that of the Keru River in Western Perak.

A review of the data for these different tribes, broken down according to the occurrence of dolichocephaly, mesocephaly and brachycephaly, gives the following results: M S 141

Tribe	Dolicho-cephalic	Meso-cephalic	Brachy-cephalic
Bésisi	8%	25%	67%
Mantra	13%	74%	13%
Blanda	60%	30%	10%
Senoi from Ulu Kampar	56%	33%	11%
Senoi from the Tapah Mountains	12%	53%	35%
Semang	-	100%	-

S T V 142

As already mentioned before, the Senoi, like the Toala and Vedda, /129/ have wavy hair; however, it seems that the hair of the Senoi, as well as that of the Toala, is somewhat finer than that of the Veddas. The type of beard of the Senoi is also similar to that of both Veddas and Toala.

The skull of the Senoi is mesocephalic; Martin measured an average cephalic index of 78.5 among the pure-blooded Senoi. Annandale and Robinson (1) measured 34 Mai Darat, S 141

1. Fasciculi Malayenses /A Bundle of Malay Papers/, London, 1903.

Sakai AN6
Toala OG10
Vedda AX5

S 141

who apparently can be regarded as representative of pure-
S T 141 blooded Senoi, and they found an average head index of 78.3. This index comes very near to that of the Toala, although theirs is still somewhat higher.

Dolichocephalic and mesocephalic forms of the skull occur more with the Senoi than with the Toala, which is proved by the following table:

Tribes	Dolicho-cephaly	Meso-cephaly	Brachy-cephaly
Senoi men of Ulu Kampar	56.0%	33.0%	11.0%
Senoi men of Tapah Mountains	12.0%	53.0%	35.0%
Toala men	19.2%	15.4%	65.4%

S T V 142 /130/ Brachycephaly, then, is more prominent among the Toala than among the Senoi; as regards skull structure, we should place the Senoi between the Toala and Veddas.

The supraorbital ridges and glabella seem to be less prominent with the Senoi than with the Toala and certainly less when compared with the Vedda.

The shape of the face of the Senoi, however, is very similar to that of the other two racial groups and this can also be said of the shape of their nose and mouth. The
S T V 144 chin is somewhat receding, which is also the case with the Veddas and Toala.

From these observations, it seems justified to conclude that the Veddas, Toala and Senoi together represent a wavy-haired, aboriginal population, although it seems that the

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

it is only because, after repeated and careful inquiry, I cannot establish the fact of such a marriage now actually existing, that I am inclined to consider that it is becoming obsolete. But I should be almost justified as describing it as an existing custom, for many of the young men are the offspring of such connections. The practice is spoken of by them in the present tense, and alluded to as a matter of course, without the smallest repugnance.* 582 835

Amongst the Bintenne Veddahs, then, it may be said to have been, for perhaps two generations or so, extinct. Amongst those of Nilgala it is, at most, only becoming so. And it has, undoubtedly, been the custom among both from time immemorial. Utterly revolting as it is to us, we must remember that with them it was a custom sanctioned by the practice of ages. It is not the consequence of a "poor community," nor the growth of mere barbarism. If it were, the elder sister would be equally sought after; if it were, polygamy in all its forms would be found among them. There would, in fact, be no restraint.†

I have before described the short stature of the Veddahs—their weak and vacant expression, their striking resemblance to each other, characteristics much more marked upon the Veddahs of Nilgala than those of Bintenne. The practice I have just noticed is quite sufficient to account for these. 142 143

It might naturally be supposed that such marriages would produce, besides a stunted growth, insanity, idiocy, and epilepsy. But I find few traces of these maladies. Madness rarely occurs, idiocy still less frequently; though dogged stupidity is not at all uncommon amongst them.‡ But in other respects the injurious effects of this custom would seem to be plainly discernible. The 143 158 000

* I am not surprised that Tennent should be ignorant of this custom. It is a most difficult task to obtain intelligible answers to the commonest questions from these ignorant creatures; and unless a clue to some subject is accidentally found, the inquirer would learn little. There are practices as revolting, though not so peculiar, among some of the Indian tribes.

† It is curious that the only trace I can find of anything approaching to a belief in retributive justice is a tradition of a man, whose name even has been preserved, and whose family still exists, who, they say, was eaten by worms for having exceeded the authorized limit, and formed connections with his elder sisters and aunts. By whom this punishment was inflicted they do not pretend to say; but the painful death they regard as the direct consequence of his incest.

‡ Madness is by no means common among them. They believe if one man curse another, the man who is cursed becomes mad. This is evidently the same superstition as is common among the Singhalese, and known as the "Kata waha," "the evil mouth," or "poison of the mouth," equivalent to the prevalent faith in the "Ess waha," "the evil eye," or "poison of the eye." Burton, in his *El Medinah Mecca*, says, "the national type has been preserved by systematic intermarriages. No evil results are anticipated from the union of first cousins; and the experience of ages and of a nation may be trusted." 754

badly off and in varying conditions of ill health and malnutrition, 511
there is abundant evidence that only a generation back these communities were composed of a large number of families who, although they made chenas led a healthy hunting life for a great part of the year. Pate XI, figure 2, represents some men and children of the Bandaraduwa chena settlement; from 144
this photograph it is evident that in spite of their prosperity even twenty-five years ago, there must have been much miscegenation, and the appearance of a couple of old grey-headed men alleged Veddas whom we saw in this neighbourhood certainly suggested that they possessed only a fraction of Vedda blood[1].

The following account of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas as they 115
existed some 20 or 25 years ago was given us by Tissahami, Arachi[2] of Potuliyadde, a man who on account of his long association with Veddas is often spoken of as the Vedda Arachi. This man though presenting the appearance of a typical Kandyan Sinhalese has Vedda blood in his veins, for his ancestors were [144] Veddas of Moranegala in the Eastern Province, his great grandfather being a Vedda shaman who settled at Damenegama in Uva Province. Although this man's descendants intermarried with the local Sinhalese (who are themselves in part the descendants of Veddas) and adopted the Sinhalese mode of life, one man at least in each generation continued to act as shaman (S. *hapurale*), and the father of the Arachi was a devil dancer and *wederale* (native doctor) of some note. This man's son, the Arachi, now a man of between 40 and 50, exerts a great deal of influence over the peasants in his neighbourhood, who all recognise that he is in more or less constant communication with the spirits, to which fact his neighbours attribute much of his success. In this manner was explained the quickness with which he recently learnt blacksmith's work. We had not heard of his re-

[1] Some of the "Veddas" living in the neighbourhood of Bandaraduwa and the rest are comparatively tall, stoutly built men with no appearance of Vedda ancestry. Two men from Uhana in Badulla Patta measured 65 and 65½ inches respectively. Two men, who looked like Tamils but called themselves Veddas, lived on big Sinhalese chenas at Kotelinda; one of them said that his wife's parents had belonged to the Galmada group.

[2] *Arachi* is the title applied to the headman of a Sinhalese village settlement.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XIV

142
144
441
291

Fig. 1. Men of mixed Sinhalese and Vedda blood from the neighbourhood of Maha Oya.

142
291
854

Fig. 2. Women of Omani

[facing p.46]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 177 points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours' influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut [562 783] because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura 944 141 Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded, since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

184 361 The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *hile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanliness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

C.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

these village Veddas, though they seem to be of a somewhat 157
morose disposition. He also said they take no interest in things unknown to them. However, the phonograph attracted as much attention and interest as it always had from Veddas and Sinhalese alike, and we distinctly saw one Vedda smile when his song was reproduced.

The chena settlement at Wallampelle was seen, but here it 144
appeared that much intermarriage had taken place with the Sinhalese.

Malgode. There are a number of people very mixed blooded, 144
but calling themselves Veddas, living at Malgode on the shores 177
of Horaborawewa, a beautiful tank traditionally associated with 361
the Veddas. They have dropped their old Vedda customs so entirely that the local Sinhalese no longer look upon them as true village Veddas, an attitude that has perhaps been fostered by the fact that here in Uva where the Veddas are exempt from all taxation these people pay road tax. Such at least was [651]
the point of view of the Arachi of Alutnuwara, "how can these people be Veddas?—they pay road tax." In spite of this there 511
is no doubt that they are largely of Vedda descent and in many instances remember their *wirage*. They live in very poorly built houses and depend largely on the seeds of the lotus for food. They still pose as pure-blooded Veddas to white visitors, and have been recently described by Drs H. M. Hillier and W. H. Furness, 3rd. "We followed the jungle path along the eastern shore of the lake, sometimes over outcrops of granite, or down by the lake side...and after following our guide through thick undergrowth for half-an-hour, suddenly, and without warning, we came out into a cleared space, where there was the merest excuse for a hut, and beside it a man and woman squatting side by side and cooking something in a blackened earthen pot, which rested on a fire of twigs and branches; a little beyond them were more huts and more women and children—lo! the Village Veddahs. The elderly man and woman whom we first saw had between them scarcely a yard of coarse cloth as clothing, their hair hung loose in dishevelled twists and strings about their faces, and they both squatted so low that their knees stood up above their shoulders. But the most impressive thing about

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords. 361

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter. 301 304

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of cocoanut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]." 415 [531]

Village Veddas of Tamankaduwa.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of intermarriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils. 144 621

Elakotaliya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-bred. Their mode of life is similar to that prevalent at Dambani and Bulugahalandena, i.e. they are occupied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their *marage* and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaku. 105 621

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve mud huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1901. [113]

105 on their chena. We waited here a little while and two Veddas
62 passed, one carrying a gun; we asked them to return to their chena and fetch some of the other villagers. Soon some twenty
[431] men and about as many women and children arrived bringing us presents of honey, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. Scarcely any of them presented the Vedda type, they were all distinctly larger and more heavily built. Except their knowledge of their *warugé* and recognition of the Nae Yaku all remains of Vedda customs seemed to have been lost.

Yakure. The inhabitants of Yakure, a village about six miles from Kalukalaeba, call themselves Veddas, though physically (Plate XVI, figure 1) they would pass as Tamils or mixed
[194] Tamils and Sinhalese, and show even less evidence of Vedda blood than do the Kalukalaeba people. Their village consists of about 40 mud houses and is compactly built; a great number of cattle was seen grazing outside the confines of the village. Like the Kalukalaeba folk they know their *warugé* and invoke the Nae Yaku, but they have a temple, a simple mud hut, and worship a number of Sinhalese gods. Some men (Plate XVI, figure 2) from a village called Ulpota near Gunner's Quoin were
[197] seen here who also appeared to have mixed blood; they knew the "Vedda language," that is to say we were able to get from them about the same number of words as we obtained at Dambani. When one of them was asked when this dialect was used he replied "only when we are sent for by the Government
[191] agent or any other white man." Among themselves they speak Sinhalese though they can also speak Tamil as it is largely the language of Tamankaduwa.

Rotawewa. There is a settlement of alleged Veddas at Rotawewa about six miles from Minerriya tank. Concerning these we were told that they cultivated rice, and were in no respect different from the neighbouring Sinhalese, while Mr Jayawardene writes: "There is only one village of Veddas in Sinhala Pattu of Tamankaduwa District, and that village is Rotawewa, about six miles from Minerriya. These Veddas lived on the chase and subsequently took to chena clearings, and when the place began to be frequented by the low-country Sinhalese and other traders, some of them were able to sell their meat to them and

CHAPTER XII

COAST VEDDAS

THE Coast Veddas or Verdas occupy a number of settlements in the Tamil zone on the east coast. They exceed in number both the Village Veddas of Bintenne and their wilder neighbours of the borders of Uva and the Eastern Province; this is no doubt due to the fact that in the majority of Coast Veddas there is a large admixture of Tamil blood, and the comparatively thriving condition of their settlements must be attributed to the same cause. The date of their first arrival on the coast and of their subsequent intermarriage with the Tamils is quite uncertain; the latter state that there have always been Veddas in the neighbourhood of the sites they now occupy, but the Veddas themselves have a tradition that they come from inland. Knox does not mention them, but Nevill considers that they come from Sabaragamuwa (Sufferagam), being driven thence in the 17th century.

"The Vaeddas say that they never were related to these Coast Vaeddas, and do not know when they came to the Coast, or where they came from, nor did they ever hear that they belonged to any waruge of the race.

"The Coast Vaeddas do not know when they came or how they came, but they say that long ago their ancestors came from the Gala, far beyond the hills to the west. They also sometimes say they came from Kukulu-gammaeda and spread out along the Coast. Some say this is Kukulugam near the Verukal; others suppose it to be somewhere far away[1]."

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. 1. p. 184.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

bours' language, customs, and manner of life. In a few of the remoter forest fastnesses of the interior there are still to be found more or less pure-blooded Veddas who continue to support life by the precarious *chena* cultivation and by hunting: but in addition to these pure-blooded Veddas, who are a very feeble folk indeed in point of numbers, the inhabitants of many of what are generally recognized as Sinhalese villages, and the so-called "coast Veddas," who have their settlements in a few places along the eastern coast to the north of Batticaloa, are to a greater or less extent of Vedda origin. The Veddas as a race have been visited and described by C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann [1] and more recently by Dr. R. L. Spittel [2] of Colombo. Of the coast Veddas the Seligmanns say,—"although these coast Veddas, or Verdas as they call themselves, have intermarried with the Tamils and have adopted many Tamil customs, they still have remains of the old clan system of the Veddas, and although they usually speak Tamil, the majority of them say they have a language of their own which they consider to be the old Vedda language, and which was found to be Sinhalese. They have roughly-built temples, and we were told independently in two settlements that the chief agency worshipped was called Kapalpe or Kabalpe, *i.e.*, "ship spirit." At first we feared some misunderstanding, but when one of us was shown within one of their temples, into which after some trouble he was allowed to penetrate, a small model of a ship partly square rigged was seen, and it was stated that at a special ceremony this was hoisted to the top of a pole some thirty feet tall which stood outside the temple." [3] The ceremony to be described in what follows appears to be in fact that conducted for the propitiation of this "ship spirit" and of the goddess Ammal, and, if so, it is that which the Seligmanns saw rehearsed, in part at any rate, at Vakarai.[4] The description, therefore, imperfect and perhaps inaccurate in some details as it may be, being

[1] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *The Veddas*. See also *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 155 *et seq.*

[2] R. L. Spittel, *Wild Ceylon*.

[3] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 156, 157.

[4] *The Veddas*, pp. 335-9.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDAS OF GUNNER'S QUOIN

THE ferry at Periathurai marked the end of our river journey. Some miles inland was the rock called Gunner's Quoin round which Veddas lived. 131

Under a bo-tree by the river was an image of Ganesha the pot bellied, elephant-headed Hindoo god with offerings of withered lotus flowers before him. In a temple hard by, were massive bells and drums that kept deafening accompaniment on many a ceremonial day when peacock-plumed men, in the self-imposed torture of skewered cheek and pronged back, bounded hither and thither in delirious dance; and here were the implements, prongs and tridents, these frenzied devotees had dedicated to their unhearing god.

At the Tamil village of Manampitiya we were regaled with an old man's tales of the Veddas. He told us of one Patabanda only recently dead, called *walige**-Patabanda owing to his habit of wearing his loin cloth long behind. It appeared this Vedda was a fine marksman. A *rata-mahatmaya*† once wishing to test his skill pointed to a small jak fruit on a tall tree and asked him to shoot. The arrow flew true and stuck in the fruit; whereupon the Vedda feigning anger said roughly, "Now give me my arrow; it was you who asked me to shoot". The timid chief proffered money which was disdainfully refused. The Vedda then taking another arrow hit the stem of the fruit so that it fell and enabled him to recover both arrow and fruit. Thus do men pass into fable. 114 173

We were told many another tale of Veddas and their ways, and of matters connected with the ancient ruins to be found on the rock; of an anchorite who had lived in a cave there unharmed by the bears; and of ancient Vedda kings captured by stratagem and fraud.

A walk of five miles the next morning brought us to the foot of Gunner's Quoin. I was now brimming with expectancy; for I was about to see for the first time the Veddas in their homes; that aboriginal people who had time and again attracted the scholars of Europe, and in whose veins flowed the oldest blood of the inhabitants of Ceylon. They were here when Wijeya came from India in 543 B.C. and founded the Sinhalese dynasty; long earlier, when that Buddha came who preached to his followers at Mahiyangana after having put to flight the Yakkhas (Veddas?); to an even still older beginning their ancestry went, to a time in the stone age when man vied for existence with prehistoric forms. 114

To-day hardly a Vedda true to the old traditions survives; not one that uses beaten bark for apparel, or depends for sustenance solely on the jungle. The inroads of civilisation and the effects of miscegenation with the neighbouring Sinhalese or Tamils are tending surely towards the extinction of the race. Yet, for all that, many of the old Vedda traits still survive in their degenerate descendants and these are still a link with an unfathomable past. 144 178

*Tail †Kandyan chief

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [164] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and [146] framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even 177 their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 224 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schlrichera trijuga, Nephelium longana, respectively.*

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

[pp. 21-33 not processed]

CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE VEDDAS AND JUNGLE SHRINES

And here were forests ancient as the hills
Enclosing sunny spots of greenery

COLERIDGE

I. THE EMBRACE OF THE TREES

13 BURIED in the jungle ten miles north-west of Maha Oya lies the old Vedda
131 village of Omuna. Forest, unbroken by the meanest glade, intervenes
361 between. At a pool we flush a brace of bronze-winged pigeons or set a-chirruping a covey of small birds; while every now and then the scurry of unseen feet tells that the woods are live with game. Jungles darken early; by five-thirty a cathedral gloom creeps to the songs of roosting birds: the shama throats a rambling lay, the grubbing pitta sounds a shrill call, the cuckoo wakes, like a curfew, the forest echoes, "while like a long-roll drummer the night-jar thrills the trees"

It is all but dark when, through a break in the trees, the hill of Omuna stands before us; and the clamour of resenting dogs and a welcoming fire tell us we have reached the limit of an arduous walk.

13 Where the Vedda is, there is the inevitable rock. The tie between them
823 is intimate. To the life, animal and tree, on the timbered sides of the hill the Vedda is beholden for sustenance. The boulder-bound stream gives him water, and there lurk demons watchful for his undoing, and tutelary ancestral spirits. Nowhere is the relation between men and rock closer than at Omuna; for from the heart of the hill flows a spring that does not fail in the cruellest drought. Is it a wonder the place has for ages been
● 144 favoured of the Veddas? But time the iconoclast breaks the oldest bonds; the half-Veddas* there to-day are not of the ancient stock; that died out some fifteen years ago.

000 Besides its association with the wild men, Omuna has other claims to interest. Like many another forest stronghold it is the site of ancient Buddhistic ruins—frescoed caves and headless, chest-battered Buddhas despoiled by treasure-hunters What induced the priests of old-time to seek such sanctuaries as this, it is hard to surmise; religious persecution perhaps, by their inveterate foes the Sivaite Tamils; or merely the claims of austere devotion. Be that as it may, it was in these fastnesses that the light of Buddhism was nursed when it flickered low, till, happening

*There is almost certainly no Vedda living to-day without Sinhalese blood in his veins. The term *half-Vedda* therefore may appear superfluous, but is used to designate Veddas who have intermarried with the Sinhalese and settled down to agricultural pursuits, the word *Vedda* being used for the wilder folk that depend mainly on the jungle for sustenance.

[p. 34]

3. THE MARAWEETHIYA

Far or forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear
And one to me are shame and fame.

EMERSON

13 FROM Yakkure to Horiwila is six miles. The first part of the journey is through marsh; here the Mahaweli make a bend which all but encroaches on the path. The place is rank with vegetation. Tall grass thrives amidst sombre trees that stand apart, clothed out of all recognition in stoles of trailing mycania. The air is humid and oppressively still. One is glad to be rid of the swampy luxuriance with its strong suggestion of malaria.

Beyond a pleasant stretch of paddy, closer than we had ever seen it before, stood Gunner's Quoin. Tinkling cow-bells and the mournful cries of peafowl welcomed us to Horiwila.

361 The racial types we have passed, will repay review. Omuna, Dola-
144 galwella and Kalukolu Eba were shifting *chena* settlements inhabited by Veddas with a large proportion of Sinhalese blood. Yakkure was a permanent village with the *chenas* apart; here the people called themselve Veddas but showed strong Tamil traits. The folk of Horiwila were not sure whether to call themselves Tamils or Veddas; while Manampitiya, beyond Horiwila, was a purely Tamil village. So does propinquity shape the type of Vedda, and forest penetration by the Sinhalese on the one hand and Tamils on the other, tend to obliterate the aboriginal race.

000 Decoyed by its beauty, we camped on a rock on the bund of the Horiwila tank, soon to learn that a stone exposed all day to the sun, was not the most desirable of camping places even at night. The stored heat radiating from the rock kept us awake till morning, and we rose quite unrefreshed for the good day's work before us, for to-day we would climb the Quoin, which, ever since we saw it across the marsh at Yakkure, beckoned us on. The Tamils of the place could only take us to the base
115 of the hill; from there a Vedda of the Ulpotta must guide us. It was quite an hour before we found him. I recognised him at once as Sinna an old friend; there were the bunions on his shoulder from carrying loads of lizards and yams, and there the hooked finger caused by a snake-bite
[142 when plucking a *kanava* comb from a creviced tree. A dwarf, with
157] frizzly upstanding hair and wild eyes, and shy almost to timidity, Sinna had nothing of the sophisticated Vedda about him. He lived alone with
[166] his small family at the end of the rock. The rest of his people had left when the *kurrukhan* crop failed: but Sinna remained to gather a precarious living from the scanty pickings of the field. We came on him searching for food in the forest.

The poor fellow was in great distress that morning, his favourite dog having been taken by a leopard the previous night. Hearing the animal's

2. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

241 181 THE genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a *chena* than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas [184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 222 177 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his 142 outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature—and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have [826] it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a degree, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

131 eastern part of that island in separate hordes and families. Nowadays, these Veddas can only be found in the plains of East Ceylon which territory is bordered in the south by the Arukan Aru River: it is commonly called "Mahaweddarata" meaning "Great Vedda Land." This name, however, has at present very little meaning because one can hardly find any real Veddas in that part of the country [144] but rather a population having more Singhalese than Vedda blood in their veins.

177 The Veddas of our times have for the greater part adopted the culture of the higher civilized population of the island of Ceylon. Really primitive Veddas hardly exist any more.

141 The Sarasins describe the Vedda people as one of short 131 stature; for the Veddas of the central districts they found an average height of 155.4 centimeters, for the tribes of the east coast one of 155.8 centimeters, and for the Veddas of the Wewatte territory one of 160.7 centimeters. However, 144 if from the number of Veddas of the central districts those 141 individuals are eliminated which show signs of interbreeding with other elements or can be regarded as such, then one will find a much shorter stature for those Veddas who seem to be of purer race; their average male's height is 153.3 centimeters, /108/ with a minimum of 146.0 centimeters and a maximum of 160.0 centimeters. On the average, the women are about 10 centimeters shorter than the males.

005 Characteristic physical features of the Veddas are:

18: Kleiweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB: Indonesia

Vedda AX5
Greater India AQ1

Characteristic physical features of the Veddas are: V 142
relatively very long and also thin arms, whereas their lower extremities are also fairly long. The color of their skin varies between brown and dark brown; the women are generally of a lighter color than the men. Their eyes are dark brown or black-brown; their hair is wavy, dark and coarse. Their beard growth is not heavy; it consists of wavy hair. The hair growth on the body is very sparse. Furthermore, they have a very long head with sometimes very marked supraorbital ridges. However, their face is broad and not very long, becoming suddenly very pointed toward the chin. Their flat nose bridge lies deep and recedes sharply under the forehead; the nose is fairly flat with broad nares. The lips are sometimes fairly thick, in other cases fairly thin. The mouth is not extremely wide and the jaw does not protrude (orthognathism).

They found that the capacity of the skull was very V 141
small. The cephalic index for the male skull was calculated to be 71.6 and 71.2 for the female skull. /109/ Therefore, the Veddas are to be considered a dolichocephalic people. (Figs. 14,15,16,17)

According to Sarasin, it can be considered certain that V GI 144
there are peoples in India who are related to the Veddas of Ceylon. All those tribes can be considered to be remnants of a very old racial stratum which probably lived all over India in much earlier times. One should not identify them with the Dravidian population since they seem to represent the remnants of a pre-Dravidian population.

18: Kjelweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia

Australian Aborigines OX5
Oceanic Negritos 05
Vedda AX5

of this great wandering" /cited in German/.

V AA 144 Sarasin was of the opinion that the Veddas and the Australians do not belong to one and the same racial group; the former are to be considered /112/ the more primitive ancestors of the Dravido-Australian race, one which was of a lower cultural level.

V ON 144 Sarasin regards the above-mentioned racial tribes of short stature, i.e., the wavy-haired Vedda type of India as well as the woolly-haired Negrito tribes, as primary varieties of the human race. The Veddas are assumed to V 144 possess a number of primitive physical features which would place them, more so than Europeans, nearer to the chimpanzee, the type which, according to Sarasin, of all living anthropoids is the one closest to the human race.

Dixon (1) regards the Veddas as the oldest racial

1. Roland B. Dixon, The Racial History of Man, London, 1923.

substratum of the island of Ceylon. He believes that they mainly originate from Proto-Australian and Proto-Negroid types who are characterised by their dolichocephalic skull. The Caspian element among the Veddas seems to be limited to a very minor degree, whereas one can hardly trace any brachycephalic Palae-Alpine elements among them.

As already remarked, Sarasin mentioned in his book about the Veddas that so far no Veddas had been met with, apart from those in India and Ceylon. /113/ However, on their

18: Kleiweg De Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Mori-Laki OG7
Toala OG10
Vedda AX5

/113/ However, on their second trip through Celebes during the years 1902 and 1903, the Sarasins encountered a tribe, the so-called Toalas, about whom they gave extensive and important information in their book Reisen in Celebes /Travels in Celebes/, as well as in their standard work Versuch einer Anthropologie der Insel Celebes /Attempt at an Anthropology of the Island of Celebes/ (Wiesbaden, 1906). They arrive at the conclusion that one should consider the Toala a remnant of a primitive, prehistoric people of small stature, having a dark skin, dark-brown eyes, wavy hair, sparse body hair, a broad and angular face which becomes notably narrower toward the chin, a broad and fairly flat nose, a sunken nose bridge, receding chin and thick lips. In short, a human race bearing a close resemblance to the Veddas of Ceylon. These Toala live in the Lamontjong territory in South Celebes not far from Macassar.

T 114
T 142 144
V [145]
T 101

The Sarasins also encountered related tribes in the southeastern peninsula of the island of Celebes, viz., the so-called Tomuna and Tokea and it seems that certain slaves and slave families of Central Celebes should also be included in this aboriginal population. All those tribes do not only show similarity to the Veddas but, as we will see later on, also to the Senoi of the Malay Peninsula.

M 144 [101]

/114/ It seems that the Tomuna, even more than the Toala, have in many respects preserved the original type of this prehistoric population in a purer form than the Toala, who are more mixed with Buginese blood.

T [144]

Toala 0620
Vedda AX5
Sakai AN6

T V 142 far distances and such long periods of time and who, therefore, may have differentiated in certain respects.

There is another difference, viz., in the physical proportions. As we have seen, the Veddas are characterized by relatively long arms, whereas the Toala have relatively short upper extremities. It seems that the Toala's lower extremities, too, are shorter than those of the Veddas. On account of those differences of physical proportions, existing between Toala and Veddas, the former seem more closely T V 5 142 related to the Senoi of the Malacca Peninsula, who have been 144 measured by Rudolph Martin. /117/ He found that the average arm index of the Senoi is very similar to that of the Toala; however, the former are somewhat shorter than the Toala and Veddas.

T 177 Undoubtedly, the Toala tribes of Celebes have lost much of their originality through Buginese influence; their language has become a Buginese dialect. Still, they show in T 171 many respects a similarity to the Veddas of Ceylon and, as we will see later, also to the Senoi of the Malay Peninsula. T 342 Until recently, also the Toala were cave dwellers. They 582 have no metal or ceramic industries. They are strictly monogamous; their veracity has been praised, whereas thefts hardly ever occur.

T 174 The present Toala are engaged in agriculture. However, the exploration of their (former) caves has proved that they [241] were originally a people of hunters who also made a living by collecting various forest products. Nowadays, the Toala

Sakai AN6
Toala OG10
Vedda AX5

S 141

who apparently can be regarded as representative of pure-blooded Senoi, and they found an average head index of 78.3. This index comes very near to that of the Toala, although theirs is still somewhat higher.

S T 141

Dolichocephalic and mesocephalic forms of the skull occur more with the Senoi than with the Toala, which is proved by the following table:

Tribes	Dolicho-cephaly	Meso-cephaly	Brachy-cephaly
Senoi men of Ulu Kampar	56.0%	33.0%	11.0%
Senoi men of Tapah Mountains	12.0%	53.0%	35.0%
Toala men	19.2%	15.4%	65.4%

S T V 142

/130/ Brachycephaly, then, is more prominent among the Toala than among the Senoi; as regards skull structure, we should place the Senoi between the Toala and Veddas.

The supraorbital ridges and glabella seem to be less prominent with the Senoi than with the Toala and certainly less when compared with the Vedda.

The shape of the face of the Senoi, however, is very similar to that of the other two racial groups and this can also be said of the shape of their nose and mouth. The chin is somewhat receding, which is also the case with the Veddas and Toala.

S T V 144

From these observations, it seems justified to conclude that the Veddas, Toala and Senoi together represent a wavy-haired, aboriginal population, although it seems that the

Sakai ANG
Toala OG
Vedda AX5
Prehistoric Malaya AN3

Senoi and Toala, as to their physical features, are somewhat closer to each other than to the Veddas. However, further research into this matter is necessary, especially regarding the exact position occupied by the Toala in this grouping. (Figs. 25, 26, 27, 28) S T V 144 S T V 171

Also in their cultural heritage, these three peoples show many similarities.

The aboriginal Senoi and also the Semang are nomadic peoples; they are /131/ continually on the move, mainly subsisting by collecting forest products, hunting, and fishing. They build very primitive huts and are clothed in a loincloth or apron made of bark cloth. When hunting they mainly use the blowgun through which they shoot poisonous arrows. They are also equipped with bow and arrow. They practice monogamy and treat their wives well. As is also the case with the Veddas and Toala, they do not engage in agriculture; they have no other domestic animals than dogs. Likewise, metal work, ceramics, or weaving are unknown to the Senoi. S 105

According to Martin, it need not be doubted that in the western part of the Malay Peninsula inhabited caves are to be found, belonging to a prehistoric era. However, one cannot state with certainty in what period these caves have been inhabited. Neither can it be derived from the ergological proportions in what period these caves have been inhabited. It must have been a nomadic people who fed themselves with small game, fish, fresh-water shellfish, and PM 172 PM 174

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

coconut milk (when procurable) dedicated to Kande Yaka, after which it is eaten with the rice. An essentially similar ceremony often spoken of by the same name (*kirikoraha*), but in which no meat is offered, is held after a death in order to propitiate the spirit of the dead man. The majority of Veddas believe that the Nae Yaku go to Kande Yaka, and become in some sense his attendants, and Kande Yaka, sometimes accompanied by Bilindi Yaka, is generally invoked at the beginning of the Nae Yaku ceremony. It was stated more than once that the Nae Yaku could not come to the offering unless accompanied by Kande Yaka, who was even spoken of as bringing the Nae Yaku. Some of our informants also said that the spirit of the deceased resorted to Kande Yaka and obtained his permission to accept offerings from his living relatives, in return for which the Nae Yaka would assist or injure them according to their behaviour, so that Kande Yaka, besides being of the greatest assistance in hunting, has also become the Lord of the Dead.

The Kandyan already mentioned, whose full title is Karagahavella Adenayaka Mudiyanselage Tissahami, visited us at Bandaraduwa; he lived at Bakiyella some ten miles from our camp. Mr Bibile, who was distantly related to the old man, told us that he must be nearly a hundred years old, since he had been brought to the wild country of the Eastern Province by his mother during the rebellion of 1818, his father having fallen in the fighting. His hair, of which he retained a fair quantity, was absolutely white and worn short, his complexion was pale with age, he had a slight unilateral facial paralysis and he walked with the aid of a stick, his back being bowed and both knees somewhat flexed; but he was withal an extraordinarily active old man, extremely intelligent and with an excellent memory, the play of the muscles of his face showing how well he realised the import of the questions addressed to him and how much they interested him. Further, his frank replies when he did not understand a question and the emphatic manner in which he delivered his answers carried conviction of the value of his evidence, and we believe that no one who listened to the old man would have considered him other than a good witness.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

resin obtained from the *timbiri* tree (*Diospyros embryopteris*). 411
The shaft of the arrow is commonly made of the wood of the 322
wolas tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*). The arrow is still the almost universal cutting tool, as we had good opportunity of ascertaining at Henebedda. There was no knife in the community, and we noticed the skill with which a deer was skinned 412 252
and cut up with an arrow. The Veddas certainly desired no better tool, and when we pressed a butcher's knife on one of them in order to see how he would handle the unaccustomed tool, it was interesting to note how slowly he worked and how poor the result was compared with that he obtained with an arrow, which he held just above the blade somewhat as a European holds a penholder. No less astonishing was the skill employed in removing the skull cap with a few strokes of the axe, not only was the brain lifted out and cooked entire, but it was removed so neatly and cleanly that the result was more suggestive of an anatomical preparation than a piece of butcher's work.

The Veddas we met were all bad or indifferent shots, and 411
we have no doubt that game is seldom shot at a distance much beyond fifteen or twenty yards, the marvellous stalking of the Veddas enabling them to approach within this distance. The bow, to which the string is securely fastened at one end, is carefully unstrung when not in use. To string it, this end is placed upon the ground, the upper end of the shaft and the string being held in the hands, the sole of one foot is then placed against the middle of the shaft which is steadied, we might almost say gripped, between the great toe and the second toe. Much of the weight of the body is thrown against the middle of the shaft while the hands pull down the upper end to which the string is quickly secured, as is shown in Plate LXIII. Plate LXIV shows the position of the hands and arms immediately before the arrow is released. The bowman is Handuna of Henebedda, who is left-handed and who in spite of being the [145] father of a large family remains the only left-handed individual in the community. The length of a bow collected at Henebedda was 172 cm., while four arrows also obtained at Henebedda varied from 88 to 105 cm. in length.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411] carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kotgaha* [162] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [164] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and [146] framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukkan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 224 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*ilee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *bong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

504 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Elusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schlichera trijuga*, *Naphelium longana*, respectively.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. [361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in [241] wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their [224] chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gátó, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticaloa boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

element as they are in the midst of a civilized crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear.

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back.

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made," and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonoomadala (*stereospermum cheloneides*), the kekala (*cyathocalyx zeylanicus*), a creeper called kobbówel, or the pandôro tree.

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zeylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the areloowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XVI

THE SENSES OF THE VEDDAS

THE extraordinary skill displayed by the Veddas in discovering game and honey led us to test their senses as far as the time at our disposal would allow. Before recording the results of these tests in detail we may state the impression produced by certain incidents of our intercourse with the Veddas. We several times had Vedda guides and invariably noticed that, however difficult the ground, they walked quickly and noiselessly without apparently paying any attention to their footsteps. Nor did they ever seem even momentarily at a loss as to the direction to take in order to reach any part of their territory, in spite of the absence of obvious tracks. We do not think that they depended to any considerable extent on the sun; indeed, the conditions under which our most striking experience of this kind took place puts that out of the question. We left our camp at Sitala Wanniya early one morning with Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira to walk to a cave which proved to be about four miles distant. Our course lay through dense jungle, it rained intermittently and the glimpses of the sky which we obtained showed that it was completely overcast during the whole of the time. There was no sign of a track, and except once for about a couple of hundred yards we did not follow any stream though we crossed several. Nevertheless Handuna led us at a rapid walk straight up to the rock shelter which was our destination. This faculty is shared by another people inhabiting Ceylon, the Wanniya, the inhabitants of the Wanni, a large forest tract in the North Central Province. The life led by these hunters in some respects resembles that of the

151 [481]

[A 395]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann 2-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 Veddas, for they depend largely on game and honey for their subsistence and like the Veddas are bow-men. Mr Parker, who has spent much time in the Wanni, gives an account of a journey 151 he made guided by Wanniya which is so interesting that we 171 quote it at length.

"I was taken by some Wanniyas through a piece of wild pathless forest ten or eleven miles across, near Padawiya tank, at the north-eastern boundary of the North-Central Province. The jungle was dense, and the journey therefore occupied all day. Of course we were unable to proceed in a straight line, and more than once we deviated into a right-angle from our proper direction in order to avoid thorny jungle that was said to be in front of us. At about one o'clock we came to a high rock, as they had promised, on the top of which good rain water is always retained in a hollow. There we cooked and ate some food, after which we resumed our tramp. In the middle of the forest, as we were proceeding along a deer-track, one of the men drew my attention to a half-broken twig hanging at the side of the path. 'I broke that two years ago,' he said; he was then proceeding at a right-angle from the line we were taking.

"When I asked him if he never lost his way in such thick forest, full of undergrowth, he at first could not understand my meaning. After I had explained it—feeling while doing so that I was making an interesting exhibition of my ignorance—he laughed consumedly and thought it a capital joke. 'How *can* one lose it?' he said. He had never heard of such a thing before; to him it appeared to be quite impossible, apparently as much so as getting lost in an open field would be to us. 'When we look at the sun we always know which way to go,' he remarked. The men justified my confidence in their powers by emerging, just before dusk, at the very spot where I wished to arrive, many miles from the homes of any of the party. Those who had acted as guides lived some twelve miles or more away, by the nearest footpath; and the house of the man who lived nearest was five miles from the point where we left the forest. I have always thought it a very clever feat[1]."

Mr Parker's account of the jungle craft of the Wanniya is

[1] *Ancient Ceylon*, pp. 77, 78.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so vivid and applies so thoroughly to the progress of the Veddas through the jungle that we again quote from his work. 151 171

"While engaged on a hunting expedition, these hunters [the Wanniya]...glide along in single file, avoiding every leafy twig the rustling of which might betray their presence, or if game be near holding it until the next man can take charge of it, and hand it over in the same manner to the man behind him. At such times all tread in the footprints of the first man, who when putting his foot on the ground first glides his toes along it in order to push aside any twigs or leaves that might emit a noise if crushed. Their eyes and ears are fully alert to catch the slightest sound or movement among the thick jungle around them....They hear sounds and see objects that to a person whose perception is dulled by civilisation might as well be altogether absent, so far as his power of observation is concerned. Their trained ears detect the footfall of the wild forest animals walking through the jungle at considerable distances away, and can distinguish even the species by means of the sound, which is quite inaudible to less experienced observers. If any uncertainty exists regarding it they crouch down, or kneel with one ear on the ground, and soon clear up their doubts. When they are in search of Deer or other animals with keen sight, they hide their cloth by hanging leafy twigs round their waist-string. This certainly gives them a very wild appearance, but there is no trustworthy evidence to show that it was the primitive dress of the aborigines of Ceylon.

"Wild honey being one of their favourite foods, their vision and hearing are trained to an astonishing quickness in detecting every Bee that flies across their path, and noting its species, and whether it is flying laden or is only in quest of food. When it is carrying a load of honey and flying straight through the trees, they at once move off in the same direction, if it be the season in which the hives contain honey, that is, August and September, knowing of course that the laden insect makes a direct flight to its hive—the proverbial bee-line. As the nest is approached other Bees are seen converging towards it, and in a few minutes it is certain to be discovered[1]."

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 70, 71.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

951

Doubtless Mr Parker is right in ascribing the marvellous jungle craft of the Wanniya to trained perception and powers of observation, for the equally fine performance of the Veddas is certainly not due to any all round superiority of the senses, as our observations on sight and hearing indicate.

Visual Acuity.

The visual acuity of twenty-four Vedda men and youths was tested by the E method described by Dr Rivers[1]. The majority of the subjects we tested quickly learnt what was required of them, though they were far less interested in this than in the colour vision tests and illusions, to which we shall refer presently.

The average distance at which a Vedda could distinguish the letter E was 14 metres, no appreciable difference being detected between the Veddas of the wildest groups (Sitala Wanniya, Henebedda) and the more sophisticated Veddas of Bandaraduwa. Giving the results on the same plan as that adopted in the second volume of the Reports of the *Expedition to Torres Straits*, 10 men (41·7 %) have a visual acuity expressed by less than 2; 12 (50 %) have an acuity between 2 and 3. The greatest distance at which E was recognised was

[1] This method is a modification of the E test devised by Cohn, "in which a letter E can be exposed in any desired position through a circular hole in a card. The subject of the test has to place a letter E which he holds in his hands in the same position as one shown to him. Instead of the small cardboard E provided in Cohn's test, I used a larger letter E pasted on a board. Cohn's method is very simple and convenient and it entirely removes the danger accompanying the older tests, that the letters may be learnt by heart during the process of testing.

"In general the procedure was the same as that previously adopted in Torres Straits; the observations were made in the open air, both eyes were used, and the distance at which a native made two mistakes in ten exposures was taken as his limit of vision. In one respect the procedure differed; with the older form of the test it was most convenient to begin with the observer beyond his far limit of vision, and to bring him up towards the test-types till he could decipher the letters. With Cohn's form of the test, I first showed the E in various positions at a short distance, and as soon as I had satisfied myself that the native understood the method of testing, I gradually increased the distance till I reached a point at which the positions of the letter could no longer be recognised." (*British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 1, 1905, p. 323.)

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

19 metres; this occurred twice. According to the system in ordinary use the position of the letter E used is supposed to be distinguished by the normal eye at a distance of 6 metres, that is, the average sight of a Vedda would be put down as 2·33 times the normal. It is, however, well known that the results obtained are greatly influenced by the quality and nature of the light existing during the test, and comparison with the figures obtained in other countries shows that there is little difference between Veddas and other races. This was confirmed by the results of the examination of ten peasant Sinhalese whose average visual acuity was 17 metres, while if one man of distinctly subnormal vision be ignored the average acuity of the remaining nine works out at nearly 18·5 metres. The keenest sighted individual could distinguish the position of the letter E at 22 metres. 151

Acuity of vision as tested by the E method seems to decrease in middle life, but this although often quite well marked does not lead to any recognised diminution of hunting capacity, practice and knowledge fully making up for the physical changes in the eye.

Colour Vision.

The alleged absence of the full appreciation of colours among the Veddas was brought forward in Ceylon as a proof of their low mental capacity, but careful observations made with coloured wools and papers showed their perception of colour to be extremely acute. Forty-two adult males, 15 women and 3 boys were tested for colour blindness with a negative result. The majority of our subjects matched the wools quickly and accurately, and of those who at first made mistakes nearly all matched a wool with another of the same saturation but of a different colour. This was particularly noticeable in one old woman who picked out the wools and arranged them in heaps composed of varying colours of the same saturation.

Colour names were collected from 31 men and 4 women [822]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 by means of Rothe's set of colour papers and the results obtained in this way were checked by frequent reference to
322 Holmgren's wools. When shown the coloured papers and asked the names the more sophisticated among the Veddas gave the usual Sinhalese colour names, red *ratu*; orange and yellow *kahu*; green (three shades) and blue and purple were all called *nil*; black *kahu*; white *sudu*. However few men used all the Sinhalese names, most of the men making comparison with natural objects for at least one or two of the colours, while the least sophisticated men made comparisons for all the colours. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya compared all colours to flowers and leaves except red and orange for which he gave the usual Sinhalese terms. As the flowering season had not begun at the time of our visit we were unable to test the accuracy of his comparisons with the objects themselves, therefore after the colour papers had been put away we repeated the names he had told us and asked him to pick out similar colours from the coloured wools. This he did, and we found that these matched the colour papers to which the flower names had originally been applied with extraordinary accuracy. This man and others as uncontaminated as himself distinguished the two shades of blue and the three of green of the papers, while those who had mixed more with Sinhalese applied *nil* to all shades of blue and green. In order to test whether Handuna knew the ordinary Sinhalese colour names, we gave him the bundle of wools and asked him to show us *sudu* (white), he then picked out white and the very slightly saturated colours of all shades. For *ratu* (red) he gave all the strongly saturated shades of red, purple, claret, bright pink and brown shading off to yellow; *kaha* (yellow) included yellows and a few pale pinks; *nil* (blue and green) included all strongly saturated blue and green-grey tints, violet and some dark browns; these darker shades he also said were *kalu* (black) and he compared them to the bark of trees.

It was noticed that on asking the names for the colour papers the Veddas made comparisons, likening the red paper to a red flower or saying "red like blood," while the purple paper was compared to a blue flower; the three shades of green shown would often be compared to three different kinds of

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

leaves, whereas the rural Sinhalese would say *ratu* for the two first colours and *nil* for the four last. 151 822

Other comparisons frequently made by Veddas were "like *hatu*" used both for orange and black, a source of great bewilderment till it was discovered that *hatu* was a general term for fungus, a bright orange and a black species being brought to us to clear up the difficulty.

Red was compared to fire, black to the coat of a bear, pure white to coconut milk and dirty white to the wax of the *bambara*. Generally speaking it appeared that the more unsophisticated the Vedda the less he used the Sinhalese colour terms, using in their place references to familiar objects. "Like blood" was a frequent comparison, sometimes used for red and sometimes for purple. Though colours were occasionally compared to bird's feathers we did not note any compared to butterflies. When shown purple, violet and blue, most Veddas said they did not know those colours or had never seen anything like them, and one said the same of yellow.

Forty-eight rural Sinhalese were tested for colour blindness and no case was found. The coloured wools were usually matched quickly and accurately. Colour names were collected from 25 men, the usual names given were *ratu* for red and purple, *kaha* for yellow and orange, *nil* for all greens and blues and sometimes for violet and purple, *kalu* for black and also often for indigo, *sudu* for white. Other words occasionally given were *dumbutu* or *dumburu*[1] once given for black, three times for violet, once for blue and once for purple, and on one occasion when wools instead of papers were shown the same word was applied to a shade of claret. *Illalu*[2] was used once for purple, and once for violet. *Guru*[3] which means mud was given on one 500

[1] Mr Parker informs us "that *dumbutu* is the same as *dumburu* and means a dark reddish purple or according to Clough 'a compound of red and black' and is sometimes applied to the dark rain clouds of the evening."

[2] *Illalu* is stated in Clough's Dictionary to be applied to "a fair complexion, light red, brown."

[3] Mr Parker writes, "In Clough's Dictionary the meanings of *gurugula* are 'red chalk [?laterite], red orpiment, gold' but '*guru* colour' is applied colloquially to a purple sky." In the invocation to Pannikkia Yaka (Chapter X, No. XIV) *guru* is applied to the sky and the earth at dawn.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

occasion for orange and on another for violet; *tamba* (copper) was used for violet and blue, this word was also given for the colour of our hair when it applied equally to dark and red hair. Sinhalese hair was called *kalu*. *Pachha* was once used for yellow-green, this being a Tamil word for green.

Whereas the Veddas seemed to think of colours by a mental reference to the appearance of leaves, flowers and other natural objects, the Sinhalese far more usually made use of colour terms, and none distinguished as many shades as the Veddas except Tissahami, "the Vedda Arachi," whose keen comparisons make his observations worthy of record in full. Several Sinhalese likened red and purple to blood, and compared green with the colour of leaves. Tissahami was first shown the colour papers, for red he gave *ratu* and said it was like fire; yellow he said he did not know; bright green *nil*, blue-green *nil*, blue *kalu*, these three he compared to different kinds of creepers; purple he said he did not know; violet like the small stingless bee; black *kalu*; white *sudu*. He was so interested in looking at colours and comparing them that we showed him several other objects. The outside of a pig-skin pocket book he called *dumburu*, the cleaned and unpolished side of the leather he compared to clay. He was then shown the bundle of coloured wools which he examined at will, comparing and naming those he chose, a grey approaching violet he called *dumburu*; dark greyish-brown he said was like a certain kind of leaf; golden yellow like monkey's fat; a light yellow-brown like a spider's web; greenish-blue like the leaves of a particular kind of yam; a deep claret almost brown he compared to the bark of a tree which is chewed with areca nut and dark greyish-violet to a village potato. It seems that this man whose keen intellect we have referred to in Chapter II had retained something of the Vedda mode of thought acquired during his contact with them in his youth.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

VISUAL ILLUSIONS.

The Müller-Lyer Illusion. We used the improved apparatus made of thin xylonite (Fig. 15) devised by Dr Rivers. "One part of the apparatus slides in and out of a framework, on the upper surface of which is drawn one-half of the Müller-Lyer figure, while the other half is drawn on the moveable sliding portion. The lines of which the figure consists are only half a millimetre broad and the point of junction between the two parts of the figure corresponds with the line of junction between the two parts of the apparatus.... 15

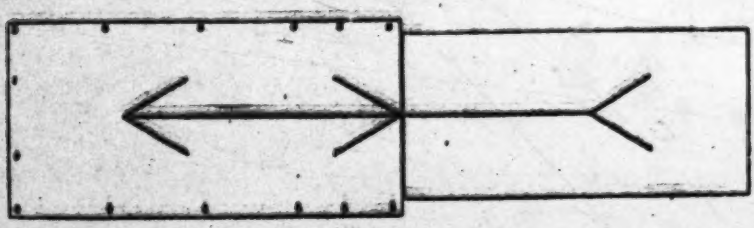


Fig. 15.

"The observer had to make five observations by sliding the moveable part in till the two lines of the figure appeared to him to be equal to one another, and then a second series of five measurements was made by drawing the sliding part outwards till the two parts again appeared equal. In the first series, the variable line was made equal to the standard by a process of shortening, in the second, by a process of lengthening the variable line[1]."

Seventeen Veddas were tested, all of whom appeared to take great interest in the matter.

The average length seen by them was 52·01 (begin long) and 52·09 (begin short). It is of interest to compare these figures with average taken from 13 Sinhalese—55·33 (begin long) and 55·7 (begin short), as well as those taken by Dr Rivers in India.

[1] *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 1, p. 256.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda, AX5

Twenty Todas gave an average of 61·2 (begin long) and 58·4 (begin short), while 28 Uralis and Sholagas, i.e. members of jungle tribes comparable in some respects with the Veddas, gave an average of 57·2 (begin long) and 53·4 (begin short).

One Vedda, who first gave 75, i.e. did not see the illusion, afterwards gave 61·54, 51·58. The most correct measurements were given by Vela, 66, 64, 63, 74, 72, average 67·8 (begin long), and 65, 65, 67, 69, 72, average 67·6 (begin short). In many instances although the men were interested and apparently trying their best each time the results in all their five attempts showed great variations. Among the Sinhalese, on the other hand, the results from separate individuals were often remarkably constant, one man giving 58, 58, 56, 60, 59, and another 60, 56, 57, 57. The average of 16 Sinhalese gave 55·3 (begin long) and 55·7 (begin short). The averages of the mean variations (M.V.) of Veddas and Sinhalese are as follows:

Veddas		Sinhalese	
Begin long	Begin short	Begin long	Begin short
3·5	3·1	3·2	2·5

Other Illusions. A number of illusions were shown to Veddas and Sinhalese. Colour after effects were in general seen very clearly as were the parallel line illusions numbered B. 3 and B. 4 in the Milton-Bradley collection. A number of Sinhalese peasants were especially interested in these parallel lines, working out the explanation for themselves; they were also interested in the illusion numbered C. 5, consisting of two curved pieces of cardboard of the same shape and of equal size which looked of very different size when placed side by side. The general explanation of these illusions offered by the jungle-dwelling Sinhalese was that their eyes were defective. The results obtained by showing equal black and white squares on white and black grounds were by no means constant.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

TACTILE DISCRIMINATION.

The threshold for the tactile discrimination of two points was tested by the method devised by Dr W. McDougall, and used by him in Torres Straits[1]. 151

Preliminary observations on Sinhalese in which they were told after each test whether they were right or wrong suggested that this practice led to speculation on their sensations, their subsequent answers being influenced by inference and judgment. Accordingly neither Veddas nor Sinhalese were told whether their answers were right or wrong.

The areas of skin tested were:

(1) The middle of the flexor surface of the left forearm, the points being applied in a longitudinal direction.

(2) The nape of the neck, the points being applied transversely and about equidistant from the middle line.

(3) The palm or surface of the terminal phalanx of the left index finger, the points being applied longitudinally.

Our observations which were made on 12 Veddas and the same

[1] This method has been described by Dr Rivers (*op. cit.*, pp. 363, 364) as follows: "The important feature of this method is that the area of the skin which is being tested is touched with one point just as often as with two points. If stimulations with one point are only occasionally interspersed between the stimulations with two points so that the latter are given more frequently, the results are almost certain to be biased. If the observer either knows or thinks that he is being touched with two points more frequently than with one point, he will tend in cases of doubt, to answer 'two' more often than 'one.' The error thus introduced can only be eliminated by an absolute equality in the number of single and double stimulations.

"The compass points were applied at a distance from one another decidedly greater than the probable threshold, and the distance between them gradually diminished till the two points were no longer recognised as two. Twenty stimulations were made at each distance at which any error occurred, ten stimulations with one point, and an equal number with two points. The distance taken as the threshold is that at which two mistakes in ten occur in each kind of stimulation....

"A man who called two points 'one' twice and one point 'two' three times at a given distance would be rejected at that distance, and the distance next above it would be regarded as the threshold.

"When the skin was touched with one point only, this was applied in the neighbourhood of one or other of the spots touched in the double stimulations."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 number of Sinhalese showed that on the whole the tactile sensibility of the two races was equal; further no member of either race showed any great variation from his fellows.

	Forearm mm.	Nape mm.	Finger mm.
Vedda average	55	27·9	2·9
mean variation (M.V.)	5·8	11·7	0·6
Sinhalese average	50	30	2·6
mean variation (M.V.)	13	6·5	0·6

Sensibility to Pain.

The degree of sensitiveness to pain of both Veddas and Sinhalese was tested by means of the modification of Cattell's algometer used by Rivers and Head[1], which differs from the original in that the spring is extended instead of compressed. "It consists of an ebonite rod 9 mm. in diameter, with smooth, somewhat flattened hemispherical head, which slides within a large ebonite rod against the resistance of a spiral spring. The larger rod is grasped by the operator, and the end of the smaller rod applied perpendicularly to the skin and a steadily increasing pressure made until the subject cries 'Stop.' A brass pin projecting from the smaller rod pushes an index up a scale which is attached to the larger rod and graduated in kilograms. The degree of pressure exerted can then be read from the index after removing the instrument from the skin[2]." Our subjects were instructed to cry out directly they began to feel any pain, the algometer always being applied by the same observer who endeavoured to increase the pressure at a constant rate.

The areas chosen for application of the algometer were:

(i) the centre of the nails of the thumb and index of each hand;

(ii) the sternum, pressure being applied over the manubrium to corresponding spots on each side of the middle line;

(iii) above the knee, the subject being seated with the knee

[1] *A Human Experiment in Nerve Division.* Brain 1908.
[2] *Expedition to Torres Straits*, Vol. II, p. 154.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

bent at right angles and pressure being applied in the centre of the limb immediately behind the knee-cap. 151

It has been pointed out by Dr Rivers that there is danger that "some individuals might regard the experiment as a test of the power of enduring pain, and might not speak till they had experienced pain for some time and could bear it no longer[1]." We were fully alive to this, and while one observer applied the algometer the other would often watch for the slight involuntary flinching which in many of our subjects—especially in the Veddas—marked the threshold of pain. As will be seen by the figures given below the threshold was consistently lower for the Veddas than for the Sinhalese. The Veddas were undoubtedly more interested in the experiment than the Sinhalese, and the flinching accompanying the onset of pain was more frequently noted in the former than in the latter. Nevertheless we consider that the difference in the figures is not due to carelessness or misapprehension on the part of the Sinhalese, but indicates a real difference in sensibility to pain in the two peoples. Were this not the case we should expect to obtain considerable variations in the same individual in the figures given by pressure on symmetrical areas; such variations are, however, quite rare.

We tested 21 Veddas and 18 Sinhalese, with the results shown in the following table:

	Thumb		Forefinger		Sternum		Above Knee	
	R.	L.	R.	L.	1 (L.)	1 (R.)	R.	L.
Veddas (21) average	4·3	3·8	37·1	3·6	3·8	4·1	6·2	6·1
" " M.V.	·15	·09	·6	·3	·3	·1	·1	·7
Sinhalese (18) average	5·3	5·3	5	5·8	5·3	5·3	10·3	9·3
" " M.V.	1·3	·4	1·3	·6	·06	·06	·06	·4

With a single exception (the forefinger in the Sinhalese) the thresholds are higher on the right side than on the left.

[1] *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 1, p. 372.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 Dr Rivers' experiments upon the Todas gave the same result and led him to conclude that the threshold is slightly higher on the right than on the left side. In coming to this conclusion he took into account a set of control experiments in which the left side was first stimulated; it will be noticed in the above table that the left side of the sternum was the first stimulated[1].

SMELL.

No attempt was made to determine the olfactory acuity of the Veddas, but our experiments with scents suggested to us that this was not specially well developed. Certainly the Henebedda Veddas suffered no inconvenience from the objectionable smell which arose round the Bendiyagalge rock-shelters after a few days' occupation, nor did they seek to [364] diminish this smell, which was due to the lack of the most elementary sanitary precaution.

The following scents were offered to a number of Veddas at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, Godatalawa, Sitala Wanniya and Unuwatura Bubula: civet, camphor, jasmine, *peau d'Espagne*, tonquin, orris, assafoetida, peppermint, verbena, crategine, chloroform, Lin. terebinthinae aceticum (B.P.), chloral, and eau de Cologne. The men examined were Tuta of Henebedda (1), Kaira of Henebedda (2), Poromala Walaha (3), Kaira (bearded) of Henebedda (4), the Vidane of Bandaraduwa (5), Banda of Bandaraduwa (6), a number of men of Godatalawa (7), Kaira of Sitala Wanniya (8), Handuna and Nila of Sitala Wanniya (9), Naida and Appu of Unuwatura Bubula (10), Tambia (11), Banda (12).

In most cases their opinions were taken down separately, but 151 at Unuwatura Bubula and Godatalawa the scents were passed 901 round and the general opinion of our informants recorded. The Veddas were always interested in examining the scents, but though they said a number of the odours were good they

[1] In his paper in the *British Journal of Psychology* Dr Rivers discusses at some length the possible fallacies of the method described.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

seldom showed any emotion of pleasure: on the other hand their demonstrations of dislike were unmistakable. When a scent appeared to them particularly distasteful they invariably held their noses and cleared their throats, but we do not remember seeing them spit. It will be noticed that there is a great variation of opinion, and even such a distinct odour as civet is considered by some very pleasant and by others extremely disagreeable. Again the same simile "squeezed orange skin" was used by different men referring to such unlike scents as civet and peppermint, and while in the first instance it was considered good, in the second it was thought unpleasant. The men of Godatalawa compared camphor to the flowers of the *na* tree (*Mesua ferrea*), calling it a good scent, while Kaira of Sitala Wanniya said assafoetida was a very bad scent like *na* flowers, and assured us that he disliked the scent of the *na* flower intensely. Except such well known flowers as this and that of the *mora* tree we were unable to identify any of the flowers mentioned as they were nearly all out of season. 151 [201]

Civet. Good, wild boar's fat (1), good, squeezed orange skin (3), not good (4), very bad, like faeces (5); good, like burning (6); good, like a flower smell (7); bad, like *kalka* flower (8); like wax of tree *bambara* (9); good, like leopard fat (10); bad, like faeces (11); bad, like faeces (12).

Camphor. Good (1); good (3); bad, like squeezed orange (4); bad (5); good (6); very good, like smell of *na* flowers (7); good, like *koel* flower (8); good, like a kind of lime (9); good, like medicine (10); very bad (11); sour, bad (12).

Jasmine. Good smell, monkey fat (1); good, like smell of mangoes (3); like honey of *bulumal* (4); bad (5); very slight smell and not good (6); not good, like *kapumal* (? *Eriodendron anfractuosum*) (7); good, like *minbuto* flower (8); like young oranges, good (9); bad, like pig fat (10); not good (11); doubtful (12).

Peau d'espagne. Doubtful, like betel leaves (1); good (3); good, like *moramal* honey (4); doubtful, partly good (5); too strong (6); like coconut spirit (7); good, like *kiola* honey (8); good, like orange (9); bad, like bear's fat (10); good (12).

Tonquin. Good, like bear's fat (1); like the fat of the monitor

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 lizard, good (4); good (5); good (6); very good, like *jak* fruit (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) (7); *malwini* fruit, good (8); like honey, good (9); bad, like bear's fat (10); good (11); bad (12).

Orris. Good, lime peel squeezed (1); good, like fat of the monitor lizard (3); not good, like squeezed orange skin (4); bad (5); like smoke (6); good, like *tulumal* (7); bad (8); bad, like *kumbu* (edible) fruit (9); bad, like elk fat (10); bad (11); very bad (12).

Assafoetida. Bad, like bear's fat (1); good (3); bad (4); bad (5); good (6); very good, like *ghee* (7); bad, like *na* flower (8); bad, like *na* flower (9); bad (10); bad (11); bad, like sour lime (12).

Peppermint. Like wild boar's fat (1); like pepper (2); good (3); bad, like orange skin (4); like smoke (6); good, like *epolu* flowers (7); bad, like a flower (8); good, like *malwini* fruit (9); medicine like coriander (10); bad, like burning (11); too strong, bad (12).

Verbena. Good, squeezed orange skin (3); good, like the flowers of the *mora* tree (*Nephelium longana*) (4); bad (5); no smell or very little (6); very good, like smell of oil (7); good, like *naran* flowers (8); good, like skin of lime (9); like coconut-spirit, good (10); like honey (11); bad (12).

A few jungle Sinhalese showed very much the same variations in personal likes and dislikes as the Veddas, but none of these men compared the scents to the odour of particular kinds of flowers—indeed comparisons were few—though one man who disliked the smell of assafoetida extremely called this *titai*. This word was commonly applied to the sensation produced by a solution of quinine applied to the tongue[1].

[1] We may here note the results of a very few experiments on taste. The Veddas of Henebedda (we speak especially of the young men of the community) have learnt to eat curry as "hot" and as highly spiced as that favoured by the Sinhalese—i.e. a curry far "hotter" than suits the palate of a seasoned European. These men resembled the peasant Sinhalese in calling the "hot" taste produced by pepper *hata piyawana*, i.e. mouth burning; quinine they compared to the bitter *harawila* fruit. Sugar or anything sweet was always compared to honey by both Veddas and Sinhalese; one of the latter compared vinegar to the taste of the juice of limes.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

HEARING.

We made a number of observations on acuity of hearing; owing to the different conditions prevalent on different days and in different localities, no attempt is made to compare the results obtained from Veddas of different groups. Our observations were made with Politzer's *Hörmesser*, an instrument in which a small metal hammer strikes a metal bar and so produces a constant sound, and although no general conclusions can be drawn certain of our results seem worthy of record. Eight men of Bendiyagalge were tested immediately after each other; two of these men, judged to be under twenty, heard the sound at 8 and 10 metres respectively; four more or less middle-aged men heard it at 3 to 5 metres; and two men, Poromala (Wallaha) and his brother Handuna, both of whom we judged to be over fifty, could only hear it at one metre or less. The figures obtained with the Sitala Wanniya group though less striking point in the same direction, so that we seem justified in stating that the hearing powers of the Veddas are at their maximum during or soon after adolescence, after which they soon begin to lessen and may reach a rather low level while the individual is still active and energetic, and before his capacity as a hunter is noticeably diminished. None of the older men with a low auditory acuity had given us any reason in daily intercourse to suspect that their hearing was less acute than that of their younger comrades. We several times noted the very great influence of the position of the head, and we soon allowed our subjects to stand with the head in any comfortable position in which they could not see the *Hörmesser*, which was clicked behind them as nearly as possible at right angles to a plane passing through both shoulders. Under these conditions a Vedda of Danigala, with his head turned so that his left ear was inclined towards the *Hörmesser*, could hear four out of five clicks at 16 metres, though with his head facing directly away from the *Hörmesser* he could only doubtfully hear anything at 8 metres, and could not definitely hear the sound at a greater distance than 5 metres.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

951 Our observations on Sinhalese were very limited, but led us to consider that the acuity of hearing of the peasant Sinhalese between the ages of 30 and 40 did not excel that of Europeans, for although a few individuals had a higher acuity than ourselves, the majority fell below us.

ENUMERATION.

802 This is a convenient place to refer to the question of counting. With regard to village Veddas our observations confirm the
184 experience of others that the village Veddas have adopted the Sinhalese numerals, which they use correctly, at least up to 20, but we cannot say whether they are equally accurate when using higher numbers. This facility in counting is not found among the wilder Veddas whose method among themselves on the rare occasions on which they wish to express a definite number is to take small pieces of stick and lay them on one side saying as each stick is put down *ekamai* "that is one." Beyond this the wilder Veddas have a slight knowledge of the meaning of the Sinhalese words for the lower numbers. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya made no difficulty in picking out 2, 3, or 4 pieces of stick from a heap on being given the Sinhalese number; the Sinhalese words for 5 or 6 (though he said he knew them perfectly well) led to hesitation and sometimes to failure in picking out the correct number, while larger numbers obviously failed to convey any precise idea to him. Although we interrogated only two other elderly Veddas of the wilder groups on this matter the results we obtained from them were so like those given by Handuna that we do not hesitate to accept his behaviour as typical of the old members of the less sophisticated groups of Veddas, and in support of this view we may refer to p. 33 on which we have stated the information given on this point by a very old Sinhalese informant. We do not attribute the Vedda inability to count to any lack of intelligence but simply to their having little need to be precise in the matter of numbers[1].

[1] For further information concerning this point cf. *Ancient Ceylon*, pp. 86 and 89.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

In their inhospitable forests, the most wild and arid in the Island, where food is scarce and only attained with great hardship, the Vedda is king. His lifelong apprenticeship to the harsh conditions fits him superbly to the mercile s task. He knows season and place and is sensitive to the slightest clue. How ill-fitted for this life are we of the towns who would starve by a tree with a honey-comb or with a succulent yam under foot. They make us feel like children, in that environment, these admirable Crichtons of the jungle, and our urban refinements as dross compared with their simple skill and hardihood. 311

It is truly a delight to travel with the Vedda and watch his ways. Moving silently, speaking no word except to "hum" an animal call to attract each other's attention, they allow nothing to escape them, and read the ground like a book, indicating spoor where you see nothing. Becoming sceptical of such claims I thought I would test the skill of Suthu Banda, also known as Poromola. Telling him to turn his face away, I tip-toed lightly on the bed of leaf that carpeted our path, and asked him to indicate my foot-prints. 151 224

"Here they are, and here," he said without a moment's hesitation. "Why, it's easy; don't you see the leaves turned?" (I certainly did not, demonstrate as hard as he might). "What is the difficulty for us to see a human foot-print here," he continued, "who have to follow a mouse-deer's trail on ground that shows less than this."

We had halted by a tree of great height and enormous girth, branchless for quite forty feet from the ground—as awkward a proposition for a climber as one could wish. I asked Suthu Banda whether he could climb it. "Why not," he said; and, without so much as putting down the axe hitched to his shoulder, he mounted the rock beside which the tree stood, and looked up a second or two. Then, shinning up an adjacent sapling that shot high, swung on to the slender extremity of the big tree's lowermost branch that sagged under his weight, and moved along with a carelessness painful to watch. He was soon among boughs no bigger than a man's wrist, and from the dizzy height wished to know whether we wanted him to go higher! None of your artificial aids, such as loops, for the Vedda; he is a veritable quadrumana, with feet as prehensile as hands. 481

They have a sure method of killing sambur. In the rainy months, and also, more rarely, in the drought, these animals climb to the tops of solitary hills. The Vedda, always watchful for the opportunity, is quick to detect this by the spoor. Cautiously attaining the summit, one or two of them guard with guns the only path by which the sambur must 224

Yams, chillies and melons survive a few months longer. After one to one and a half years the *chena* is abandoned as worthless, and a fresh acreage leased; for *kurrukkan* especially, is reputed to take such heavy toll of the soil, that this must be allowed to lie fallow for some ten or twelve years before being fit for recultivation! A terrible consumption of forest land results, unless controlled; harmless enough where a few families exist in vast forests; but sadly devastating in places at all populous. [41]

Irrigation, as these people know it, is solely what heaven bestows. Water may lie to hand but is not seriously utilized. A drought brings ruin, and scatters the folk far in quest of food. It is time a more economic system of agriculture was introduced to the Vanni, and the people taught, by the institution of model *chenas*, at least the value of forest leaf mould as a manure, and the advantages of some simple system of irrigation from available streams or wells, such as the Tamils of Jaffna and the Moors of the Eastern Province exploit so well.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

HIVES

There are five varieties of honey bee in Ceylon :—The large *bambara* (*Apis dorsata*) that builds huge combs of very pure wax on bare hill sides and the large branches of lofty trees ; the *mee massa* (*Apis indica*) sweetest honey bee of all, whose combs are to be found in hollow trees, rock-clefts and within ant-hills ; the *dandual massa* (*Apis florea*), the smallest honey-bee in the world, that hives on rocks and boughs ; the *kanava massa* (Rosin or Dammar bee) a docile, stingless, friendly little creature whose long black combs within tree crevices yield a delicious, if heady, honey ; the *hotha massa*, an even smaller species, whose puny comb is hardly worth the taking. 222 136

Kanava and *hotha* combs are available all the year round ; they are the *pathinchiharayas* or stayers. If the Vedda is hungry it is for one of these he goes at a pinch. The *bambara* and *mee massa*, the most abundant honey makers, are seasonal in their habits ; and June and July are the great honey months ; the fruit season synchronising with this, marks these months as the festive time of the jungle ; then the Veddas leave their homes for caves and stream beds, take their fill, and have a surplus for barter. 222 [439]

On the flavours of honey the Veddas are connoisseurs. They can tell by tasting a comb the flower or medley of flowers that contributed to its making. That honey is relished most which prevails when the *mora*, *veera* and *galseembela* are in bloom. [151 262]

Honey gathering is the master art of the Vedda. Supreme as he is in other jungle crafts, he is supremest in this. As he travels through the forest he is alive to the faintest hum, and no hive, however concealed, escapes him. His adroitness in tracking a bee to its lair is well described in a delightfully euphonious song they have (beginning, *Thomba, thomba Gomba me-na-na*), that tells of a Vedda Thutha who goes on the honey quest with his brothers Gomba and Naga. Thutha leads in the trail of a particular bee ; and as he goes he sings to his brothers, indicating various trees in which bees are busy ; but not decoyed by these, and with his eye steadily on the bee he first sighted, he follows it, till eventually it guides him to its hive within the skull of an elephant—*kolanathe gatche* (tree without leaves) as he quaintly describes. [533]

The taking of any hive, other than that of the rock *bambara*, is a very simple thing for the Vedda. All he does is to climb the tree, steady himself at the hole containing the comb, and blow into it to drive the bees away. Then with his axe he enlarges the opening sufficiently to enable him to introduce a hand and secure the cache, stopping every now and then to blow inside or to slap an offending bee. He eats the comb at his perch, grubs and all, throwing down fragments to those below.

The *bambara* comb is quite a different proposition. These great bees build high on the precipitous sides of rocks ; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only. A dangling cane at Westminster Abbey gave us some idea of the daring of the enterprise. To reach the combs ladders of vines are lowered from the summit of the rock ; and down these the collector descends ; as this does not bring him within arm's length of the hives, he has usually to rely on the use of a long stake. Sometimes [417 481]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342 (figure 2) and the Bendiyagalge caves (figure 1) show. In the former the shelter was constituted by the weathering back for about five feet of a horizontal stratum softer than the rest of the rock mass. The shelter thus formed was about five feet high at its front and three feet at its back, and from personal experience we can testify that it afforded comparatively good shelter from the wet. This can hardly have been the case with such caves as Bendiyagalge which appear to have been formed by the weathering of a stratum with a dip of about 45 degrees, or by the oblique tilting and subsequent weathering of a rock mass such as appears to have formed Uhapitagalge (Plate XVII, figure 2). Indeed we were told that such shelters as Punchiammagalge and Bendiyagalge sometimes became uncomfortably wet. Plate XVII, figure 1, is a view taken to show as much as possible of the rock mass in which the Bendiyagalge shelters are formed, and this figure and that of Uhapitagalge when examined in connection with the plan of Bendiyagalge will give a good idea of the possibilities of a Vedda rock-shelter as a home. As will be seen from Plate XVIII, figures 1 and 2 of Pihilegodagalge (Sitala Wanniya), no care is taken to keep the cave clean. At Bendiyagalge we noticed an unpleasant odour about the cave due to the lack of sanitary precautions taken by the members of the comparatively large community then living in these caves. Plate XIX, figure 1, shows the general appearance of these caves including the steps (Plate IX) hewn in the rock between the lower and upper caves and the worked edge of the upper cave forming a drip-ledge. Plate XIX, figure 2, is an early morning scene in the cave, and was taken soon after its occupants had awakened.

The love of the wilder Veddas for their rock-shelters, as well as their disregard for climatic conditions, is well illustrated by a remark made by Handuna the oldest and most influential man among the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, "It is pleasant for us to feel the rain beating on our shoulders, and good to go out and dig yams and come home wet and see the fire burning in the cave and sit round it."

152 Such a remark is in itself evidence of a cheerful disposition, and before going any further we must describe the Vedda

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

temperament. Travellers have called the Vedda morose, and stated that he never laughs; this belief has doubtless been strengthened by the disagreeable behaviour of the "show" Veddas (see p. 50), yet Veddas have told us how they throw leaves in the air and laugh and dance for joy. Nevill was certainly right when he said, "They are a merry people, delighting in riddles, songs and jests. Mr Hartshorn observed some Vaeddas who never laughed in his presence. They must have been either terrified, or sulky and offended, for those I have seen, of all clans, laugh often and merrily, a habit very strongly contrasted with that of the Sinhalese, who scarcely ever go beyond a smile. They burst into a verse of song, now and again, apparently from sheer exuberance of spirits, and any ludicrous incident amuses them [1]."

At Bendiyagalge we were particularly well situated to observe their behaviour, our camp being out of sight of the Vedda cave but within 200 yards of it, here we could listen to their unrestrained chatter and laughter which was especially noticeable at sunset. It is true that their faces express no emotion of pleasure or gratitude when they are given exactly what they expect. Thus, white cloth, which the men like to wear, is well known to them, they buy it themselves from the Moormen pedlars, it is the usual present for a European to make to Veddas, and they receive it with perfectly stolid faces, and are hence dubbed sullen. We had an excellent example of this at Henebedda when we gave a piece of white cloth to Poromala the senior of the group, whom we knew well and who had frequently smiled and laughed in our presence. When, however, a sharp pruning knife was given him his face beamed like a schoolboy's, he ran his thumb along the blade and tried its edge on pieces of grass. Things new to them which we showed

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 192. Veddas often dance for a few moments when pleased, thus a Henebedda Vedda on being given a piece of sacking to cover himself with after complaining of cold, immediately held it over his head, bowed his body forward and went through a few dance steps, singing the while. On another occasion this man and three companions (all young men) began to dance spontaneously. This was about 9 p.m. one night in the courtyard of the Ambilinne Rest House, where they had visited us, their sense of well-being in this case may have been stimulated by a liberal feed of curry and rice which had been given them, but we do not think they danced in payment for this.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Things new to them which we showed.

152 them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and
522 most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character, but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous, and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman, but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela, half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well as the other men. Kaira, *bana* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *bana* to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives, keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately, it did not seem that any food was private property. One other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely, that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own division, but always put them all together in a particular

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a prophecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *choregos*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wach! wach! wach!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announcement was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[9]

them on pp. 335-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were not coast Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one of some interest; but as, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[9] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

familiarity savouring even of impudence and disrespect. But that is because they know no better. I have had a Vedda address me as "*tho*," a word now used only towards a very inferior person. A Vedda once took my gun and cartridge-bag to shoot us something for dinner. He returned empty-handed and disgruntled. I inquired what ailed him. 181 [576]

"What sort of cartridges are these?" he said, throwing down the bag contemptuously. "You fire at a wanderoo, and he sits and grins at you. You fire again, and he grins the more. You want six or seven big shot for animals, not *kurrukhan* grains."

I asked him how he knew the size of the shot in my cartridges. He answered that he had looked inside. It was not until the next day that I realised the thoroughness of his investigation. Every single cartridge in the bag, some fifty or more, had its wad at a rakish tilt! When I upbraided him for the liberty, he disarmed my wrath by laughing uproariously.

On one occasion we had pitched our tent under a big tree which caught fire through the carelessness of our cook who had pursued his occupation by its foot. As I lay in bed ignorant of a blazing branch overhead, I was warned repeatedly by the carriers of the danger of my position; but to these anxieties my tiredness made me deaf. "After to-night," said a Vedda, "no devil will be able to return to Colombo!" The words were electrical in effect—and in good time too, for the branch fell just as the tent was dismantled.

The quaintness of the Vedda language is always a delight. Not knowing the art of dissembling, they say just what they think. They are capable of exquisite and spontaneous similes and metaphors. Vulgarity is natural to them, and their talk is interlarded with phrases that would make a navvy blush.

I have said that a Vedda laughed uproariously. Now, it has been stated repeatedly, by persons professing to know all about Veddas, that these people are incapable of laughter. The statements have even gone to grotesque lengths as the sub-joined extract testifies.* When a 181 152

*THEY NEVER LAUGH

MOST SOLEMN TRIBES IN THE WORLD.

Laughter, and the faculty of being merry and bright, are gifts of the gods to a world in which there is not too much sunshine at any time.

But this gift, according to the scientists who know all about these subjects, has been denied to the Veddas, the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon. It is the only people in the world who never laugh, and in consequence they are thin and flabby folk, and a fat man among the Veddas would be an extraordinary sight for sad eyes. A traveller who has studied the early races in Ceylon gives some interesting particulars about this curious tribe.

For nearly 2000 years, according to the best chronicles, these people, now almost extinct, have preserved the same characteristics, and no one, so far as history reveals, has ever seen a smile on the face of one of them or heard a laugh while in their section of Ceylon.

Why these people do not smile is a mystery. They alone of all the people on the earth know nothing of the sensation of laughter.

A scientist, who recently journeyed to Ceylon for the purpose of investigating this question, persuaded some of them to permit him to tickle them in the ribs and in the middle of their feet with straws, and never caught even the flicker of a smile on their faces, nor did he ever succeed in making one of them squirm and laugh aloud during the operation.

(*Continued on next page*)

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

181 sophisticated Vedda knows what is expected of him he will act up to
152 the expectation right enough. Personally I have never yet met a Vedda who could not laugh. The truth is that the Vedda will laugh with the best of us when there is occasion; but he is a stranger to the conventional, hypocritical smile of civilisation, meant only to please and so uncertain an index of the heart. The Vedda's face, like a child's, is a mirror to his mind.

His natural expression is one of apathy and moroseness. Schooled to hardship and privation, he is neither greatly distraught by sorrow nor transported by joy He expresses his emotions with more moderation than we; he is the greater fatalist; and accepts with stoic equanimity the hard conditions of his life which have wrought into his expression a dour indifference, a decorous gravity.

There is something naturally fierce in his nature; and it does not do to anger him. The tradition is undoubtedly true that the Veddas, at one time, carried in their betel bags fragments of human liver which they chewed when roused, to give fire to their frenzy. And this is probably the origin of the Sinhalese threat, "I'll eat your liver!" There is a spot in the Eastern Province which commemorates to this
[173] day an early incident of colonisation: A Vedda had once way-laid and killed a European soldier, and going up to him could hear the ticking of his watch; examining this he said, "His life is still here," and dashed it to pieces on a rock.

When a Vedda returns from an expedition no one must speak to him until he has rested and it has pleased him to talk first. One who had accompanied us once on a hunt nearly killed a Sinhalese boy who innocently asked him what he had brought, the moment he arrived. Most sportsmen, Vedda or not, are impatient of cross-examination when fatigued—especially if unsuccessful.

771 The Veddas have no conception of a supreme being; nor have they any myth or theory bearing on cosmogony. The panorama of the heavens is beyond their questioning; but its supremacy is instinctively avowed: "*Mā Suriya Deyyo*" (by the Sun God) is an oath by which
195 the Vedda vouches his good faith.

776 Like animals, concerned only with their immediate needs, they take the world very much as they find it. But if the aloof heavens leave their imaginations untouched, not so their immediate environment. Here exist real powers more within the pale of their comprehension, influencing every act of their lives, overshadowing their credulous minds, and affording at least some data on which to found a faith. Is it surprising then that they people Nature with sentient beings, unseen, but very evident by their acts. And what spirits more comprehensible to the primitive mind, more inspiratory of faith and fear, than those of one's

---

Another strange thing about the Veddas, and one which may possibly be connected with their lack of humour, is the fact that every one of them is a George Washington, unable to tell a lie or to conceive of anyone else telling a lie.

They cannot even believe that any one would take the property of anyone else, and association with civilisation has failed to convince them that it is possible.

With all this—or, rather without all this—the Veddas are a peaceable, gentle, quiet people. They take wives without any marriage ceremony, and are faithful and constant to them, supporting them to death.

Aberdeen Paper, 1922

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222 And as he works he sings the cutter's song* and many a vulgar song besides. For this is the epic event of the Vedda's life, and never is he so happy as when engaged in the perilous work. Wild is the jungle night and the rocks around re-echo to his song.

[533 152]

The honey-gatherer at work

When the "devil's mouth" is full, he releases it from the ladder and shouts "*adapo*" (lift) to those above; they pull on the attached rope. With a series of short jerks, the cutter climbing and helping from below, the honey is lifted. As each pull brings the vessel to the level of the cutter's head he calls out "*ho-ho*," and the hauling is stopped; then, climbing a rung or two he gives a helping hand and cries "*adapo*" again. And so, with "*adapo..... ho-ho*" following each other in quick succession, the precious freight is safely hauled over the edge of the cliff. It may be that the cutter has to descend to his work again. With the last load he climbs over the top, a figure to behold—sweating, exhausted, honey-bedaubed, bereft of all the stamina that has sustained him so long. He throws himself down. Nor have all his arts availed him against the bees, for he is covered with stings. Solicitously his wife and a friend or two group round him, and with pitying words pick off the stings. But, impatient of this, he besmears himself with sand that the ants may not worry him, and is soon asleep.

[439]

Such is the story behind the potful of *bambara* honey the Vedda offers for a trifle of grain or a fragment of cloth.

Borri, borri, borri, borri,
Borri, borri, borri, borri.
Ama, ama,
Aramaya, aramaya, aramaya, aramaya,
Thelung badonage adung padung kothoi heyya
Esale harale pelang anda kanthulang
Gegung thesgena yanna
Alutla Vanniya!

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were 131
unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously.

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these 101
parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow [301]
stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved [157]
and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne.

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found [301]
the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were appar- [626
ently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep 152]
the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very jealous of their women.

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each 576
hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to [411]
know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine.

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for 342
Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukhan* [241]
and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community.

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the 101
same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered 361
about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit!

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never 161
before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by 177
their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting.

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, 224
better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

GENEALOGIES.

THE genealogies on the next two pages show the relationship existing between the various individuals of the three Vedda communities, which still retain enough of the old Vedda mode of life to make a study of their organization valuable. At the first glance it is obvious that these genealogies do not go back beyond the memory of middle-aged men of the present day. We are convinced that this is due, not to any general distrust of our inquiries, but simply to certain peculiarities of the Vedda habit of thought which is directly dependent on their mode of life. The first of these is the extraordinary lack of memory shown by every Vedda for the names of individuals of more than one generation older than himself. This may perhaps be due to the fact that the number of individuals whom any one knows well is really small, being necessarily limited to the community to which he himself belongs. The genealogies show how small are these communities and, since every Vedda should marry a first cousin, marriage does little or nothing to enlarge the number of his connections. Further, each of the people with whom he comes in contact is related to him in a definite manner and is called and spoken of by a definite kinship term, so that personal names come to play a very small part in the daily life of the Veddas. It is this, doubtless, that has led to the frequent persistence of the baby names Tuta and Tuti, "little one" in its male and female forms, as the only names by which many individuals are known, and this together with the number of children called by

601 [153] [582] 601 55

[p. 59] [text continues on p. 62]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Things new to them which we showed

152 them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and
522 most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character, but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous, and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman, but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela, half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well as the other men. Kaira, *baena* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *baena* to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives, keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately, it did not seem that any food was private property. One other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely, that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own division, but always put them all together in a particular

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of these days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudaši*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 226 water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *nahapata*, *pusiljata* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is evidence that a hundred years ago there were organized communities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century. 184 361

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the surrounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure 2), though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility. 621 [177] [142] [609]

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been [197] 622 156

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1981
AX5 Vedda AX5

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
●156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

Things new to them which we showed.

them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the oldest and
152 most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by
[522] a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the
rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground
with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and
smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character,
but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous,
and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
●156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the
fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman,
but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose
opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela,
half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means
stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, pretending
inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well
as the other men. Kaira, *Aasna* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was
intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *Aasna*
to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was
a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not
chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when
addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives,
keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them
as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from
that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilagodagalge
showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately,
it did not seem that any food was private property. One
other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely,
that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own
division, but always put them all together in a particular

5: Spittel ZD-8 (ca. 1920) 1948 AX5 Vedda AX5

were loath to purchase their intimacy with gifts. Time enough for that, when we had won them over by less humiliating means. Besides, these Veddas were evidently spoilt, and we wished to show them they were not the important personages they imagined themselves to be. 123

"We are going then," said Handuna. It was now our turn for dejection. Was it for such an ungracious issue we had travelled so far?

I had a last card, having brought some neosalvarsan, a sovereign remedy for yaws so rife among these people. The offer was received with indifference. There was only one case among them, they said, and the patient was too ill to come. This being just what we wanted, I offered to visit them the next morning. [164]

"You cannot come where we live unless we allow you," said the irrepressible Kaira. "And we won't show you our caves or anything, unless you give us presents."

Sick with exasperation and disgust at the behaviour of these impossible children, I told them they could take our offer or leave it as they chose, and turned to other work. The result was a grudging acquiescence; and, leaving a guide behind, they went away.

A word of explanation regarding the sophistication of a people so remote. They were in fact about the purest-blooded Veddas extant; indeed, it was to this very circumstance they owed their disappointing behaviour; for it had attracted Seligmann among them. What that implied may well be imagined. To obtain the valuable sociological information with which his book abounds, he had gained the confidence of these folk with scrupulous consideration and kindness, showering on them gifts of all kinds. Moreover, the patient investigation of the most intimate details of their lives by such a man, heightened their self-esteem. Of this we had an amusing illustration. I was obliged to admonish a group of Sinhalese that embarrassed us with their attentions. A Vedda sidled up and, tapping me familiarly on the shoulder, whispered, "Those people don't like us, they are jealous of us. We and you gentlemen are one; they are different!" 156 114 [126]

To dismiss these Veddas as spoilt uninteresting folk would imply failure to discern their innate simplicity, beneath the veneer of pose and importunity, for which contact with an indulgent stranger had been responsible. In their homes they still are as artless as their forbears were before ever white man set foot on these shores.

We were out hunting early that afternoon, when a sudden snapping sound arrested our attention. The Vedda we were with listened a few seconds. "Catching *talagoyas*," (monitor-lizards), he said laconically. The excited barking of a dog and rebuking human voices soon confirmed his conjecture. Going up, we found two men, one of whom carried a large quivering monitor just killed; while two dogs, still spirited with the chase, danced round their victim and growled and snapped at us. One of the men now set about to disjoint the quarry's tail at the middle, leaving it connected only by a tag of sinew; then, slitting the submandibular web, he rove the tail through till it locked at the division, making the reptile eat its own tail as it were, and carried it neatly in a loop. The monitor is best hunted at high noon; after four in the afternoon it takes to trees and holes. 224 231

614 they belonged, which suggested to us that perhaps they belonged to Uru *waraga* or one of the other clans which are considered of inferior status. Although the Arachi of Belligala did not know their *waraga* and believed that they had really forgotten them themselves, our opinion was confirmed by information obtained later from the Arachi of Alutnuwara who said that they were of the Uru and Namadewa *waraga*, while a Vedda of Horabora-wewa told us that his mother came from Dambani and she was a Namadewa woman.

576 609 As the Arachi of Belligala assured us the Bulugahaladena Veddas lived in a condition precisely similar to those of Dambani, we did not visit their village but arranged for two of them to visit us at Belligala; they greeted us in the same way as the Dambani folk, with loud and guttural voices, accentuating all the "chs," and shook hands. They brought some honey and yams. They said they could not bring *bambara* honey (for it was too early in the year) so they had brought honey from the stingless bee. After a little while they gradually dropped their [194] guttural tones, especially when they were speaking to the villagers and not to us; their voices, naturally deep, assumed a sing-song tone not unlike that of Nila of Sitala Wanniya. We consider that the gruffness of these Veddas is almost entirely affectation. They have been expected to be sullen and morose and never to laugh. For thirty years the Arachi of Belligala has acted as "show-man" to the Veddas of his district, and he always speaks to them in their "language" in similar or even fiercer tones, and he has shown them so many white men that he has quite lost count of their number. He has thus helped to keep up the fiction of "wildness," for these Veddas are not wild since they are not shy but come up, shake hands, ask for presents, and offer to dance.

178 We believe that they keep up few, if any, of the old Vedda customs; they cultivate chenas and keep cattle, their bows and arrows are probably more for show than use, for the Arachi told us that some of them possess guns while others go to the Sinhalese and borrow them. Deschamps says that Veddas never laugh nor have they ever been seen to smile. Of course this is 157 not true of the Veddas of Nilgala, nor do we think it is true of

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

these village Veddas, though they seem to be of a somewhat morose disposition. He also said they take no interest in things unknown to them. However, the phonograph attracted as much attention and interest as it always had from Veddas and Sinhalese alike, and we distinctly saw one Vedda smile when his song was reproduced. 157

The chena settlement at Wallampelle was seen, but here it appeared that much intermarriage had taken place with the Sinhalese. 144

Malgode. There are a number of people very mixed blooded, but calling themselves Veddas, living at Malgode on the shores of Horaborawewa, a beautiful tank traditionally associated with the Veddas. They have dropped their old Vedda customs so entirely that the local Sinhalese no longer look upon them as true village Veddas, an attitude that has perhaps been fostered by the fact that here in Uva where the Veddas are exempt from all taxation these people pay road tax. Such at least was the point of view of the Arachi of Alutnuwara, "how can these people be Veddas?—they pay road tax." In spite of this there is no doubt that they are largely of Vedda descent and in many instances remember their *wariyas*. They live in very poorly built houses and depend largely on the seeds of the lotus for food. They still pose as pure-blooded Veddas to white visitors, and have been recently described by Drs H. M. Hillier and W. H. Furness, 3rd. "We followed the jungle path along the eastern shore of the lake, sometimes over outcrops of granite, or down by the lake side...and after following our guide through thick undergrowth for half-an-hour, suddenly, and without warning, we came out into a cleared space, where there was the merest excuse for a hut, and beside it a man and woman squatting side by side and cooking something in a blackened earthen pot, which rested on a fire of twigs and branches; a little beyond them were more huts and more women and children—lo! the Village Veddahs. The elderly man and woman whom we first saw had between them scarcely a yard of coarse cloth as clothing, their hair hung loose in dishevelled twists and strings about their faces, and they both squatted so low that their knees stood up above their shoulders. But the most impressive thing about 144 177 361 [651] 511

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

follows, that, till I measured him, I believed him to be not merely comparatively a tall man, was only five feet three inches in height. He was a Veddah of Bintenne, and much more civilised in his life than the rest of the wild tribes there. The shortest man I have measured was four feet one inch. I should say that of men, the ordinary height is from four feet six to five feet one inch, and of women from four feet four to four feet eight inches.* 141

Their features are tolerably regular. The eyes are good, and often full. The nose is generally well shaped, though inclining to be flat; the nostrils wide. The mouth sometimes large, and the lips firm, but rather thick. The beard is short and scant. The hair of the head which is not curly falls in rusty, tangled masses about the face, making the head appear out of all proportion to the lean body, and this leads those who are not close observers to describe the Veddahs as large-headed. Tennent notices this and remarks how perfectly the description of the Besedæ, in the tract *De moribus Brachmanorum*, applies to the Veddahs of the present day. "Pigmies" indeed they are, "stunted and with unshorn dishevelled locks"—but the term μεγαλακέφαλα is not appropriate to them; for in point of fact, their heads are remarkably small.† One of their skulls, sent to England by me some years ago, through my friend Mr. Thwaites, the able Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens of Ceylon, to be submitted to the Society, was pronounced to be, in general capacity, smaller than the smallest negro, native Australian, or Esquimaux.‡ But their wild shaggy hair gives such an appearance of undue size to the head that it might well mislead the travellers from Thebes in the fifth and Tennent in the nineteenth century. 142 [141]

When quite in repose, the features of the Veddahs wear a vacant and melancholy expression, which is almost painful to look upon. In speaking to them, I have observed, in some, considerable shrewd- 157

* In a list of heights of Veddahs taken lately at my request, I find two Veddahs measuring five feet three inches, and one five feet three inches and four-tenths; but, if these measurements are perfectly accurate, this is much above the average height. Of fourteen Veddahs of Bintenne, lately measured for me, the tallest was five feet three inches and four-tenths, the shortest four feet six inches and a quarter; the average five feet and half an inch. Of twelve women, the tallest was five feet two inches and a half, the shortest four feet four inches and a half; the average four feet nine inches.

† *Vide* the whole passage quoted by Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, note at page 429, 2nd edition, but especially the following: "*εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ οἱ Βεσήδες δεδρυωμένοι, κοιλοβῆ, μεγαλακέφαλοι, ἄκαρτοι, καὶ ἀτριχόεις.*"

‡ It was considered to be that of a female between twenty-two and twenty-eight years of age. The skull came from Milgala, and was the smallest skull ever measured by Mr. Busk.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

142 The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

291 Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable. A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments.† Indeed, almost the only difference [304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have [301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

515 Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

302 Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait, 114 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking [276] gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smoking is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

181 When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1867.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*antiaris innoxia*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as *na* leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [325] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 222 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 252 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 757 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all 262 were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, 164 his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This [757] his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: 000 those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

2. FOREST CHILDREN

621 THE village of Potuliyadda lies in the heart of the country of the Henebedde Veddas. We had hoped to take these people unawares in their homes some three miles away; but it was not to be; for a Vedda boy who had witnessed our arrival had forestalled us.

We were at lunch, when my friend, whose seat commanded a view of the jungle, quietly remarked, "Hullo; who are these? Veddas without a doubt."

142 157 [411] [622] Five men, armed with bows, arrows and axes, strode in single file under the leadership of a small one-eyed man, half of whose face was covered by an awful scar which puckered an eyeless socket, giving a touch of pathos to an otherwise harsh expression. Such was Poromola, chief of the Henebedde Veddas also called *Walaha* (bear) for obvious reasons. Then there was Handuna a fine type of wild man; though close on fifty his figure was well-knit, and this combined with his goatee beard and tousy head gave a strength and rugged dignity to his bearing. There were also a tall bearded man of forty, loquacious and sophisticated enough when you knew him; a lanky, slouching, beady-eyed fellow; a robust, curly-haired bumpkin; and lastly, the snub-nosed little mischief-maker to whom we owed the honour of this visit.

123 As the Veddas came up to us, they uttered some fierce jargon we did not understand. It was pretty obvious they were acting; and not caring to encourage them in this, I casually motioned them away. They retired mumbling. We recalled them later to find them in dudgeon, evidently not being used to such treatment. They stared mutely at us affecting not to understand a word of the Sinhalese in which I addressed them. I tried again and again, but not by the flicker of an eyelid did they signify comprehension. Civility and persuasion having failed, I tried the effect of candour, telling them that we were not gullible strangers and knew all about them. This also was without effect.

Opening Seligmann's book, which contained the portraits of these very Veddas taken ten years previously, we suited picture to prototype. They gazed uncritically with stolid intentness showing no surprise or enthusiasm. I asked them whether they remembered the author and his wife who had spent so much time with them and been so kind to them. One nodded, and the others' faces betrayed interest. Thus was the first barrier carried.

Gradually we won them over one by one; but despite our best efforts the conversation flagged. And we, tired of making all the advances simulated an indifference we far from felt, and took to our books.

"We are hungry," said Handuna after a while. "Will you not give us food?"

We could only offer them money, an almost useless thing to the Vedda. We had made the serious mistake of coming unprovided with a surplus of rice, betel, arecanut and tobacco; for the surest way to the heart of the Vedda is through his stomach. We

3. THE MARAWEETHIYA

Far or forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear
And one to me are shame and fame.

EMERSON

13 FROM Yakkure to Horiwila is six miles. The first part of the journey is through marsh; here the Mahaweli make a bend which all but encroaches on the path. The place is rank with vegetation. Tall grass thrives amidst sombre trees that stand apart, clothed out of all recognition in stoles of trailing mycania. The air is humid and oppressively still. One is glad to be rid of the swampy luxuriance with its strong suggestion of malaria.

Beyond a pleasant stretch of paddy, closer than we had ever seen it before, stood Gunner's Quoin. Tinkling cow-bells and the mournful cries of peafowl welcomed us to Horiwila.

361 144 The racial types we have passed, will repay review. Omuna, Dolagalwella and Kalukolu Eba were shifting *chena* settlements inhabited by Veddas with a large proportion of Sinhalese blood. Yakkure was a permanent village with the *chenas* apart; here the people called themselve Veddas but showed strong Tamil traits. The folk of Horiwila were not sure whether to call themselves Tamils or Veddas; while Manampitiya, beyond Horiwila, was a purely Tamil village. So does propinquity shape the type of Vedda, and forest penetration by the Sinhalese on the one hand and Tamils on the other, tend to obliterate the aboriginal race.

000 Decoyed by its beauty, we camped on a rock on the bund of the Horiwila tank, soon to learn that a stone exposed all day to the sun, was not the most desirable of camping places even at night. The stored heat radiating from the rock kept us awake till morning, and we rose quite unrefreshed for the good day's work before us, for to-day we would climb the Quoin, which, ever since we saw it across the marsh at Yakkure, beckoned us on. The Tamils of the place could only take us to the base of the hill; from there a Vedda of the Ulpotta must guide us. It was 115 quite an hour before we found him. I recognised him at once as Sinna an old friend; there were the bunions on his shoulder from carrying loads of lizards and yams, and there the hooked finger caused by a snake-bite [N2 when plucking a *kanava* comb from a creviced tree. A dwarf, with 15] frizzly upstanding hair and wild eyes, and shy almost to timidity, Sinna had nothing of the sophisticated Vedda about him. He lived alone with [166] his small family at the end of the rock. The rest of his people had left when the *kurrukhan* crop failed: but Sinna remained to gather a precarious living from the scanty pickings of the field. We came on him searching for food in the forest.

The poor fellow was in great distress that morning, his favourite dog having been taken by a leopard the previous night. Hearing the animal's

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

triangle bounded on the south by the Gal Oya: on the west by the Bibile-Batticaloa road; and on the east by the coast road. Within this space are found the Veddas of Danigala, Henebedda and Bingoda, besides the few about Kotelinda, Divulana and Serangamadu. If to this tract were added that to the west and north of the Bibile-Batticaloa road, between it and the Mahaweli-ganga, we shall have embraced the Veddas of Bintenne, Gunner's Quoin, and other scattered settlements, and accounted for every Vedda extant—a mere handful of people in all.

Kaurala of Kotelinda was the first Vedda worthy of the name we had encountered on this long journey. He was a Bingoda Vedda of the Morana *waruge*, but had spent most of his days at Bandaradua now derelict. He lived with his family in a crude hut in the jungle; his sole weapons were an axe, a bow and arrows. He was a simple soul, laughing uproariously at one moment, and the next assuming that troubled gravity so characteristic of his race. He knew every inch of his jungles; there was no tree, stream, or stone once passed which he could not instantly recognise again. This instinct and the sun were his sole means of orientation. We tried to press him into service, but he refused. "How can I come?" he said, tossing head and arms like a windmill. "I am a lone man. I live in the jungle. I am only a Vedda. If I go, who is there to look after my children? See here, now," pointing to the damaged trees about his hut; "this is what the *botukandas** have done. How can I come?"

Our deviation to Kotelinda was in vain. We had hoped to cut across the hills of Madana to Galmede; but the path had long been absorbed into the forest. We had therefore to double back to Bokkebedda, and thence strike north, through Gonagalla, to Divulana. With our usual ill-luck on this trip, we caught our fifth thunderstorm. It dropped plumb on us and worried us all the way; while in the unscathed beyond, over the treed parkland, the sunset wrought a panorama of opal and pearl, touching to glory the austere peak of Friar's Hood, queen of the distant hills.

*Elephants.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were 131
unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously.

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these 101
parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow [301]
stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was [157]
the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne.

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found [301]
the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were appar- [626
ently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very 152]
jealous of their women.

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each 576
hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to [411]
know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine.

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for 342
Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukhan* [241]
and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community.

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the 101
same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a 361
rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit!

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never 161
before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by 177
their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting.

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, 224
better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It is not suggested that the conscious element is entirely absent from the Vedda possession dances, it is impossible to believe that such a sudden collapse as that occurring in the Henebedda *kirikoraha* ceremony (p. 222) (when Kande Yaka in the person of the shaman shoots the sambar deer), followed by an almost instantaneous recovery, is entirely non-volitional. and the same holds good for the pig-spearing in the Bambura Yaka ceremony (p. 243) at Sitala Wanniya. We believe that these facts can be fully accounted for by a partial abolition of the will, that is to say, by a dulling of volition far short of complete unconsciousness. The shaman in fact surrenders himself to the dance in the fullest sense, and it is this, combined with a high degree of sub-conscious expectancy, which leads him to enact almost automatically and certainly without careful forethought the traditional parts of the dance in their conventionally correct order. Further, the assistant, who follows every movement of the dancer, prepared to catch him when he falls, may also greatly assist by conscious or unconscious suggestion in the correct performance of these complicated possession dances. Again, we do not think there can be any doubt as to the non-volitional nature of the possession, by the *yaka*, of the bystanders, near relatives of the dead man, which may take place during the *Nae Yaku* ceremony[1].

One remarkable fact may be chronicled here, viz. that we have never met a Vedda who had seen the spirit of a dead man, that is to say, no Vedda ever saw a ghost, at least in his waking hours. We have never been able to obtain any corroborative evidence for Bailey's assertion that "the spirits [of the dead] appear to them in dreams and tell them [the Veddas] where to hunt." Veddas certainly dream, but Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira, two most trustworthy informants, said that they did

[1] There was nothing about the general behaviour of any of the Veddas with whom we came in contact that suggested a specially neurotic or hysterical tendency. The graver stigmata of hysteria such as would warrant a diagnosis of functional disease were always absent and the Veddas, even when ill, were in no sense fuss makers or inclined to magnify their ailments in the way so many Melanesians do. We are indebted to Dr C. S. Myers for the suggestion that possession by the *yaka* can best be explained as an affection (dissociation) of altered personality. If this be so the condition is comparable to a number of well-known cases in the sphere of mental pathology.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

it is only because, after repeated and careful inquiry, I cannot establish the fact of such a marriage now actually existing, that I am inclined to consider that it is becoming obsolete. But I should be almost justified as describing it as an existing custom, for many of the young men are the offspring of such connections. The practice is spoken of by them in the present tense, and alluded to as a matter of course, without the smallest repugnance.* 582 835

Amongst the Bintenne Veddahs, then, it may be said to have been, for perhaps two generations or so, extinct. Amongst those of Nilgala it is, at most, only becoming so. And it has, undoubtedly, been the custom among both from time immemorial. Utterly revolting as it is to us, we must remember that with them it was a custom sanctioned by the practice of ages. It is not the consequence of a "poor community," nor the growth of mere barbarism. If it were, the elder sister would be equally sought after; if it were, polygamy in all its forms would be found among them. There would, in fact, be no restraint.†

I have before described the short stature of the Veddahs—their weak and vacant expression, their striking resemblance to each other, characteristics much more marked upon the Veddahs of Nilgala than those of Bintenne. The practice I have just noticed is quite sufficient to account for these. 142 143

It might naturally be supposed that such marriages would produce, besides a stunted growth, insanity, idiocy, and epilepsy. But I find few traces of these maladies. Madness rarely occurs, idiocy still less frequently; though dogged stupidity is not at all uncommon amongst them.‡ But in other respects the injurious effects of this custom would seem to be plainly discernible. The 143 158 000

* I am not surprised that Tennent should be ignorant of this custom. It is a most difficult task to obtain intelligible answers to the commonest questions from these ignorant creatures; and unless a clue to some subject is accidentally found, the inquirer would learn little. There are practices as revolting, though not so peculiar, among some of the Indian tribes.

† It is curious that the only trace I can find of anything approaching to a belief in retributive justice is a tradition of a man, whose name even has been preserved, and whose family still exists, who, they say, was eaten by worms for having exceeded the authorized limit, and formed connections with his elder sisters and aunts. By whom this punishment was inflicted they do not pretend to say; but the painful death they regard as the direct consequence of his incest.

‡ Madness is by no means common among them. They believe if one man curse another, the man who is cursed becomes mad. This is evidently the same superstition as is common among the Singhalese, and known as the "Kata waha," "the evil mouth," or "poison of the mouth," equivalent to the prevalent faith in the "Ess waha," "the evil eye," or "poison of the eye." Burton, in his *El Medinah Mecca*, says, "the national type has been preserved by systematic intermarriages. No evil results are anticipated from the union of first cousins; and the experience of ages and of a nation may be trusted." 754

PREFACE

THE Veddas have been regarded as one of the most primitive of existing races, and it has long been felt desirable that their social life and religious ideas should be investigated as thoroughly as possible. The welcome opportunity of conducting this research was afforded me on the initiative of Dr A.C. Haddon, who suggested to the Honourable Mr John Ferguson and Dr Arthur Willey that it was desirable that the Ceylon Government should continue its enlightened policy of studying the anthropology, archaeology and history of Ceylon and its peoples. This proposal received the warmest support of the Governor, Sir Henry Blake, G.C.M.G., and his successor the present Governor, His Excellency Sir Henry E. McCallum, G.C.M.G., A.D.C., of the Colonial Secretary and of the other members of the Legislative Council who made a liberal grant covering the expenses of the expedition in the field. |21 122

Not only was the work urgently needed on account of its scientific importance, but it was known that the Veddas were a numerically small people verging on extinction, and so affected by contact with Tamils and Sinhalese that if they were not studied promptly there was every possibility that it would soon be too late to study them at all; indeed, with all my efforts I was able to meet only four families, and hear of two more, who I believe had never practised cultivation. Pure-blooded Veddas are not quite so rare as this statement implies. The Danigala community, the best known "wild" Veddas of Ceylon, are still reasonably pure-blooded, though they have adopted many Sinhalese habits, including cultivation, and have assumed the rôle of professional primitive man. They are commonly fetched to be interviewed by travellers at the nearest rest house, where they appear clad only in the traditional scanty Vedda garment, whereas, when not on show, they dress very much as the neighbouring peasant Sinhalese. |21 |6| 177

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 height. Clear rock-strewn streams abound, their banks
brightened by the deep green leaves and the bright red flowers
137 of the *ratwal* (*Ixora coccinea*). Scattered masses of rock often
of great size form convenient shelters for the Veddas, and assist
the rapid drainage of the country, which does not become water-
logged even during torrential rains. This beautiful country is
rich in game. To the east, where many Veddas have drifted,
the jungle is thicker, the land lies lower, and is generally less
healthy. The Nuwaragala Hills to the north of the Nilgala
ranges are perhaps the wildest part of the island and are more
densely clothed in jungle, but there are plenty of streams, while
the slope of the country permits of ready drainage.

The coastal zone north of Batticaloa inhabited by the coast
Veddas is flat and sandy, and the vegetation though dense
is often less tall and less abundant than in other parts of the
country. Salt water marshes are common, and the country
is cut into by numerous lagoons and creeks, often bounded
by a fringe of mangroves which stretches some distance up
the mouths of the rivers. Although this area may now, and
131 for yet a few years, be rightly called the Vedda country it must
161 not be thought that any considerable number of its inhabitants
are Veddas, or that they exercise any territorial or political
563 influence; on the contrary, they constitute an insignificant
fraction of the Tamil and Sinhalese inhabitants before whom
they are rapidly disappearing, partly by intermarriage and
absorption, partly owing to misery and a high death rate
brought about by sheer inability to cope with the new state
of affairs that the increased settlement of this, the wildest part
of the island, has brought about.

Formerly the Vedda country is known to have embraced
131 the whole of the Uva, and much of the Central and North
175 Central Provinces, while there is no reason to suppose that their
territory did not extend beyond these limits. Indeed there is
no reasonable doubt that the Veddas are identical with the
"Yakkas" of the Mahavansa and other native chronicles.

175 The seventh chapter of the Mahawansa relates the arrival in
Ceylon, B.C. 543, of Vijaya who married Kuweni an aboriginal
princess (*Yakkini*) and by her assistance destroyed a great

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

shorter ceremony *rumula*, this being an older name than *kolamaduwa*[1].

It appeared that the invocations at present in use among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas were those used in the old man's youth, for although he had not, as he stated (truthfully we believe), been closely associated with the Veddas for many years he recognised a number of Vedda invocations which were sung to him, as identical with those sung in his youth, and named the occasions on which each was used. *Maligi* was recognised as sung when honey was taken; the invocation at the beginning of the *kirikoruha* ceremony (cf. p. 285) was promptly named, and the occasions of its use pointed out, but the charm used when driving monkeys was not recognised. A song sung for amusement by the Veddas beginning *Mamini mamini ma deyo* was immediately recognised, as were two of the invocations of the Kolamaduwa ceremony, but considering how Sinhalese in substance this ceremony is this is perhaps not of much importance.

At the present day the number of Veddas living their natural forest life is necessarily few, for their territory has been gradually encroached upon by the Sinhalese who are inveterate poachers. The Veddas, who were never numerous within recent historic times, are now rapidly dying out, while many have settled among the Sinhalese and so lost their identity. We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgala but among the Nuwaragala Hills. At Nilgala itself there are no Veddas at the present day, though the local peasant Sinhalese doubtless have much Vedda blood in their veins. The Henebedda and Danigala Veddas are the descendants of those recorded by Bailey in 1863, and the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are the descendants of those known and described by the old Kandyan who visited us at Bandaraduwa.

Hennebedda. At Hennebedda we met a number of families living together in the Bendiyagalge caves. They had come to this their largest cave, from several settlements all within a few hours' journey. The genealogies show that at least

[1] These ceremonies are described in Chapter IX.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason
161 to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this
221 time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time
621 they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakkan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

222 Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted
411 of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda
423 chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to
621 the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

614 The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *warage*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states
197 that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil
128 tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirukodol*, "nothing," is said

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *hodai*, *tiru* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure 1) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *warage* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *warage* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Arachi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

calce and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.*

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt.

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in their barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other.

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilising the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenne. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1858, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited.

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilised. They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilisation, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in 1836 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Binteanne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those of Binteanne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singhalese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chena" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is reclaimed again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gata, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Binteanne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticaloa boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 effectual so long as there were no influences to weaken it, but when once a preponderating force came to surround these clans, their chance of survival was small, and to prevent individual extinction amalgamation presented the path of minimum resistance.

The effect of this amalgamation was to break down the primitive methods, and concurrently to infuse new blood, and with it to stay, or lessen, the forces that were weakening an already over-inbred stock.

101 If we refer to certain statistics, as recently as 1840 we find that a rough enumeration of the so-called Rock-Veddas disclosed that only thirty families in Bintenna then existed.

Since then the increase of civilised races pressed with yearly greater insistence, till we are forced to conclude that the primitive Vedda is now no more, or nearly so.

N2 In my Paper read at the meeting of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society on September 19, 1914, I have described the features of the Vedda family I found at Setawa, but I venture here to repeat it for easy reference.

The man Dissan Hamy is about 5 ft. 10 in. in height, thin, small round the chest, with rather short arms, slender legs, with hardly any calf development. He does not know his age. His head is small, with small dark-brown beady eyes set far back in their sockets. His hair is short, not tied in a [302] knot, staring, and frizzy. His younger brother is shorter in stature, but with the same character of hair on the head. The elder has short, scanty, and bristly moustaches, but in both brothers there is a marked scarcity of hair on the face and body. Dissan Hamy's two sisters are both of normal height, and dress like the other women of the country. They are about 5 ft. 3 in. in height, with slender limbs. Both women are mothers, and both indicated the small breast development that appears to be characteristic of women residing in the arid parts of the country I explored. In both women [302 354] the hair is short and frizzy. Their infants had shaved heads.

I remarked that the skin of Dissan Hamy's body is darker than that of the other members of the family. The nose is strongly formed, with thin dilated nostrils. The mouth is rather wide, with lips of no unusual thickness.

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena* ; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house" ; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark ; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that ; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats ; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone ; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned :

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas ; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain : it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good !

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes : *Gona-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese *gama* village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect.

8: Spinal D-6 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Unapana *waruge*, like all the other *waruges*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *waruge* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *waruge* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *waruge* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *waruges* after similar occurrences under *nabudu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gamana*). 614 173 [551]

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season. 177 178

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *kanava* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukkan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukkan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukkan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter, he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more." [437]

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas. 161 186 731

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously. 131

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. 101 [301] [157]

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were apparently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very jealous of their women. [301] [626] [152]

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine. 576 [411]

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukkan* and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community. 342 [241]

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit! 101 361

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting. 161 177

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from 224

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

The
162 race is rapidly becoming extinct; large families are all but un-
163 known, and longevity is very rare. I have been at some pains to obtain reliable data to elucidate these points. Out of seventy-two Veddahs in Nilgala, fifty were adults, twenty-two children. In one small sept, or family, there were nine adults and one child; in another, one child and eight adults; and so on. In Bintenne, out of three hundred and eight Veddahs, a hundred and seventy-five were adults, a hundred and thirty-three children. Here the disproportion is not so marked; but in one of the smaller tribes, more isolated than the rest, there were twenty adults and but four children.

The paucity of children, I think, must be ascribed to the degeneracy produced by such close intermarriages, for I have never heard a suspicion of infanticide existing among them.* Out of
[847] fifty adults in Nilgala, only one appeared to have numbered seventy years, and but eight to have exceeded fifty. In Bintenne, of a hundred and seventy-five adults, two only seemed to have reached their seventieth, and but fourteen to have exceeded their fiftieth years. Such statistics seem to show the practical results of such connections. The Nilgala Veddahs, who still maintain an almost total isolation from other people, are rapidly disappearing.† The Veddahs of Bintenne, who have abandoned the pernicious custom which I have described, and still intermarry among themselves, are becoming extinct, though more gradually.

[852] The Veddahs have no ceremonies at the birth of a child, nor
764 when the name is given; and though, in Bintenne, they have long buried and mourned their dead, those of Nilgala have only commenced, in this generation, to do either.

Till very recently the dead man was left where he died. The survivors covered the body with leaves, put a heavy stone upon its chest, and sought some other cave, leaving that in which the death occurred to the spirit of the deceased. They still desert the scene of the death, and the bones, constantly found in good preservation in the caves of Nilgala, prove how recently the practice of leaving the body unburied has been abandoned.

000 Tennent says, truly, that they have "no system of caste among

* It certainly was practised among the Kandyans, but never, I think, to any great extent. I have, however, seen two persons who, when infants, were buried alive by their mothers, and rescued.

† Knox speaks, page 63, of Veddahs, "who lived about Hourly, the remotest of the king's dominions," who were "pretty tame," and used "to come and buy and sell among the people," who resented "being pressed to serve the king" in some expedition, and so "removed further into the woods and would be seen no more." "Hourly" is evidently the village of "Ouan-oela," on the furthest boundary of the Nilgala district, which, though, as tradition has it, it was once peopled by Veddahs, is now exclusively inhabited by Singhalese.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

houses of lasting character, as neither their instincts nor habits necessitated such procedure. 361

At Kumuna alone we find a modification of these conditions, in that the greater part of the land where the village stood is above flood level, and possessed of constant fresh water all the year round, besides being at a spot where there was a prospect of trade.

It should be added that all the many anicuts on this river between Kumuna and Kebilitte bear silent testimony to the violence of the floods on the river, and to the once existence of a large population, that probably vanished as soon as these engineering works were destroyed—a population who could enjoy the benefit of the river's floodings by diverting the water into immense tanks, that now are but park-like pieces of jungle. 172

The present inhabitants of the region embraced within the boundaries recorded here are unquestionably of mixed origin, as it is easy to trace on the western limits the pure Sinhalese type of feature, these fading again to a more specific type through the Maha Wedirata, and again changing markedly on the north-east of that country, till it is practically replaced by Tamils in the Panawa Pattu. Thus, it would seem that the Vedda type lay between the Uvan Sinhalese on the west and the Tamil on the east, with the result that frequently one would hear men, while asserting that they were pure Sinhalese, conversing with each other in Tamil. This I found to be actually the case at Bowela, where the villagers insisted that they were of the Goigama caste. 101 162

I was completely baffled in my attempts to secure a vocabulary of Vedda words, though I offered liberal payment for a few lessons in that language. I was pointed out men who were able to speak Vedda, and it was arranged that we should meet, in secret, at a definite time, and at a fixed spot, but when the time came I was told the men had gone away to find stray cattle, or some other equally trumped-up story. 197 198

One night I camped close to some huts in the village of Wattagama, and after my lamp had been put out and I was supposed to be asleep, I heard an animated discussion in the nearest hut, but though I could hear every word, I did not

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of [342] these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

504 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

162 The race is rapidly becoming extinct; large families are all but unknown, and longevity is very rare. I have been at some pains to
163 obtain reliable data to elucidate these points. Out of seventy-two Veddahs in Nilgala, fifty were adults, twenty-two children. In one small sept, or family, there were nine adults and one child; in another, one child and eight adults; and so on. In Bintenne, out of three hundred and eight Veddahs, a hundred and seventy-five were adults, a hundred and thirty-three children. Here the disproportion is not so marked; but in one of the smaller tribes, more isolated than the rest, there were twenty adults and but four children.

The paucity of children, I think, must be ascribed to the degeneracy produced by such close intermarriages, for I have never heard a suspicion of infanticide existing among them.* Out of
[847] fifty adults in Nilgala, only one appeared to have numbered seventy years, and but eight to have exceeded fifty. In Bintenne, of a hundred and seventy-five adults, two only seemed to have reached their seventieth, and but fourteen to have exceeded their fiftieth years. Such statistics seem to show the practical results of such connections. The Nilgala Veddahs, who still maintain an almost total isolation from other people, are rapidly disappearing.† The Veddahs of Bintenne, who have abandoned the pernicious custom which I have described, and still intermarry among themselves, are becoming extinct, though more gradually.

[852] The Veddahs have no ceremonies at the birth of a child, nor
764 when the name is given; and though, in Bintenne, they have long buried and mourned their dead, those of Nilgala have only commenced, in this generation, to do either.

Till very recently the dead man was left where he died. The survivors covered the body with leaves, put a heavy stone upon its chest, and sought some other cave, leaving that in which the death occurred to the spirit of the deceased. They still desert the scene of the death, and the bones, constantly found in good preservation in the caves of Nilgala, prove how recently the practice of leaving the body unburied has been abandoned.

000 Tennent says, truly, that they have "no system of caste among

* It certainly was practised among the Kandyans, but never, I think, to any great extent. I have, however, seen two persons who, when infants, were buried alive by their mothers, and rescued.

† Knox speaks, page 63, of Veddahs, "who lived about Hourly, the remotest of the king's dominions," who were "pretty tame," and used "to come and buy and sell among the people," who resented "being pressed to serve the king" in some expedition, and so "removed further into the woods and would be seen no more." "Hourly" is evidently the village of "Oora-oola," on the furthest boundary of the Nilgala district, which, though, as tradition has it, it was once peopled by Veddahs, is now exclusively inhabited by Singhalese.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

166 In one instance there had been intermarriage with Sinhalese,
563 and we suspected this in other cases, though the majority appear to be reasonably pure-blooded.

361 These people make chenas[1] on which they live temporarily
231 in bark-covered huts; Plate X, figure 1, represents the chena settlement of the local group of the Namadewa *warugē*, some of the members of which are shown in Plate X, figure 2. They gather honey and hunt, several of them possess guns, and some
[222 of them rear cattle for the Sinhalese villagers. Indeed, for
224] Veddas their lot is singularly happy, since they live in the heart of the park country where game is still abundant. Bailey first induced some Veddas in the Nilgala district to make chenas about the middle of the last century, before which all the Veddas in this district were probably living their natural hunting, honey-gathering life.

361 It is not often that a community that has taken to the semi-
511 civilised life of chena cultivation is seen, in which its members are so healthy and well fed, for Veddas dislike settling down and do not generally do so until they find they can no longer subsist on the game in the country, when they either drift into Sinhalese settlements, or make extremely rough chenas for themselves, the produce of which is seldom sufficient to feed the community. Besides which, as is the case with the Sinhalese peasants themselves, the crop is often pledged to Moormen pedlars before it is reaped. The poor Veddas then subsist
[164] as best they can on yams, honey and berries, and usually fall a prey to fever. Several Veddas in this wretched condition were seen between Namal Oya and Bandaraduwa, while those at Godatalawa were scarcely better off.

In the Nilgala district the conditions are different. Chena making and cattle rearing had been introduced while game was still abundant, families are still able to leave the chena settlement and hunt and gather honey, living during such times in rock shelters within their own hunting boundary. However, the

[1] Bailey defines a chena as "a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again: it is cultivated again after intervals of from five to ten years." *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.* Vol. II, 1863, p. 181.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Kuṭurup kuṭurup kiyanna
Tāla piṭaṭa wayi wāla
Kīṭan dīmana hera wataraṇi
Kīṭan dīmana hera wataraṇi
Kāḍu paccaiyak gamata
Bīmen yannaṭa bal piṭi karimayiṇi
Madaṭa piṭan yanni dennā
Kaliya wala nagīlā
Ēhat bīhāgena wattīlā
Kobba wali nagīlā
Ēhat bīhāgena wattīlā
Wai-kobba wala dunna dannāgena
Wīrunā ingā piṭaṭa dannāgena
Kaḍiyā hallat iccarahāragena
Endela poṭubanna nayidī
Endela poṭubanna nayidī
Mā mipi mā mipi mā diyiyā
Mā mipi mā mipi mā diyiyā.

Ah, our husbands! Let us go to Kokkagala. Let us go to Madegala. (I) cannot go to Kokkagala. I cannot go to Madegala. The dove of the Kakuru-kanda is uttering *kuṭurup, kuṭurup*. There has been rain in the high land. There has been muddy water bringing down logs. There has been a *yaka* ceremony (lit. *yaka* house) below the hill. (I) cannot go on the ground as there is dew. Let us ride on the buffalo. Having climbed up the *Kīḍiya* creeper, on its breaking having fallen; having climbed up the *kobba* creeper, on its breaking too, having fallen; putting down the bow (made) of *wai-kobba* creeper, putting the canes at the back of the head[1]; sending in front the dog Kaḍiyā, (you are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Poṭubanda Nayidī. (You are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Poṭubanda Nayidī. *Mā mipi mā mipi mā diyiyā, Mā mipi mā mipi mā diyiyā.*

All the remaining songs except the last were collected from the village Veddas of the Uva Bintenne; all are of one type and with a single exception (No. XVII) all are related to each other and to the two songs immediately preceding them which we obtained at Nilgala. No. XVII, the exception just referred to, is extremely Sinhalese in tone and thought. The *gamara* spots referred to are the light patches on the body, due to the attacks of a parasitic fungus, which are much admired by the peasant Sinhalese of Uva and the Eastern Province.

[164]

[1] Or "carrying them hanging round the neck."

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

I remarked that while walking through the jungle, though 481
provided with a knife, Dissan Hamy rarely used it to cut away any intercepting branch or creeper, these being invariably bent to one side by the hand.

I observed this custom many years ago when travelling through a distant village called Uda Wellawey at the foot of the Haldummulla hills, and I understand it is to prevent persons from finding a hunter's trail.

I made inquiry, in addition to direct observation while 164
exploring the Vedda country, as to the prevailing diseases among the inhabitants, and what was done as regards remedies. The result of my investigation led me to conclude that the commonest disease among adults was fever, but I could get no statistics on which I could rely to form an opinion as to the percentage this particular disease afforded as compared with others.

It was, however, difficult to discriminate in what proportion of fevers typhoid was to be regarded, as I found in many cases the people did not know the difference. Dysentery appears to be well known, and is locally called "Le-pachchane," but I was told that it was not nearly so common as fever. Fever is not common as compared with the prevalence of that disease in the Tamankaduwa District.

Venereal, I am told, is unknown, and probably for reasons I gave earlier in this Paper. It occurs, however, more in the neighbourhood of civilised centres. I did not see a single instance of goitre, or of elephantiasis, though I cannot suppose the latter is unknown. I found numerous cases of sores on the feet and legs of both adults and children, but these were explained as being in all cases due to accidental injuries. Bronchitis, however, is common, more especially in children, who also appear to be commonly troubled with anæmia, which may or may not be directly due to intestinal parasites.

As regards treatment, I found that the remedy was invari- 753
ably based on the theory that diseases may be divided into 757
two great classes—heating or inflammatory, and the opposite—therefore the cure was to be found in those specifics which were opposed to these two heads of causation. For example, if a man had a violent cold, the "milk" of the coconut could

S: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kongaha Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *hurrakkan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*ilee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *pala*, *vera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

"How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation.

†*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Memecylon capitata*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1938) 1945 AXS Vedda AXS

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as as leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger. [157] 776 [825]

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey." 312

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves. 186

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in families under various trees. It was the season of the *kung* fruit, of which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish. 621 342 222 252 757 262 164

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. One man had a large scar across his face. The manner *he* came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify. [622] 222 [481] [757]

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kung* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst. 222

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes; these voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food. 996

Spotted D-8 (ca. 1926) 1945 AX8 Vedda AX8

were loath to purchase their intimacy with gifts. Time enough for that, when we had won them over by less humiliating means. Besides, these Veddas were evidently spoilt, and we wished to show them they were not the important personages they imagined themselves to be. 123

"We are going then," said Handuna. It was now our turn for dejection. Was it for such an ungracious issue we had travelled so far?

I had a last card, having brought some neosalvarsan, a sovereign remedy for yaws so rife among these people. The offer was received with indifference. There was only one case among them, they said, and the patient was too ill to come. This being just what we wanted, I offered to visit them the next morning. [164]

"You cannot come where we live unless we allow you," said the irreproachable Kaira. "And we won't show you our caves or anything, unless you give us presents."

Sick with exasperation and disgust at the behaviour of these impossible children, I told them they could take our offer or leave it as they chose, and turned to other work. The result was a grudging acquiescence; and, leaving a guide behind, they went away.

A word of explanation regarding the sophistication of a people so remote. They were in fact about the purest-blooded Veddas extant; indeed, it was to this very circumstance they owed their disappointing behaviour; for it had attracted Seligmann among them. What that implied may well be imagined. To obtain the valuable sociological information with which his book abounds, he had gained the confidence of these folk with scrupulous consideration and kindness, showering on them gifts of all kinds. Moreover, the patient investigation of the most intimate details of their lives by such a man, heightened their self-esteem. Of this we had an amusing illustration. I was obliged to admonish a group of Sinhalese that embarrassed us with their attentions. A Vedda sidled up and, tapping me familiarly on the shoulder, whispered, "Those people don't like us, they are jealous of us. We and you gentlemen are one; they are different!" 156 114 [166]

To dismiss these Veddas as spoilt uninteresting folk would imply failure to discern their innate simplicity, beneath the veneer of pose and importunity, for which contact with an indulgent stranger had been responsible. In their homes they still are as artless as their forbears were before ever white man set foot on these shores.

We were out hunting early that afternoon, when a sudden snapping sound arrested our attention. The Vedda we were with listened a few seconds. "Catching *kalagoyas*," (monitor-lizards), he said laconically. The excited barking of a dog and rebuking human voices soon confirmed his conjecture. Going up, we found two men, one of whom carried a large quivering monitor just killed; while two dogs, still spirited with the chase, danced round their victim and growled and snapped at us. One of the men now set about to disjoint the quarry's tail at the middle, leaving it connected only by a tag of sinew; then, slitting the subcutaneous web, he rove the tail through till it locked at the division, making the reptile eat its own tail as it were, and carried it neatly in a loop. The monitor is best hunted at high noon; after four in the afternoon it takes to trees and holes. 224 231

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese chena village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there. 131 361

There we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmode. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thathi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you. 101 161 [587] 855 [164] 516]

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bent, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randonna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neris. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone bewitchingly on the face of some proud beauty. 361 [187 392] 101 161 [582] [164]

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vannaiya, Heratha, Kabua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect. [545 516]

814 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at
813 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *maala*, which fruits are
262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard
863 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would
262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wandaru*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The
814 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round
[184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's
262] flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be danger-
•[165] ously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *kataadiyaa* (devil dancer) would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who
834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa
551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 23, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
593 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

shorter ceremony *runela*, this being an older name than *kolamaduwa*[1]. 535 751

It appeared that the invocations at present in use among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas were those used in the old man's youth, for although he had not, as he stated (truthfully we believe), been closely associated with the Veddas for many years he recognised a number of Vedda invocations which were sung to him, as identical with those sung in his youth, and named the occasions on which each was used. *Maligi* was recognised as sung when honey was taken; the invocation at the beginning of the *kirikoraha* ceremony (cf. p. 285) was promptly named, and the occasions of its use pointed out, but the charm used when driving monkeys was not recognised. A song sung for amusement by the Veddas beginning *Mamini mamini ma deyo* was immediately recognised, as were two of the invocations of the Kolamaduwa ceremony, but considering how Sinhalese in substance this ceremony is this is perhaps not of much importance. 782

At the present day the number of Veddas living their natural forest life is necessarily few, for their territory has been gradually encroached upon by the Sinhalese who are inveterate poachers. The Veddas, who were never numerous within recent historic times, are now rapidly dying out, while many have settled among the Sinhalese and so lost their identity. We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgala but among the Nuwaragala Hills. At Nilgala itself there are no Veddas at the present day, though the local peasant Sinhalese doubtless have much Vedda blood in their veins. The Henebedda and Danigala Veddas are the descendants of those recorded by Bailey in 1863, and the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are the descendants of those known and described by the old Kandyan who visited us at Bandaraduwa. 161

Hennebedda. At Hennebedda we met a number of families living together in the Bendiyagalge caves. They had come to this their largest cave, from several settlements all within a few hours' journey. The genealogies show that at least 166 563

[1] These ceremonies are described in Chapter IX.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

166 In one instance there had been intermarriage with Sinhalese,
563 and we suspected this in other cases, though the majority appear to be reasonably pure-blooded.

361 These people make chenas[1] on which they live temporarily
231 in bark-covered huts; Plate X, figure 1, represents the chena settlement of the local group of the Namadewa *waruge*, some of the members of which are shown in Plate X, figure 2. They gather honey and hunt, several of them possess guns, and some
[222 of them rear cattle for the Sinhalese villagers. Indeed, for
224] Veddas their lot is singularly happy, since they live in the heart of the park country where game is still abundant. Bailey first induced some Veddas in the Nilgala district to make chenas about the middle of the last century, before which all the Veddas in this district were probably living their natural hunting, honey-gathering life.

361 It is not often that a community that has taken to the semi-
511 civilised life of chena cultivation is seen, in which its members are so healthy and well fed, for Veddas dislike settling down and do not generally do so until they find they can no longer subsist on the game in the country, when they either drift into Sinhalese settlements, or make extremely rough chenas for themselves, the produce of which is seldom sufficient to feed the community. Besides which, as is the case with the Sinhalese peasants themselves, the crop is often pledged to Moormen pedlars before it is reaped. The poor Veddas then subsist
[164] as best they can on yams, honey and berries, and usually fall a prey to fever. Several Veddas in this wretched condition were seen between Namal Oya and Bandaraduwa, while those at Godatalawa were scarcely better off.

In the Nilgala district the conditions are different. Chena making and cattle rearing had been introduced while game was still abundant, families are still able to leave the chena settlement and hunt and gather honey, living during such times in rock shelters within their own hunting boundary. However, the

[1] Bailey defines a chena as "a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again: it is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.* Vol. II, 1863, p. 282.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 439 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 141 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 m.[?] (60¼ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 m.[?] (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 609 576 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

166 **Galmede.** A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good 115 informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very 651 poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

? [Correction; see p. xx. — Analyst]

3. THE MARAWEETHIYA

Far or forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear
And one to me are shame and fame.

EMERSON

13 FROM Yakkure to Horiwila is six miles. The first part of the journey is through marsh; here the Mahaweli make a bend which all but encroaches on the path. The place is rank with vegetation. Tall grass thrives amidst sombre trees that stand apart, clothed out of all recognition in stoles of trailing mycania. The air is humid and oppressively still. One is glad to be rid of the swampy luxuriance with its strong suggestion of malaria.

Beyond a pleasant stretch of paddy, closer than we had ever seen it before, stood Gunner's Quoin. Tinkling cow-bells and the mournful cries of peafowl welcomed us to Horiwila.

361 144 The racial types we have passed, will repay review. Omuna, Dolagalwella and Kalukolu Eba were shifting *chena* settlements inhabited by Veddas with a large proportion of Sinhalese blood. Yakkure was a permanent village with the *chenas* apart; here the people called themselve Veddas but showed strong Tamil traits. The folk of Horiwila were not sure whether to call themselves Tamils or Veddas; while Manampitiya, beyond Horiwila, was a purely Tamil village. So does propinquity shape the type of Vedda, and forest penetration by the Sinhalese on the one hand and Tamils on the other, tend to obliterate the aboriginal race.

000 Decoyed by its beauty, we camped on a rock on the bund of the Horiwila tank, soon to learn that a stone exposed all day to the sun, was not the most desirable of camping places even at night. The stored heat radiating from the rock kept us awake till morning, and we rose quite unrefreshed for the good day's work before us, for to-day we would climb the Quoin, which, ever since we saw it across the marsh at Yakkure, beckoned us on. The Tamils of the place could only take us to the base of the hill; from there a Vedda of the Ulpotta must guide us. It was 115 quite an hour before we found him. I recognised him at once as Sinna an old friend; there were the bunions on his shoulder from carrying loads of lizards and yams, and there the hooked finger caused by a snake-bite [142 when plucking a *kanava* comb from a creviced tree. A dwarf, with 157] frizzly upstanding hair and wild eyes, and shy almost to timidity, Sinna had nothing of the sophisticated Vedda about him. He lived alone with [166] his small family at the end of the rock. The rest of his people had left when the *kurrukkan* crop failed: but Sinna remained to gather a precarious living from the scanty pickings of the field. We came on him searching for food in the forest.

The poor fellow was in great distress that morning, his favourite dog having been taken by a leopard the previous night. Hearing the animal's

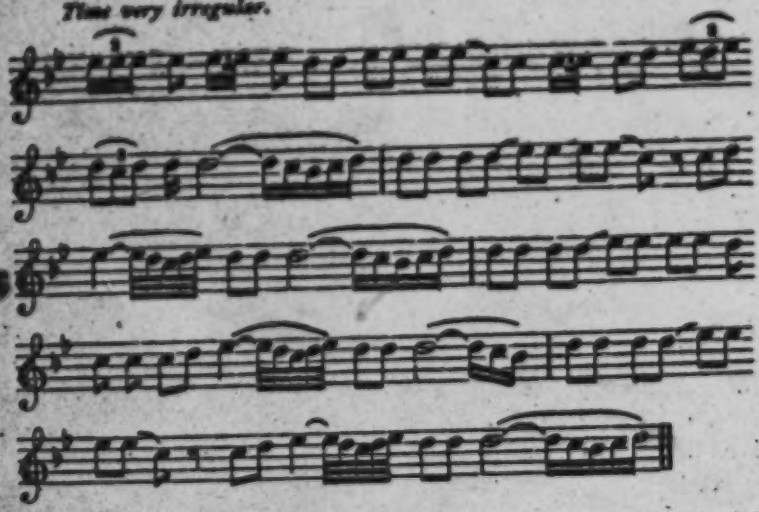
Langham & Langham 8-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AXS Vedda AXS

General Character of Songs.

The songs have an exceedingly plain character, and are devoid of the ornamentation with which we meet in many examples of primitive music. The few embellishments which occur in Nos. 1 (1), 1 (2), 2, 29, 32, are quite slight and simple. They present a contrast in this respect when compared with Nos. 50 and 53, which are records of other than Vedda music from Ceylon. I am indebted to Mr R. R. Broome, B.A., of Christ's College, Cambridge, for their notation.

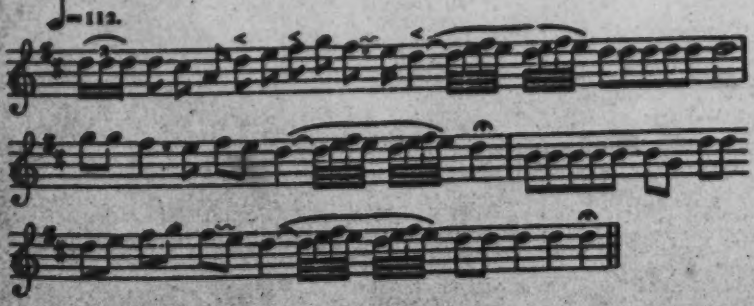
533
171

No. 50. Charm (reputed to be Arabic) sung by the Arachi of Girandura.
Time very irregular.



No. 23. Sinhalese Love Song.

♩=112.



1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yet in songs Nos. 26 (1), 38, and 44 there are opening phrases distinct from the body of the song. And in No. 44 this opening phrase (marked A in the transcript) is repeated in its original (or, as at A[1], in a modified) form during the song. The melody is thus very easily divisible into a series of alternating phrases, attaining a higher stage of development in this respect than any other of the melodies under investigation. Nos. 26 (1) and 41 (both of which Dr Seligmann suspects to be of modern date) have a short terminal phrase, clearly separable and differing in character from the remainder of the song. 533

Conclusions and Comparisons.

In the Vedda music we seem to meet with the very beginnings of melody-building. At the lowest stage (Group A) we have a two-note song descending from the higher to the lower tone. Then (in Group B) a third note is added higher in pitch than either of the preceding. Lastly (in Group C) a fourth note is introduced, generally a tone below the tonic, the influence of which throughout most of the songs is very clearly felt. 533 171

There is no other people in whose music the gradual construction of melody on these simple lines can be discerned. If we turn to Australian music[1], we usually meet, it is true, with small intervals between successive tones, but the range of tones throughout any one song is considerable. Among the American Indians it is also rare to find a song consisting only of two notes. Only four of the forty-three American Indian melodies collected by Abraham and v. Hornbostel[2] consist of two notes, and in three of these the interval is a neutral or minor third. Similar results are yielded by the older collections of Baker[3] and Stumpf[4]. The music of the natives of New Guinea, Borneo and Africa is decidedly more complex than that of the Veddas.

Turning to the music of Southern India, we find that only two or three of thirteen phonographic records, obtained from

[1] Karl Hagen, *Ueber d. Musik einiger Naturvölker*, Hamburg, 1892.
[2] Phonographirte Indianer Melodieen aus British Columbia, in the *Boas Memorial Volume*, New York, 1906, pp. 447—474.
[3] *Ueber d. Musik d. nordamerik. Wilden*, Leipzig, 1882.
[4] *Vierteljahrs. d. Musikwiss.*, 1886, S. 405—426.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
171

natives of Gujar, Malabar and Tanjore[1], at all resemble in simplicity the Vedda music. Five of them have a range of tones compassing an octave, while three others range over a sixth. Of the three most primitive songs one is a prayer, the other two being children's songs. It cannot be said that in general character they very closely resemble the Vedda songs.

The intervals among the Veddas appear to have been developed by the successive addition of small intervals to those previously used. There are only two or three exceptional cases [Nos. 20, 34 (2), 53 (1)] in which the added intervals are approximately equal to the original; and these instances are possibly accidental. In nearly all the remaining songs of Group B, the additional third tone consists of approximately a semitone added above the whole-tone interval which starts from the tonic. The two intervals thus comprise a minor third. This minor third tends to be smaller than our own tempered or untempered interval. A major third occurs only in a single song, and a neutral third is also only once sung. In Group C, the fourth, when sung, is in most cases approximately true, although in one song it is smaller, in another decidedly larger, than our own tempered or untempered interval. A fifth occurs but in one song and is distinctly smaller than ours.

We can only conclude from these data that in the absence of musical instruments, musical intervals are by no means fixed among the Veddas, and that this want of fixity becomes more striking, the greater the number of notes introduced into the song. In dealing with the songs of Group A, we were able to range without difficulty the intervals under three heads. But with the songs of Groups B and C such classification became increasingly difficult and more uncertain.

From what we know of primitive music elsewhere, it was not to be expected that the Veddas would sing pure minor or major thirds. For a long time, even in European music, thirds were regarded as dissonant. What does, however, seem unusual, is that the fifth, in the one Vedda song in which it occurs, bears so little resemblance to the consonant interval which has the ratio 2 : 3. It is almost a quarter-tone flat. On the other hand, the

[1] Sammlung d. Intervall. Monatsschrift, 1904, Bd v, S. 348—401.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
17/

fourth is several times sung nearly in the consonant ratio of 3 : 4. Inasmuch as the fifth is so much more consonant than the fourth, we should have expected to have found its intonation purer than the fourth.

For the same reason we might have expected to have found the fifth preferred to the fourth, but the fifth only occurs in one song, while the fourth is sung in several. But the intervals of the Veddas appear to have been developed, as we have already said, not by taking a harmonious interval and dividing it into smaller intervals, but by starting with small (and uncertain) intervals and adding further intervals to them. It is only in the more advanced songs (and these are very few in number) that relatively large intervals are sung. And here we appear first to meet with the influence of harmony in fixing the size of such consonant intervals. Despite the fact that to our ears tonality is so well-marked throughout the Vedda songs, the approximate consonance of intervals is only reached when the two tones immediately succeed one another.

As regards the rhythm of the Vedda songs, it is noteworthy that in Indian music Abraham and von Hornbostel found frequent instances of the interpolation of a 3- or a 5-pulse measure in music otherwise of common time. They note that change of rhythm is "so frequent that we are often unable to detect any constant primary rhythm at all, but are compelled to imagine a continual modification of measure[1]." This remark is applicable, as we have seen, to much of Vedda music, while in other Indian and Vedda songs a definite rhythm can be readily apprehended. In many parts of the world primitive music is characterised by "a delight in change and opposition of rhythm, and a demand that relatively long periods filled with measures of diverse length be apprehended as an organic whole or 'phrase'[2]." This is a characteristic of several of the Vedda songs.

[1] *Op. cit.* S. 398.
[2] C. S. Myers, *Brit. Journ. of Psychol.* 1905, Vol. 1, p. 405.

C.Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 Veddas, for they depend largely on game and honey for their subsistence and like the Veddas are bow-men. Mr Parker, who has spent much time in the Wanni, gives an account of a journey 151 he made guided by Wanniya which is so interesting that we 171 quote it at length.

"I was taken by some Wanniyas through a piece of wild pathless forest ten or eleven miles across, near Padawiya tank, at the north-eastern boundary of the North-Central Province. The jungle was dense, and the journey therefore occupied all day. Of course we were unable to proceed in a straight line, and more than once we deviated into a right-angle from our proper direction in order to avoid thorny jungle that was said to be in front of us. At about one o'clock we came to a high rock, as they had promised, on the top of which good rain water is always retained in a hollow. There we cooked and ate some food, after which we resumed our tramp. In the middle of the forest, as we were proceeding along a deer-track, one of the men drew my attention to a half-broken twig hanging at the side of the path. 'I broke that two years ago,' he said; he was then proceeding at a right-angle from the line we were taking.

"When I asked him if he never lost his way in such thick forest, full of undergrowth, he at first could not understand my meaning. After I had explained it—feeling while doing so that I was making an interesting exhibition of my ignorance—he laughed consumedly and thought it a capital joke. 'How can one lose it?' he said. He had never heard of such a thing before; to him it appeared to be quite impossible, apparently as much so as getting lost in an open field would be to us. 'When we look at the sun we always know which way to go,' he remarked. The men justified my confidence in their powers by emerging, just before dusk, at the very spot where I wished to arrive, many miles from the homes of any of the party. Those who had acted as guides lived some twelve miles or more away, by the nearest footpath; and the house of the man who lived nearest was five miles from the point where we left the forest. I have always thought it a very clever feat[1]."

Mr Parker's account of the jungle craft of the Wanniya is

[1] *Ancient Ceylon*, pp. 77, 78.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so vivid and applies so thoroughly to the progress of the Veddas through the jungle that we again quote from his work. 151 171

"While engaged on a hunting expedition, these hunters [the Wanniya]...glide along in single file, avoiding every leafy twig the rustling of which might betray their presence, or if game be near holding it until the next man can take charge of it, and hand it over in the same manner to the man behind him. At such times all tread in the footprints of the first man, who when putting his foot on the ground first glides his toes along it in order to push aside any twigs or leaves that might emit a noise if crushed. Their eyes and ears are fully alert to catch the slightest sound or movement among the thick jungle around them....They hear sounds and see objects that to a person whose perception is dulled by civilisation might as well be altogether absent, so far as his power of observation is concerned. Their trained ears detect the footfall of the wild forest animals walking through the jungle at considerable distances away, and can distinguish even the species by means of the sound, which is quite inaudible to less experienced observers. If any uncertainty exists regarding it they crouch down, or kneel with one ear on the ground, and soon clear up their doubts. When they are in search of Deer or other animals with keen sight, they hide their cloth by hanging leafy twigs round their waist-string. This certainly gives them a very wild appearance, but there is no trustworthy evidence to show that it was the primitive dress of the aborigines of Ceylon.

"Wild honey being one of their favourite foods, their vision and hearing are trained to an astonishing quickness in detecting every Bee that flies across their path, and noting its species, and whether it is flying laden or is only in quest of food. When it is carrying a load of honey and flying straight through the trees, they at once move off in the same direction, if it be the season in which the hives contain honey, that is, August and September, knowing of course that the laden insect makes a direct flight to its hive—the proverbial bee-line. As the nest is approached other Bees are seen converging towards it, and in a few minutes it is certain to be discovered[1]."

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 70, 71.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX3 Vedda AX3

occasion for orange and on another for violet; *tamba* (copper) was used for violet and blue, this word was also given for the colour of our hair when it applied equally to dark and red hair. Sinhalese hair was called *kalu*. *Pachchi* was once used for yellow-green, this being a Tamil word for green.

Whereas the Veddas seemed to think of colours by a mental reference to the appearance of leaves, flowers and other natural objects, the Sinhalese far more usually made use of colour terms, and none distinguished as many shades as the Veddas except Tissahami, "the Vedda Arachi," whose keen comparisons make his observations worthy of record in full. Several Sinhalese likened red and purple to blood, and compared green with the colour of leaves. Tissahami was first shown the colour papers, for red he gave *ratu* and said it was like fire; yellow he said he did not know; bright green *nil*, blue-green *nil*, blue *kalu*, these three he compared to different kinds of creepers; purple he said he did not know; violet like the small stingless bee; black *kalu*; white *sudu*. He was so interested in looking at colours and comparing them that we showed him several other objects. The outside of a pig-skin pocket book he called *dumburu*, the cleaned and unpolished side of the leather he compared to clay. He was then shown the bundle of coloured wools which he examined at will, comparing and naming those he chose, a grey approaching violet he called *dumburu*; dark greyish-brown he said was like a certain kind of leaf; golden yellow like monkey's fat; a light yellow-brown like a spider's web; greenish-blue like the leaves of a particular kind of yam; a deep claret almost brown he compared to the bark of a tree which is chewed with areca nut and dark greyish-violet to a village potato. It seems that this man whose keen intellect we have referred to in Chapter II had retained something of the Vedda mode of thought acquired during his contact with them in his youth.

174
171

The case of the Bhumij of Western Bengal is particularly illuminating. "Here a pure Dravidian race have lost their original language and now speak only Bengali. They still retain a set of totemistic exogamous sub-divisions closely resembling those of the Mundas and the Santals. But they are beginning to forget the totems which the names of the sub-divisions denote, and the names themselves will probably soon be abandoned in favour of more aristocratic designations. The tribe will then have become a caste in the full sense of the word, and will go on stripping itself of all customs likely to betray its true descent. The physical characteristics of its members will alone survive[1]." Further, "some of the leading men of the tribe, who call themselves Bhuinhars, and hold large landed tenures on terms of police service, have set up as Rajputs, and keep a low class of Brahmans as their family priests. They have, as a rule, borrowed the Rajput class titles, but cannot conform with the Rajput rules of intermarriage, and marry within a narrow circle of pseudo-Rajputs like themselves[2]." The rest of the tribe, numbering at the last census 370, 239, are divided into a number of exogamous groups, which include the Sabusi (*sal* fish), the Hansda (wild goose), the Lang (mushroom), Sandiliya (a bird) and Hemron (areca palm) clans.

174

Mr Parker (*op. cit.* p. 96) lays some stress on "the fact" that the Veddas "understand and use" the "classical expression" Nirindu "chief of men" which occurs in an invocation (Chapter X, No 16) we obtained from the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya. We may perhaps point out that very many expressions occur in the invocations given in Chapter X which the Veddas do not understand at all, or to which they attach a secondary and incorrect meaning. That the expression is classical and is "never employed in modern colloquial Sinhalese" is not surprising, for as we have shown in Chapter XV the time at which the Veddas gave up their own language and assumed the Sinhalese is relatively remote, so that their charms and invocations may reasonably be expected to contain archaic expressions. We may also refer to the passage (already quoted on p. 417) from Mr Parker's

[1] H. H. Risley, *People of India*, p. 74.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 94, 95

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

ward, shoot their long-bladed arrows in the soft fleshy part under the forearm, and so disable him.* 227

They have a great dread of meeting elephants at night, and have charms to protect them from them—not only to turn them from their path, but to render innoxious the bear, the leopard, and the wild boar. And I must here record, that they are the only charms I have entire faith in. 225 789

I never shall forget the first time one of these Veddah charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation. The moon had not quite risen, and the stems of the trees and the gigantic pendent creepers were flickering in the uncertain light cast by the torches, which my Veddah guides, gliding through the forest, bore before me. I was chatting to an intelligent Veddah by my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms, having been till then, like Tennent, ignorant of the fact.† I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant "behegang! wiroowee! wiroowah!" which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success.‡

Honey, and the grub in the comb, before it becomes the bee, are both staple food with the Veddahs, and their acuteness in discovering hives, when bee-hunting, is very remarkable. I have seen a Veddah stealing through the forest, suddenly stop—listen for an instant with uplifted hand—dart off into the jungle and return in an incredibly short space of time with a fresh honey-comb; while I have been in vain endeavouring 222 [262]

* This fact I established beyond a doubt. I questioned many Veddahs on that practice, which Knox treats as a fable, p. 63, viz., striking an axe into the sole of an elephant's foot; and I was assured by several that, though they never practise it themselves, the Veddahs of Batticaloa do, and that they even hamstring elephants. To those who know the pluck and dexterity of the professed elephant catchers in the north of the island, there is nothing extraordinary or incredible in a Veddah approaching sufficiently close to an elephant to wound his foot or to hamstring him. But I have inquired, and cannot satisfactorily establish the truth of the statement; and I confess that I am inclined to doubt their physical power to do either.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 448, 2nd edit.

‡ Tennent, vol. i, part ii, chap. i, p. 139, gives a lamentable account of the inefficacy of a charm for bears. I dare say the unhappy moorman there mentioned would have been more fortunate had he known the Veddah charm. The Singhalese have charms for the same purpose; but they differ from those of the Veddahs. [171]

Z:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

differ from the Singhalese, and those which, though Singhalese, are, in the sense here used, peculiar to the Veddahs. It has been suggested to me that some of the former are derived directly from the Sanskrit, but as I am incompetent to judge of the accuracy of these suggestions, I do not venture to give the conjectural derivations which I have received. 197

I have, myself, noted down, and caused to be noted down from dictation, several Veddah charms, which are not, I am informed, known to the Singhalese, though in some there is a certain resemblance to charms in use by the latter. Whether corrupted during the many ages in which they have been unintelligently repeated, or whether they are in a form of Singhalese now obsolete, or both, they are not easily translated. They are charms used in illness, and for protection against elephants, leopards, bears, and wild boars. 789 [755]

The Veddahs are at present chiefly known by names similar to those in use among the neighbouring Singhalese, and it is curious to observe how oddly they are jumbled together. In one family are to be found names which would only be appropriate to Kandyans of the highest caste, and names which could only be borne by the lowest. Some of their names, too, belong to Hindoos, and not to Singhalese. Some are not proper names at all; while, most strange of all, others, though utterly unknown in Ceylon, either to Tamils or Singhalese, are in common use in Bengal, and refer directly to Hindoo deities, or personages mentioned in the Puránas. 951 171

The names of the preceding generation appear to have differed in a very marked manner from the Singhalese names by which the Veddahs now are for the most part known; and those in the list appended to this paper are chiefly the names of the fathers and mothers of the present Veddahs. Most of these I was able, by the kindness of Colonel Vincent Eyre, C.B., R.A., to submit to the inspection of Professor Lees, of Bengal, and they are pronounced by him to have a decided Sanskrit affinity. [197]

It is a singular and significant fact, that not only are many of their names unknown in Ceylon, but their meaning is utterly unintelligible to the Veddahs themselves, among whom they were family designations which have descended to them from father to son for ages.

It is strange that so many have written of the Veddahs, and have been contented with information at once scanty and inaccurate. Davy believed that they had no names.* Tennent affirms that they have no charms—no "instinct of worship"—and doubts 114

* Davy, *Account of the Veddahs*, p. 115 of his work.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 Almost omnivorous, I have before remarked their scrupulous abstinence from the flesh of cows and fowls, though they can
171 assign no reason for it. Now, though good Buddhists as well as Hindús reject the flesh of cows, yet since the Veddahs have never associated with their Buddhist neighbours, they cannot have acquired this prejudice from them.

And though all over the south-east part of Ceylon, where even the superstitious awe of Skanda extends, the cock, the device on his banner, is in a certain degree respected; yet, since the Veddahs care no more for Skanda than they do for all the other gods in the Hindú Pantheon—the very names of whom, as gods, are unknown to them, they would not respect his sacred cock.* In

---

789 but Pasé-B'uddho—the only single allusion to Buddhism among them; but the very meaning of this and other charms is unknown to the Veddahs. They are repeated by rote; they do not pause to understand them, and could not if they would. It is enough for them, as for most Oriental people, that a particular formula is to serve a particular purpose.

Veddah Charm for Protection against a Wild Boar.

539

Ira deyané ókma.	Boar (?) of the sun-god!
Sanda deyané ókma.	Boar (?) of the moon-god!
Pasé budané ókma.	Boar (?) of the Pasé Buddha!
Situ ókma situ.	Stay, boar, stay!

Singhalese Charm for Tooth ache.

Ira deyané myá!	Worm of the sun-god!
Sanda deyané myá!	Worm of the moon-god!
Pasé Budané myá!	Worm of the Pasé Buddha!
Daté nositoo dat myá!	Stay not in the tooth, thou tooth-worm!

171 These are identical; yet the Veddahs and the Singhalese certainly do not associate so closely as to borrow one another's charms. Have they descended in each race since the time they were one? The term *ókma* I can get no satisfactory explanation of. It is not Singhalese, certainly. I assume it means "wild boar", as this is the charm to arrest a boar in the path; but it is not the term used by the Veddahs for a boar in ordinary conversation. The allusion to the Pasé, or Pachó, Buddha, is curious as occurring in both; the one people being anything but Buddhist, while Buddhism is the religion of the other. As Gotama Buddha visited Ceylon long anterior to the final establishment of Buddhism in Ceylon, and descended in Bintenne, may not this solitary allusion to the religion have been handed down in this form among the Veddahs from a period even before the invasion by Wijalja? In the form of a charm which is repeated by rote, such an allusion would be most naturally retained. So far from having any Buddhist tendencies, they do not even show the slightest outward respect in the presence of a Buddhist priest. The other Veddah charms are, I believe, quite unlike those of the Singhalese, but on that point I am still making inquiries; aided, as I have been throughout, by Mr. De Loysa, the able and intelligent modhar of Benlotte.

* The far-famed Hindu temple of Katragam, which attracts thousands of pilgrims annually from India, and is regarded with awe by the Singhalese, is dedicated to Skanda, the Indian Mars. The temple is built on a spot which, according to tradition (though it is not mentioned in the Skanda Puranas), is the site of Skanda's camp in his wars with the Asuras.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

fact, neither scruple is now a religious one with them. Their aversion to beef and fowls is an hereditary prejudice, now become a custom amongst them. 262 171

The names borne by many of them are the designations of Hindú gods and goddesses. It seems clear then, that these Hindú customs and prejudices—these Hindú names, which we find still lingering amongst a people which does not profess that faith, and for twenty centuries have been far removed from those who do, indicate either that the Veddahs once professed it, or lived in the closest intercourse with those who did.* 551 171 [174]

The complicated and artificial ceremonial of that religion has naturally died away during the long ages of isolation in which the Veddahs have lived; the vestiges of its former existence among them have been preserved only in some of its strongest prejudices, and in the names derived from the Hindú mythology which have descended as customary family designations to the Veddahs of the present day.†

I should hardly say that the cock is "respected" in the neighbourhood of Katagam; but fowls are rarely eaten by the people there, who, if they eat them, must undergo a course of purification. A fowl curry involves the necessity of an ablution of the head with limes and saffron. Peafowls, too, are rejected as an article of food in that part of the island, for a peacock is represented as the vehicle of the gods: of all this, however, and of the existence of Skanda or of Katragam, the Veddahs are profoundly ignorant. The names of Skanda are common appellations among Veddah men, and that of Valli, Skanda's consort, a common name for Veddah women. 171

* Let it be remembered that the Veddahs, of whom I am writing, have never had any communicatian with the Tamil-speaking Veddahs who inhabit the seacoast of the Batticaloa district, who are in direct contiguity with Hindús. [The inference drawn is not warranted by the fact referred to. The Hindús occasionally have names taken from those of foreign languages. Thus the Regent of Nepal, a pure and high-caste Hindú, bore a name consisting of two Persian words. EDIT.]

† It was not for years after I had collected this information regarding the superstitions of the Veddahs, that I read the Laws of Menu. It is impossible not to be struck with the similarity, if not identity, of their rude worship and its precepts; *e.g.*

"72. But whoever cherishes not the five orders of beings—those who demand hospitality—those whom he ought to maintain—*his departed forefathers* and himself—that man lives not, even though he breathes."

The Brahman is ordered to make an oblation every day to the following divinities, viz.:—

"First to Agni, *god of fire*, and to the *lunar god*;" .... to the "*goddess of the day*"; .... the *goddess of the earth and sky*"; to the "*winds*" and "*water gods*"; the "*gods of large trees*"; to the spirits "*that walk in light*", and those "*who walk in darkness.*" The reverence of deceased ancestors is then insisted on. "The Pitris, or great progenitors, are free from all wrath—intent on purity—even exempt from sensual passions—endued with exalted qualities."

"The divine Manes are always pleased with an oblation *in empty glades*,

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

171 But what is Hindú is, so to speak, the *dead* part of their religious belief. What is in daily practice, bears the closest resemblance to the Nât worship of the aboriginal tribes of India.*

I have, in the preceding pages, faithfully recorded the habits, customs, and superstitions of the "wilder sort" of the Veddahs. 184 To have discussed the "tamer sort," or those who, for a considerable period, have maintained intercourse with the Singhalese or people of the country, would have been a mere waste of time; or to have considered them in connection with their more barbarous brethren would have been to have fallen into the very error, which has marred the exceedingly interesting notice of the aboriginal race of Ceylon, which Tennent has given us. It would have been like weaving a woof of bleached and unbleached threads, so intermingled and complicated that a clear perception of either were impossible. I have confined myself, therefore, exclusively to the most barbarous specimens of the race, for wild as the wildest of the Batticalao district are, they are less barbarous than these.

I now propose to consider the evidence I have collected, with a 174 view to fixing the ethnical origin of these Veddahs. I have shewn that the term "Veddah" has no distinctive signification—that it may be, and is applied to barbarous races generally, who depend on hunting for their support, and hence, to the wild tribes in India, who are supposed to be the aborigines of the country.

It has always been assumed, that the Veddahs of Ceylon are the descendants of the race which originally peopled the island, or, at any rate, of that which inhabited it prior to its conquest and colonization by Wijaya and his followers.† Of this, there can be

---

naturally clean, on the banks of rivers, and in solitary spots." Sir William Jones's works.

* A paper "On the Veddahs of Bintenne", by the Rev. J. Gillings, was published in the Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1853. Mr. Gilling's paper treats of the Veddahs inhabiting that portion of Bintenne which is in the district of Batticalon, and it shews how materially they differ from the Veddahs of Nigala and the Badulla Bintenne, whom I have just described. He states that they have intermarried with the Singhalese, with whom they are "mixed up to a large extent"—that "adultery and polygamy are still common among them"—that "theft and lying are prevalent"; and he speaks of divorce as habitual. The absence of these practices among the Veddahs of the Badulla district is clearly to be accounted for by the greater isolation in which they have lived.

† Nothing can be more charming than that portion of Tennent's work in which he undertakes the proof that they are the descendants of the Yakkhos, as the Buddhistical writers termed the aborigines. And we may well forgive him for giving way to the temptation of reviving exploded customs, and discussing them in the present tense, in order to prove that the habits of the Veddahs, in the year of grace 1860, are identical with those of the Besedæ, in A.D. 400; for there can be no doubt that, about a century ago

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
192 Here	Mobba	Móhi	
197 There	Obba	E'hi	
Far off	Nekat rata	Dura	
Be quick!	To bang	Wigahata	"To", the pronoun thou; in the Bhotia dialect "bangjyap" is, be quick!
Before	Itchätä	Issaraha	
Behind	Patchätä	Paasé	
Exclamation of approbation	Etä!		
Exclamation of disapprobation	Iss!		

SPECIMENS OF VEDDAH NAMES.

MEN.

551 171 Lókendra. "Sovereign of the World", from Lóka (Sanscrit), "the world", and Indra; unknown among Singhalese or Tamils of Ceylon, but in use in Bengal.

Kanda. The Singhalese call Skanda, the Indian Mars, to whom the famed temple at Katragam is dedicated, "Kanda Kumaryia"; but the word is unknown as a name.

Weyla. One of the names of Skanda.

Suppa is a corruption of Subhramanya, one of the names of Skanda. Both these are Tamil names in use; and I think I have heard Weyla as a Kandyan name, but it is very uncommon.

Skanda is a favourite of the Veddahs (of India), though unknown to the Veddahs here; and "Valli", one of his consorts (a Veddah female name in use among the Veddahs in Ceylon), was said to have been born of a deer in a forest in Arcot, and found by a Veddah chief Kumāra (Kumāro was Kuweni's uncle, and Kumā is a Veddah name still in use), and brought up by him.

Kanda, it is true, means, in Singhalese, simply a mountain; but it is more probable that, as a Veddah name, it is a corruption of Skanda, a name descended to them, though they are ignorant of its signification.

Nila. A name in common use in Bengal; also used by Tamils (Hindús); but entirely unknown as a name among the Singhalese. Nila, a personage mentioned in the Puranas.

Benda. Binda, in common use in Bengal, but unknown in Ceylon, either among Singhalese or Tamils. There is a common appellation, a title rather than a name, Banda, in Ceylon; but Banda does not occur among the Veddahs. Binduwa also is a low-cast name among the Singhalese.

Dówa Denna. Unknown as a name in Ceylon. Equivalent to the Hindú "Deva Dattah", given by the deity—which is its signification in Singhalese.

Milālāna. Unknown by Singhalese or Tamils in Ceylon.

Koonchi. From "kuncha" (Sanscrit), to go crookedly—a cripple. In use, with the affix Tamby, among the Tamils, but not in use among the Singhalese.

Kangeria. "Kangana" (Sans.), one of the names of Kandarpa, God of Love. Neither used by Singhalese nor Tamil as a name.

Kowa. No such name among Singhalese or Tamils.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Godira. "Generous, excellent" (Sans.). Not known as a name among either Singhalese or Tamils.

551
171

Kuma. "Kurma", the second incarnation of Vishnu. Not a name in Singhalese or Tamil.

Buduwa. A common name in Bengal and Hindústan. Not known among the Singhalese.

Nanga. "Nagna" (Sans.), naked. Not a name in use either by Tamil or Singhalese.

Toota. ? "Tuta" (Hindu), broken, or "tushta" (Sans.), satisfied ? No such name in use among Tamils or Singhalese.

Kombowa. Not known as a name among Singhalese or Tamils.

Konára. Not a Singhalese or Tamil name; though it forms part of the family titles of some Singhalese families, as Kônaramudianse lágé.

Kaira. Neither a Singhalese nor a Tamil name.

Bandena. Neither a Singhalese nor a Tamil name.

Koba. Neither a Singhalese nor a Tamil name.

Pusamittya. "Pusha", the sun (Sans.); "mitra", friend (Sans.); "pussa" (Singh.), an empty nut; "mittya" (ditto), a bundle. "Pusamitta", a Yakkho name mentioned in the Mahawanso. No such name is known among either Singhalese or Tamils.

Bissa. "Vishwa" (Sans.), the world; "bissa" (Singh.), an oval basket for holding grain. The name occurs among the Veddahs thus: "Koorikhan" (a kind of grain) "bissa". No such name is in use among Singhalese or Tamils.

Paya. A fool or maniac, in Tamil; and "pó" is a spirit, goblin, or *spirit of the dead*, in Singhalese. Not used as a name among the Singhalese.

Kotali. "Kotalé" (Singh.), a vessel with a spout for drinking from. Not a Singhalese nor Tamil name.

Goolia. Not a Singhalese nor Tamil name. "Gooli" (Singh.), anything round.

Heen kenda. Not a Singhalese nor Tamil name. "Heen kenda" is the Singhalese for a kind of tree.

Kanata. Neither a Singhalese not a Tamil name. "Kanata", in Singhalese, is applied to ground which has been cleared, and has partially become covered with brushwood.

WOMEN'S NAMES.

Nili. A heroine in a Tamil drama. A name in use in Bengal, but unknown as a name in Ceylon.

Walli. "Valli", consort of Skanda—see "Kanda" among men's names. "Valli" (Sanscrit), a winding creeper—a term of endearment. Also an honorific affix to names of goddesses and princesses. Not used as a name in Ceylon.

Ráno. Corruption of "Rajni", queen; common name in Bengal. This name is used among low-cast women in the Kandyan country.

Nangi. Not used as a name in Ceylon (vide ante, "Nanga"). It means, in Singhalese, younger sister.

Wyrie. A title of Parvati. A name among Hindús; also Kandyan.

Kumie. See "Kuma". Not a Singhalese name, nor Tamil; but "Kuma" is a Kandyan *female* name, though a Veddah *male* name.

Alendi. "Loundee" (Sans.), a maiden. A name, I believe, in use among the Singhalese of the maritime provinces.

Abi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

Goberi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

Tohti. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

Tangi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

551 171 Nagi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.
Tandi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.
Kombi. Not a woman's name in Tamil or Singhalese; though "Koombi", with the affix "Hamy", is a man's name in the maritime provinces.
Saloo. Neither Singhalese nor Tamil.
Redda. Neither Singhalese nor Tamil.
Pokoóti. No such name among the Singhalese or Tamils. "Pookooti", in Singhalese, dwarf-like.

DOGS' NAMES.

552 171 Dimbili. ? From "dimba" (Sans.), an egg.
Chĕrăna.
Kerita. ? From "kelita" (Sans.), playful; or perhaps a diminutive of the Veddah term for a bear, "kerri" or "keria".
Kaddia. ? From "kad" (Sans.), to injure. "Kadia" is a venomous ant in Singhalese.
Kăna. ? From "kanahila" (Singh.), a jackal.
Sangelia. "A chain" in Tamil.
Gora.
Debera. "Dabera" is, in Singhalese, quarrelsome.
Bahera. Name of a yakka.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kukula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botua-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
[281 362] open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like
[84] structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indisposition. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda,
[171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fireplace at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various fragments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels
264] were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

Sakai ANG
Toala OG
Vedda AX5
Prehistoric Malaya AN3

Senoi and Toala, as to their physical features, are somewhat closer to each other than to the Veddas. However, further research into this matter is necessary, especially regarding the exact position occupied by the Toala in this grouping. (Figs. 25, 26, 27, 28) S T V 144 S T V 171

Also in their cultural heritage, these three peoples show many similarities.

The aboriginal Senoi and also the Semang are nomadic peoples; they are /131/ continually on the move, mainly subsisting by collecting forest products, hunting, and fishing. They build very primitive huts and are clothed in a loincloth or apron made of bark cloth. When hunting they mainly use the blowgun through which they shoot poisonous arrows. They are also equipped with bow and arrow. They practice monogamy and treat their wives well. As is also the case with the Veddas and Toala, they do not engage in agriculture; they have no other domestic animals than dogs. Likewise, metal work, ceramics, or weaving are unknown to the Senoi. S 105

According to Martin, it need not be doubted that in the western part of the Malay Peninsula inhabited caves are to be found, belonging to a prehistoric era. However, one cannot state with certainty in what period these caves have been inhabited. Neither can it be derived from the ergological proportions in what period these caves have been inhabited. It must have been a nomadic people who fed themselves with small game, fish, fresh-water shellfish, and PM 172 PM 174

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 "A 16th century MS.—the *Wanni Kada-in Pota*—records the appointment of a Vaedda chief as Bandara Mudiyanse (a title applied only to high caste chiefs); at the king's orders (Bhuvanaika Bahu of Kotta) he fixed the boundaries of four districts or "Pattus" of the North-western Province. His name was Panikki Vaedda[1], he caught elephants and took some to the king, with another Vaedda chief, a Registrar or Secretary, called Liyana Vaedda. I have an early 17th century MS. which gives an account of part of a civil war in the Matale District, carried on by his nephew against the king who imprisoned Knox. Among the insurgent leaders were first, three Sinhalese chiefs of Matale, and after them are enumerated a number of Vaedda chiefs (including one woman) who are all expressly said to be Vaeddas; of the 'Vaedda wasagama'; one of them was the chief of Bibile[2]."

[172] Ceylon," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* 1863, Vol. II, p. 313.) Within the last few months the matter has been rendered almost certain by the discovery by the late James Parsons to the N.E. of Ratnapura of quartz implements of the type figured in Plate VIII.

[1] The mention of the existence of a chief called Panikki Vedda is especially interesting since Panikkia Yaka reputed to be the spirit (*yaka*) of a long dead Vedda chief, who was especially skilled in hunting buffalo and elephant, is honoured among the Henebedda Veddas. This record shows that the memory of this "Vedda" chief has been maintained among the local peasant Sinhalese, who themselves are partly of Vedda descent, until it recently passed to the Henebedda Veddas. (Cf. Religion, Chapter VI.)

[2] The present day Sinhalese of the Vedirata say that such Vedda chiefs as those here recorded were called *mannija* and repaired annually to Kandy with offerings of honey, wax, and venison for the king, who might also invite their presence on special occasions when they would attend, each *mannija* bringing with him a ceremonial fanlike ornament (still used by the Sinhalese chiefs) called *awupata* (literally "fan"), with an ornament made of wood or ivory on the top called *hewaghwa*, or *hota*. Mr Bibile told us the following story of what happened on one occasion when the *mannija* stayed near Kandy with one Galebandar who seems to have been a Vedda. The king instructed Galebandar to remove the *hota* from his guests' *awupata* without their knowledge. On the day of the audience these *hota* were missing, and as there was no time to get others the Vedda chiefs had to go before the king without them. The king questioned them: "Where are your *hota*? Lost!" and the king said "Henceforth only I will have the right to *hota* and you Vedda chiefs have no right to them." And the king called the Vedda chiefs *bandar*, each *mannija* being given a name, e.g. Mahabandar, Hantanebandar, Talabandar, Kirtibandar, Rangotibandar, Rattebandar, Pebandar, Motubandar, Kapurubandar, and so forth, and henceforth the Veddas must needs go to Kandy yearly taking tribute to the king. And their people took their chiefs' names as community names, e.g. Danigala and Henebedda are Mahabander. It did not appear that *bandar* names of this sort were generally known to the Veddas, and we confess that we at present attach no importance to the story we

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142 is rarely prominent. The lips, though well developed, are not tumid (except sometimes in the young); sometimes the mouth is rather flat. This when accompanied by moderately prominent cheek bones gives some faces an expression of considerable energy. The jaw is not prognathous, the nostrils are moderately broad, the root of the nose is depressed but never flattened to any considerable degree. The average of the nasal indices of 17 skulls gave the figure 52·7 (minimum 43·3, maximum 62·2, 141 median 52·3), which is just short of the index (53) at which platyrrhiny is commonly assumed to begin. Nevertheless we believe that the Veddas may more fairly be classed as mesorrhine than platyrrhine, for certainly the impression made on us by the living was that they were not specially broad-nosed. The capacity of the 18 male skulls described by the Sarasins varies from 1012 to 1502 c.c. with an average of 1278 c.c.: none of the three female Vedda skulls from the inner Vedda district have a capacity of less than 1150 c.c., though there is a skull of an adult Vedda woman in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons with a capacity of only 960 c.c.

Summing up the physical characters to which we have briefly referred we may define the Veddas as a short, wavy-haired, dolichocephalic race, with moderately long faces and moderately broad noses. Expressing the results of measurements taken by the Sarasins we may say that chamaeprosopes[a] and leptoprosopes occur in about equal numbers, and that the Veddas are mesorrhine or present a low grade of platyrrhiny.

114 The latest Vedda literature of any importance is a volume published by the Sarasins which records the work they did 172 in Ceylon during 1907 when they established the existence of a stone age upon the island. This fact had not been realised before, though two naturalists, Mr E. E. Green and Mr J. Pole, both old residents, had already collected and recognised as artifacts the quartz implements which were the typical product of the stone age in Ceylon, and which, as pointed out by the Sarasins, are most reasonably to be attributed to the Veddas. A number of rock shelters were explored; these were situated at Kataragam in the south of the island where no Veddas now exist, and in other parts of Uva, in the present Vedda country.

a [erratum, see p. xx. —Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Not all the caves investigated yielded evidence of prehistoric habitation, but from a certain number were obtained quartz, chert and shell implements which put the matter beyond doubt and conclusively show that Ceylon formerly possessed a stone age. The greater part of the volume is taken up by an account of prehistoric quartz and chert artifacts, and the excellent reproductions given by the authors show that the quartz implements they discovered belong to the same type as those found by ourselves and described elsewhere[1].

But in addition the Sarasins found hammer stones, a few pieces of worked bone, and a series of shells of the large land snail (*Helix phoenix*), the curve of each shell being occupied by a circular hole large enough to allow of its sharp edge being used as a cutting tool[2].

Plate VIII shows a number of typical Vedda implements. All are of quartz except No. 2 which is of chert. Nos. 1 and 3 are worked on one side only, the unworked side being shown in order to illustrate the well-marked bulb of percussion which distinguishes many of the specimens. The general characteristics of these implements are so well shown in the plate that a description in detail is not necessary. Attention may, however, be called to figures 6, 8 and 9; the first of these shows a large part of the outer surface of the quartz pebble from which it was made. No. 8 belongs to a type of which numerous examples occur among European stone implements, this specimen is thicker than is usual and measures 15 mm. from one surface to the other. No. 9 can scarcely have been intended for anything but an arrow head, two views are given of this remarkable implement which comes from a cave on the Scarborough Estate at Maskeliya, and for a drawing of which I am indebted to Mr Pole. No. 2 is of chert and was found in the same cave; two views of this implement are given. The localities from which the other specimens were collected were as follows: No. 1 was found by Mr Pole at Maskeliya, No. 3 we picked up at Bandarawela, No. 4 was collected by Mr Green

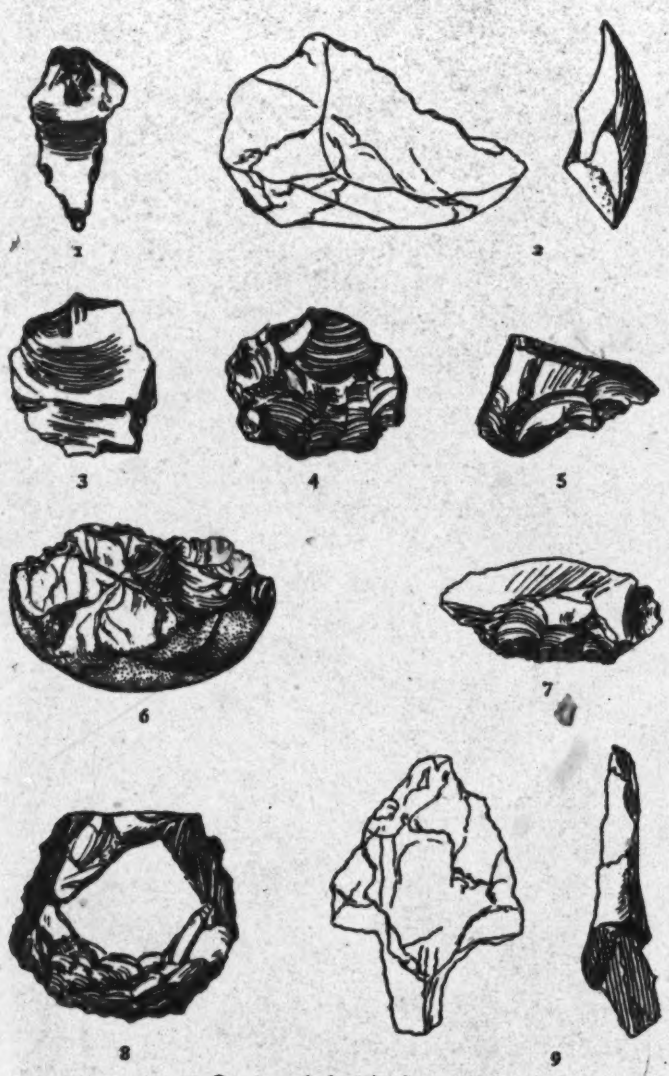
[1] C. G. Seligmann, "Quartz Implements from Ceylon," *Man*, 1908, 63.

[2] These shells in fact constitute a primitive plane or spokeshave and resemble those found in Queensland and some parts of South America at the present day.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate VIII

172
324



Quartz and chert implements

[facing p. 20]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172
324

near Peradeniya, Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8 are in Mr Pole's collection and were found by him near Maskeliya.

The questions raised by the discovery of implements such as those figured are so many and interesting that no excuse is needed for considering some of the issues at length. The data are the caves excavated by the Sarasins in which prehistoric implements were found, and our own work in Ceylon including the partial excavation of the Bendiyagalge caves which are described and figured in Chapter IV.

In the first place if we accept the suggestion that Veddas, the ancestors of those still existing, are responsible for these implements, their distribution will give valuable information as to the former extent of the Vedda country. It may be said at once that the distribution of these implements, as far as it is at present known, agrees with our historic knowledge of the extent of the Vedda domain, and adds to it the heights of Uva up to about 4000 feet (Bandarawela), the country around Kandy, and the hill country to the south (Gampola) and in the neighbourhood of Adam's Peak (Maskeliya)[1]. And since they have been found in the neighbourhood of Matale they add an interesting confirmation to what Mr Parker has said on p. 9 concerning the former occurrence of Veddas in this part of the country. Within the last few months the range of these implements has been extended south to the neighbourhood of Ratnapura, where a number of excellent specimens were found by the late James Parsons, who wrote to us concerning them as follows: "I dug out a cave in Sabaragamuwa in a ravine to the north-east of Ratnapura which was most interesting. I have full notes of the cave—briefly it is sufficiently high above the stream for it to have been impossible for it to enter the cave in

[1] We consulted the late James Parsons, Director of the Mineral Survey, concerning the geological formation of the rounded grassy hills near Bandarawela called *patana*, upon which we had independently collected many quartz artifacts. He informed us that the capping of these hills usually consists of more or less disintegrated granular quartz rock, but that this did not seem to contain nearly enough clear quartz to produce the flakes even as a "survival of the fittest" in the process of disintegration. Parsons did however find several water-worn pebbles, all broken, but there were not enough to lead him to think they represented a capping gravel, although in the case of the Peradeniya locality there is no doubt that there is river gravel on the hill.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172 324

geologically recent times. To a depth of 8 feet the cave is full of black earth containing many shells of the big tree snail mixed with the river shells, *bellan* (*Paludina ceylonica*), in such abundance that these shells are now occasionally collected and burnt for chunam. A shell is said to occur that is found only in the river at Ratnapura, but I did not succeed in finding it. The tradition is that the molluscs were used as food by 'an ancient Tamil people.' The shells are not calcined, but with them were a number of flakes of clear quartz—mostly made from pebbles, some of them the best I have seen and undoubtedly neolithic.... I do not think there can be any reasonable doubt about them. At a depth of five feet very rotten fragments of the top of a human skull and the region of the ear besides bits of long bones and some pieces of chert not obviously worked. At the entrance of the cave there is a sort of dyke thrown up, which is full of flakes some of which appear to be ground and polished."

Parsons' premature death renders it unlikely that a full account of this find will ever be published, but owing to the kindness of Mrs Parsons we have been able to examine a number of the implements excavated by her husband. These include a number of cores, worked flakes and scrapers, and one flake of chert showing a bulb of percussion, but none of the specimens that I have handled show any signs of polishing[1].

[1] Since the above was written we have received the following account of the cave from Mr W. D. Holland on whose property we understand the cave is situated. "The cave is situated about a mile from my bungalow on the N. bank of a small stream and some 10 to 15 feet above present water level. The cave has been formed by the weathering out of a soft core of rock from gneiss of the ordinary kind and may have been assisted by the action of the stream when running at a higher level. The cave is a fairly large one and would accommodate several families, say 15 or 20 individuals, and is quite dry inside. It appears to have been banked up in front, but this may have been caused by debris falling from the cliff above. The strike I believe coincides with the stream S.W. N.W. We dug a pit about 5 feet in diameter and about 7 or 8 feet deep, and came upon a lot of shells of the *bellan* or water snail and some bones: a much shattered portion of the latter we thought to be a portion of a human skull, and Mr Parsons subsequently informed me by letter that this had been confirmed in Colombo....The quartz flakes were not found in the cave, but on the entrance bank where they had been exposed by the drip from the rock above washing the earth away and leaving them. The old inhabitants would naturally work at the entrance for the sake of light. I know only of this one cave in this neighbourhood. The stream flows S.W. to the Kalugangs (eventually), and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

• 172

Plate IX

Steps cut in the rock at Bendiyagalge

[facing p. 22]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172

With regard to the distribution in time of these implements, it seems that they are of respectable, but of no great antiquity. They are found abundantly on the surface of the open grassy *patanas* at Bandarawela and also on the surface of the soil near Kandy and scattered everywhere in the neighbourhood of Maskeliya over the ground planted with tea. Considering that Ceylon is a well vegetated country with an abundant rainfall, these facts do not point to any high antiquity even if it is allowed that in the tea country the cultivation of a century has lowered the level by 9 to 12 inches, the estimate given by planters whom we questioned.

The evidence from the caves seems to point in the same direction. The Bendiyagalge caves present well marked drip ledges and many signs such as the steps (Plate IX) hewn in the rock, between the upper and lower caves, which show that they were used by the Sinhalese during the efflorescence of Buddhism before, or about the beginning of, the present era. This date is made perfectly certain by the occurrence in one of the caves, a few miles from Bendiyagalge and used by the same Veddas, of a typical drip ledge associated with an inscription of which Mr H. C. P. Bell, archaeological commissioner, says, "The Brahmi [characters] are of the oldest type, therefore B.C." This inscription has been read by the same authority as,—"(cave of) the chief. son of the chief Vela." It is therefore clear that these caves were at one time—about 2000 years ago—inhabited

faces about 1½ miles (bee line) to the east in the range which forms the watershed of the Kalugangs and Wallawe rivers. The elevation is approximately 1900 feet and the cave faces S. (about). The Sinhalese have used this cave for a mine for the shells of the *helan*, which they burn into lime to eat with betel leaf. A large number of shells must have been removed but notwithstanding there must still be an enormous quantity left. We were also informed by the natives that there are two kinds of *helan* shells found in the cave, only one of which is found in the neighbouring streams and the other must have been brought from some distance in the Ratnapura direction, 15 or so miles, and they inferred that these had been brought by whoever had lived in the cave, presumably for food. We also found some fragments of pottery (chatties) with the quartz flakes, which the Sinhalese said were of a thinner kind not made now; these however were no doubt left by Sinhalese gemmers or refugees at a later date, as caves in the jungle are still used by them if no houses are near. The rainfall of the district is heavy, some 150 inches. The cave would I think well repay a thorough exploration, but it should be undertaken by someone who has experience in such work and would be expensive."

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

by Sinhalese who, as the results of excavation showed, had left behind them abundant evidence of their occupation of the cave. This will be clear from the following short account of our partial exploration of these caves. 172

The nature of its bottom made the lower cave the easier to examine, accordingly a longitudinal trench about a foot wide was dug in the long axis of the lower cave. The first six inches yielded fragments of pottery and a number of bones, a much rusted catty, and an areca nut cutter, both of the pattern in common use. A good many fragments of charcoal were found in the upper 12 to 18 inches, and several pieces of iron slag—perhaps six in all—as well as a number of land shells lying in groups, were found at a depth of from 1 to 2 feet. Bones and fragments of pottery continued to occur until a depth of about 3 feet was reached. Massive rock, which was taken to be the bed rock of the cave, was reached at about 2½ feet, and within a few inches of this were found many fragments of quartz—some milky, some ice-clear, some faintly opalescent, some smoky and some amethystine. A few of these were as big as hens' eggs, the majority varied from the size of an apricot to a haricot bean, some were even smaller. From the large number of pieces of quartz—nearly 300—collected at the depth mentioned from this trench, and a small trench driven at right angles to it, as well as the absence of pieces of country rock, there can be no doubt that these pieces of quartz were brought to the site in which they were found by man. They were not water-worn, and the variety of colour and opacity they presented make it certain that they had not weathered out in situ, in spite of the fact that quartz (but not as far as we could determine ice-clear quartz) occurs in segregation masses in the gneissic rock of the neighbourhood. Further, when all the fragments were carefully washed and examined it was found that some three per cent. of the pieces of quartz obtained from this cave showed signs of working. Additional proof that the fragments of quartz had been brought by man to the site on which they were found were afforded by some irregular digging done in the upper cave formed by the same rock mass as the lower cave, and separated from it only by a few feet. The floor of this

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172 cave was so rocky that a regular trench could not be dug, but a number of holes, the largest perhaps 6 feet by 4 feet, were dug down to what was apparently the country rock at the bottom of the cave. Fragments of pottery and the bones of animals were found in plenty in these holes, but altogether they yielded only four pieces of quartz, namely two water-worn pebbles and two broken pieces of clear glassy quartz. As in the lower cave a few small pieces of slag were found some 18 inches to 2 feet below the level of the surface. Most of the fragments of pottery found in both caves in the first 2 feet are decorated and are certainly not the remains of Vedda pots, and since fragments of iron slag are found associated with this pottery, the deposit in which it occurs must be regarded as formed not earlier than the Sinhalese occupation of the cave. As already stated massive rock was found six inches lower, and from these last few inches were obtained quartz implements and many unworked pieces of quartz. Clearly then the people responsible for these occupied the caves before the Sinhalese, but there is no obvious reason for holding that the makers of these implements antedated the Sinhalese by any long period. All that can be affirmed is that no pottery was found associated with the quartz fragments either by the Sarasins or by ourselves, but this is no sign of great age considering the extreme roughness of the pots made by the Veddas at the present day, and the fact that the art is believed, doubtless correctly, to have been adopted from the Sinhalese. One of us has already stated in *Man* his beliefs that these implements are neolithic and this is also the opinion of Mr Reginald Smith. Considering the refractory nature of the material, and allowing for the fact that it does not occur in large masses, the better formed implements must be regarded as neolithic in type, and in this connection it is significant that the bones found associated with the implements by the Sarasins are those of existing forms. These authors, however, believe that the implements they found are paleolithic, arguing that the absence of pottery and stone adze heads proves that they cannot be neolithic, though they apparently admit that in many respects the best implements approach neolithic forms.

174 The mention of these stone implements naturally brings

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

[531 177] [172]

Tools and Weapons.

411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

[437]

No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *kobbera* (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained; it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum resin obtained from the tinkari tree (Diospyros embayopteris).

411 322 [283 314]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

houses of lasting character, as neither their instincts nor habits necessitated such procedure. 361

At Kumuna alone we find a modification of these conditions, in that the greater part of the land where the village stood is above flood level, and possessed of constant fresh water all the year round, besides being at a spot where there was a prospect of trade.

It should be added that all the many anicuts on this river between Kumuna and Kebilitte bear silent testimony to the violence of the floods on the river, and to the once existence of a large population, that probably vanished as soon as these engineering works were destroyed—a population who could enjoy the benefit of the river's floodings by diverting the water into immense tanks, that now are but park-like pieces of jungle. 172

The present inhabitants of the region embraced within the boundaries recorded here are unquestionably of mixed origin, as it is easy to trace on the western limits the pure Sinhalese type of feature, these fading again to a more specific type through the Maha Wedirata, and again changing markedly on the north-east of that country, till it is practically replaced by Tamils in the Panawa Pattu. Thus, it would seem that the Vedda type lay between the Uvan Sinhalese on the west and the Tamil on the east, with the result that frequently one would hear men, while asserting that they were pure Sinhalese, conversing with each other in Tamil. This I found to be actually the case at Bowela, where the villagers insisted that they were of the Goigama caste. 101 162

I was completely baffled in my attempts to secure a vocabulary of Vedda words, though I offered liberal payment for a few lessons in that language. I was pointed out men who were able to speak Vedda, and it was arranged that we should meet, in secret, at a definite time, and at a fixed spot, but when the time came I was told the man had gone away to find stray cattle, or some other equally trumped-up story. 197 198

One night I camped close to some huts in the village of Wattegama, and after my lamp had been put out and I was supposed to be asleep, I heard an animated discussion in the nearest hut, but though I could hear every word, I did not

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137

of fruit, an insipid fibrous product being the usual type of Vedda-country orange.

In dry rocky ground *Ochna wightiana* is to be found in some abundance, as exemplifying the small order of the Ochnaceæ.

Of the Burseraceæ, I have already pointed out that *Balsamodendrum cordatum* may be taken as indicating some place of veneration. I found in many cases where there were ruins, or abandoned monastic caves, this plant would be sure to occur. [172] On the summit of "Westminster Abbey" it is comparatively abundant, as also at Nuwaragala—another ancient fort. Doubtless the fragrant smell of the wood led to its use as an incense, and, thus, to its cultivation. *Canarium zeylanicum* occurs very sparingly west of Bowela, and *Filicium decipiens* may be found in the forest valleys, though it does not attain any striking proportions.

The Maliaceæ is very well represented. The Margosa, however, as typical of this order, is an introduction, and where it is found under semi-wild conditions the inference is that that particular spot was once inhabited. This beautiful tree, however, is afflicted with a disease that kills back the young twigs, and I remarked that this sickness is very widespread. *Melia dubia*, often called Wal-kohomba, occurs in the western part of the Vedda country, but in no great abundance. *Walsura piscidia* and *Dysoxylum binectariferum* are both common, while the famous Satinwood is, of course, very fairly abundant, except in what might be called wet forest. The abundance of Satinwood has, as I have hinted, doubtless from very early times been influenced by human operations, as the value and quality of this excellent wood is widely known. That being so, its spread has been materially governed, with the result that in a great deal of the country where it once must have been plentiful there are now only isolated examples.

Muaronia pumila occurs in tolerable abundance round Bowela, Waragama, and Danakiria. It is medicinal.

Of Celastraceous plants, *Elæodendron glaucum* is very common near the coast, and attains a large size. A *Kurrimia*, probably a variety of *K. zeylanica*, is found occasionally in the northern half of the country I explored, but does not appear to attract native attention.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) · 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

away more frightened than you. A scratching noise under your pillow may lead to the discovery of a scorpion or a centipede. Beetles, moths, biting ants, and insects of all descriptions investigate and experiment with you. But you soon learn to ignore these little draw-backs and drowse to the lullaby of some wood-land songster.

Tropical Nature is a stern mistress; her favours are never unalloyed. For him who would seek her she holds grievances in store, grievances that enhance the very joy they encumber; toning down ecstasy lest it pall with surfeit; giving to the contemplation of foregone experience that unfettered pleasure the reality denies, prompting us in after years to say, forgetful of all the hardships, "those were happy days we had".

The Verugal where it joined the Mahaweli was at this season an insignificant stream. Quite a colony of tobacco growers flourished here. Very picturesque are these settlements or *thethes* as they are called. Four to six huts stand some distance apart in clearings along the bank, most of them beautifully overspread with melon-creepers. Every hut has its vegetable garden; and standing before them, like sentinels, are the draw-wells, usually in couples, that feed the tobacco plots direct from the river. The lowing of cattle under the superb trees that stud the clearing, the crowing of cocks, the sound of human voices complete the atmosphere of rural domesticity in this wild land and furnish scenes which would rejoice the heart of a painter.

Putting up one evening in a coconut grove owned by a Moor we found an unkempt ill-clad fellow seated on his haunches staring at some simple wares a pedlar was displaying. They told us he was a Vedda from a village some miles away. Becoming restless under our scrutiny he walked off. I followed him to his miserable shelter, where I found his daughter, a puny girl of four, covered with ulcers. Edging up towards her father she stared at us distrustfully with the eyes of a startled doe. A few broken pots were their sole belongings. The bond of tender solicitude that united these human derelicts, of no consequence except to each other, was indeed a touching sight. I asked the man what he did for a living. He said he "earned a rupee for two months work". He knew neither his nor his daughter's age, and when pressed for an answer said irritably, "What do I know of age? Am I a man who knows anything about age?" Blessed mortal!

We gave him a coin which he at first refused, and only accepted with persuasion; he had evidently never handled one like it before, for he looked at it puzzled and suspicious; and when the amount it represented was explained to him he was not enlightened.

"He knows nothing," said the Moor vociferously. "Ask him to count six and see if he can. He's a real bull. What does he know? He's a Vedda. For thirty-six cents he will bring a kerosene-tinful of *bambara** honey, and," he added chuckling with subtle satisfaction, "he does not know what thirty-six cents is!"

The next day we saw in the distance the blue contours of Gunner's Quoin, the goal of our journey. The river had now become considerably shallower with broad stretches of its sandy bed exposed. As we punted along the shady border, we suddenly came upon a most realistic piece of ancient sculpture—the life-sized head of an elephant carved out of a

*Rock-bee, *Apis dorsata*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

172 partially submerged rock. Occupying the position it did in an environment teeming with elephants it seemed designed to give a shock at first glance.

We were now in the precincts of an old civilisation. Polonnaruwa, its ruined capital, was barely ten miles away. We camped on a shoal by the water's edge. Purplish clouds retained awhile the languishing tints of a fast paling sky. Near us was an islet, forest-engloomed and haunted, they said, by tutelary demons. In bygone days these forests were peopled. All was now still save for the plaint of a sand-piper. A buffalo coming to drink stood irresolute awhile watching our fires, then melted into the gloom. A scarcely distinguishable flock of cormorants flew overhead. From afar came the eerie cry of a devil bird.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172 cave was so rocky that a regular trench could not be dug, but a number of holes, the largest perhaps 6 feet by 4 feet, were dug down to what was apparently the country rock at the bottom of the cave. Fragments of pottery and the bones of animals were found in plenty in these holes, but altogether they yielded only four pieces of quartz, namely two water-worn pebbles and two broken pieces of clear glassy quartz. As in the lower cave a few small pieces of slag were found some 18 inches to 2 feet below the level of the surface. Most of the fragments of pottery found in both caves in the first 2 feet are decorated and are certainly not the remains of Vedda pots, and since fragments of iron slag are found associated with this pottery, the deposit in which it occurs must be regarded as formed not earlier than the Sinhalese occupation of the cave. As already stated massive rock was found six inches lower, and from these last few inches were obtained quartz implements and many unworked pieces of quartz. Clearly then the people responsible for these occupied the caves before the Sinhalese, but there is no obvious reason for holding that the makers of these implements antedated the Sinhalese by any long period. All that can be affirmed is that no pottery was found associated with the quartz fragments either by the Sarasins or by ourselves, but this is no sign of great age considering the extreme roughness of the pots made by the Veddas at the present day, and the fact that the art is believed, doubtless correctly, to have been adopted from the Sinhalese. One of us has already stated in *Man* his beliefs that these implements are neolithic and this is also the opinion of Mr Reginald Smith. Considering the refractory nature of the material, and allowing for the fact that it does not occur in large masses, the better formed implements must be regarded as neolithic in type, and in this connection it is significant that the bones found associated with the implements by the Sarasins are those of existing forms. These authors, however, believe that the implements they found are paleolithic, arguing that the absence of pottery and stone adze heads proves that they cannot be neolithic, though they apparently admit that in many respects the best implements approach neolithic forms.

174 The mention of these stone implements naturally brings

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

with men astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalastic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 [191] 142 301 412

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen floated away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing 136 825

2. YAKKURE

This be the verse you grave for me;
Here he lies where belonged to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. STEVENSON

THROUGH a lush meadow studded with fragrant wood-apple, we entered 000
Kalukolu Eba a hamlet of some twenty huts nestling in the picturesque dishabille of a *chena* rank with maize, vegetables and chillies. Here as elsewhere in the Vanni there was much evidence of parangi (framboesia). Fully three-fourths of the people showed active or quiescent traces of the disease. A boy had a necklace of loathsome papules; a woman covered with nodes in practically every bone of her body was boiling a decoction of dry leaves as a salve; another was stewing monitor flesh in chilli-water.

The first sign of our nearness to Yakkure was a cattle-penstamped clean, 231
where half a dozen boys were securing cows and yearlings for the night. Scratching around the stockade with the tameness of domestic fowls were a jungle cock and his dames, and from every side came the jerky cries of wild chanticleers. A cairn of tumbled stones marked the site of 172
an old *vihare*. Blue in the distance, across a wide lagoon bordered with sedge, lotus and dead trees, stood the long rock called Gunner's Quoin, with a bare patch, high on its tree-mantled flank, pointed out to us as the Maraweethiya, a historic cave.

Yakkure itself was a negligently palisaded hamlet nestling ina grove of 361
tamarinds, in full view of a beautiful tank. We were unfortunate in our choice of a camping place. Five days of seclusion in the forest had made us forget that the immediate proximity to a village always meant flies, smells, and embarrassing attentions from forward men and coy but curious women. There were other draw-backs too. At sunset, from a pool near by, came a low, ominous hum auguring ill for our night's rest. We lit fires, bestowed meticulous care on bed curtains, and bedaubed ourselves with mosquitol. The lapwing's desolate cry, the doleful music of water fowl, the booming of great owls, the distant trumpeting of elephants, and more than all, the baffled mosquito murmur around, soon lulled me to sleep. But my companion who had failed to stop up betimes several holes in his curtain, the inside of which was found at dawn to be plastered with a blood-sodden host, tells a different story!

Three miles from Yakkure are the well-known falls of the Mahaweli. 133
At flood-time their thunder is heard at the village. Once in a decade [731]
the waters creep up to and submerge the huts, sending the people up trees, and their cattle into the forest to be drowned or killed by leopards. [178]
With a *kapua* (priest) for guide, for the place is held eerie, we set out to visit the falls. Skirting an ancient aqueduct (*yoda ella*) which tapped the river a mile above the falls, we came to open jungle bordering the banks, that allowed us free passage through its colonnades of giant

[p. 39]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133 timber. Such places are the favourite resort of sambur, of which on this morning we saw no less than six. From great tree-heights came the whirring of strong wings as gibbous-beaked hornbills took alarm. We were perhaps a half-mile from the falls when we first heard them like a pervasive hum of swarming bees. Soon we lost the noise; and turning to our guide for an explanation, learnt, inconsequently enough, that "the water does not cry after the morning; it cries loudest when the cock crows at dawn!" The sound swelled suddenly again as there opened before us, not the turbulent cascade we expected, but placid murmuring rapids that swirled in a wide sheet around and over a thousand sunnied boulders. Such were the falls as we saw them; but on occasion they could be a roaring power leaping over the granite to a wild cataract melody, surging widely to the outskirts of Yakkure itself, and bestrewing the jungle with great wrack that even now lay stranded high on forked tree-trunks. What wonder the place is held in awe and that men have a care how they journey to it, lest they be lost on the way or fall a prey to beast or demon.

172 A smooth rock on the bank bore the frettings of ancient craft; the
778 tutelary god's *devale* (temple) it was said to be. Here we were irreverently seated, while our guides sat apart whispering at the profanation. The surface of the rock was socketed presumably to hold strong stanchions
[782] which in the old days supported a bridge across the water; while small oval pools, reputed to contain a mint of wealth from the accumulation of years of propitiatory and votive offerings, showed to our pagan vision nothing more than a few potato-like pebbles and sportive water beetles.

000 A few months before our visit, Yakkure was the setting of a gallant episode:—On the bund of the Polonnaruwa tank stands a shanty for forest-officers on circuit. Here one evening a wiry man of forty-five was amusing himself with his rifle. Placing a rupee against a tree fifty yards away he fired, holing it in the centre. He next made his targets a variety of live things that flecked the smooth surface of the tank, such as a cormorant or the barely visible head of a submerged crocodile. Every time his aim was true. The shots attracted a friend. "Testing your nerves as usual before an adventure?" he asked, walking up. "What is it this time? The Yakkure rogue* I'll bet."

"Yes, to-morrow I hope to get him," was the confident response. "You haven't seen *this* before, have you?" said the hunter handling his new rifle.

"You know best," said his friend; "but I should have brought a tried weapon if I were you, especially against such a beast as the Yakkure rogue is said to be. Only yesterday he smashed a boy to pulp. The villagers are too scared to leave their homes."

"This gun is all right. I've tested it. See," said he, indicating his hits, "I've been warned time and again against the use of light arms for elephants, but they have never failed me so far. Once, though," he continued thoughtfully "I had a near shave..... You know, I sometimes wonder whether the villagers appreciate what I do for them."

"They look on you as their greatest benefactor," replied his friend.

"It is good to know that," said the hunter. "For the last fifteen years, whenever I heard of a rogue in my province, I've gone after him; often at great trouble and expense."

*A dangerous elephant ostracised by the herd, and a menace to human life and property.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the *gos*-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Maraweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

flesh which they tore out and ate. They were afraid only of the buffalo and the dog. The Veddas, not very long ago, are said to have herded the last of them into a cave and destroyed them. Brute or man, persistent rumour in jungle countries brings the *Nittaewo* within the realm of the probable. 776

Entering the forest at Siyambala Anduwa, and working north, we strove to maintain a route as far removed as possible from civilisation represented by the coast road on the one hand, and the Badulla-Batticaloa road on the other. 000

Two miles within the jungle was the old path, now over-grown and abandoned, from Badulla to Pottuvil. It led hereabouts through a narrow pass guarded, it is said, a few generations ago by the Karande Hela Vedda who, having fenced it across, levied toll on travellers. Intercepting, as he did, a trade route from the interior to the coast, we may be certain he made a good thing of it, getting his share both of the *kurrukkan*, maize, vegetables and fruit of the *Vanni*, as well as of the paddy, salt and dry fish of the Coast. 173

Kandanketiya, nine miles from Siyambala Anduwa, boasts an ancient temple of the era of Dutugemunu. We found it in the keeping of a doddering priest of eighty, who showed us round, all the while muttering "hu-hu, hu-hu," his only form of comment. His bed-room, dark, airless and dirty, was better adapted to mice and spiders than human beings. A great brass spittoon, emptied he told us once in two weeks, was the proudest thing there. A stupendous bo-tree, planted by himself, mocked with its vigour the withered frame of him who had tended it. Throwing open the doors of his little temple, without much ado he bade us enter the holy of holies, and pointed proudly to pictures of *devas* and harpies, half spurred-fowl half woman, who he confidently asserted lived in the Himalayas. Incidentally he indicated a money-box on the altar. But no sooner were our donations secure than his interest in us rapidly declined, reaching its climax when we told him we were going: "All right, go," he said, settling down comfortably on his bed. 172

A hornbill flying repeatedly to a large tree attracted our attention. Perching itself wood-pecker-wise on the trunk, it fed the occupant of a hole there with berries which it brought out of its crop one by one. We were told this was the male feeding the female he had deprived of feathers and shut up in the hole. We suggested there might be young. "Not so," said a woman; "where then are the feathers and droppings at the root of the tree?" Here was an opportunity to test the truth of gossip we had heard regarding the domestic amenities of hornbills. A man was sent up to the nest. Squeezing his hand through the narrow opening he produced an egg; then seized something by the beak, and unsuccessfully tried to pull it through. With an axe he enlarged the hole and soon handed down to us a veritable travesty of a bird. Scared out of her wits, voiceless, featherless, with half-opened beak, she flapped pathetic wings and tumbled ludicrously about in attempts to escape. She was obviously unfit for existence in the outer world and we returned her to her dark abode. Rumour was right, the male hornbill took no risks. 136

Bowala village lies at the northern end of Westminster Abbey. Buried as we were in the forest depths, we had not seen the hill since leaving the heights of Haputale. Suddenly the leviathan bulked over the trees. "There, that is why it is called Govinda Hela*," said our guide pointing 361 [103]

*Goa inde hela—rock where the monitor lizard is.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pine-apple.

The height was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There, crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadinagala; to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thanagoda* (breast mounds) and behind them *Thanakirigoda* (breast milk mound) with wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale: A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it. When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year. On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena kalangkalangme popekorai*," which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 535
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For [534]
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they outdistance us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

A [the hill called Westminster Abbey. – Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

were generally associated with rocks and were not the spirits of the dead. There is however an exception, namely, Dehigole Yaka, whose history is as follows. A man from Dehigole, a Vedda, went to Kandy to see the king, probably Sri Vikram Rajah Sinha, the last of the Sinhalese kings, who was dethroned early in the last century. On his way back he was killed by an elephant, and now his spirit looks after the chena and prevents elephants breaking into and destroying the crops. A leafy branch is tied to a pole or dead tree in the chena, and Dehigole Yaka and other spirits are invoked, an offering of sweetmeats, jaggery, coconuts and rice cooked in coconut milk being made and subsequently eaten by the owners of the chena. There was said to be no invocation of the *yaku* of the recent dead, nor before taking honey which is obtained from trees.

LINDEGALA.

The "Veddas" described on p. 76 from Lindegala in the neighbourhood of Kallodi worship a large number of male and female spirits including the Bo Gaha Yaka and the Na Gaha Yaka[1].

As already indicated the people of Lindegala are Veddas in scarcely more than name. The most important of them, an old man with his son and son-in-law, visited us at Kallodi. The old man who is tall and presented typical Sinhalese features is a renowned *vederale* (medicine-man) and is employed by the Sinhalese for miles round. He brought with him to show us two ceremonial arrows with which he invoked the spirits. One of these arrows is of the shape of a Hindu trident, the other is of the usual Vedda shape and is notable on account of the silver *bo* leaf with which the blade is inlaid. This *aude* is shown in Plate XXV. Both of these had been presented by the Sinhalese king to one of his ancestors, apparently about 100 years ago.

[1] Although these *yaku* were spoken of in the singular there were many individuals of each species. Some of the other more important *yaku* which were worshipped were named, Wategala Wanniya, Gala Degala Wanniya, Gurugala Wanniya, Maldampahe Yaka, Lepat Yaka, Eheregala Yaka, Meheregal Yaka, Komal Yaka, Walmat Yaka, Hilihengale Yaka, Mikmal Naida Yaka, Kehelpotagale Yaka, Mawarangala Yaka, Hereng Yaka, Isihangala Wanniya, Muluhangala Wanniya, Gara Rajah Wanniya. These were only an insignificant fraction of the total number of *yaku* known to our oldest informant.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411 The story told us was that when this ancestor, who was a Vedda
778 headman and a shaman of great fame, gave up his jungle life
173 and began to cultivate, the Sinhalese king sent him the two *aude* as tokens that he granted the land on which he settled to him and his descendants for ever. It seems that previously to this they had led a more or less unsettled life, or had perhaps been dispossessed of their own territory during the troubles of the period. The arrows were in fact "selsin" and were considered the equivalent of a *sannasa*, the inscribed metal plate or rock face on which grants of land were formerly recorded. Inquiry showed that it was by no means uncommon for a man to be given a ceremonial example of an implement of his trade or profession as a *sannasa*. Thus, in the Kandy Museum there is a beautifully worked Bull's bell (*gonminigediya*) given as *sannasa* to Rantun Mudianse of Walala head of the Pattiya or Nilamakkara people by King Narendara Singhe of Kundasale who reigned 1706—1739. We may also refer to a ceremonial weaver's shuttle in the Colombo Museum and to the lacquered arrows described in Chapter XI.

776 The *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Wanegata Yaka are con-
775 sidered less important than the tree *yaku* and the host of *yaku* alluded to above. Indigollae Yaka and Rahu Yaka are recognised but not considered very powerful, though it was said that all these were formerly invoked to give success in hunting. The *kolamaduwa* ceremony is known, very many spirits being invoked including Unapane Kiriamma. The *Nae Yaku* become attendants on some of the *yaku* mentioned in the above list and these are invoked first and bring the *Nae Yaku* with them, but it appeared that it was no longer the custom to hold a *Nae Yaku* ceremony within a few days of a death. Among the *Nae Yaku* mentioned was the spirit of the man on whom one of the last Sinhalese kings had bestowed the land of which the inlaid *aude* shown in Plate XXV is the *sannasa*. Another *yaka* greatly venerated is that of Kimbul Otbe, an important individual living a few generations ago concerning whom Nevill has written at some length[1].

[1] Nevill, who says that he could find no clue to his identity, still regarded Kimbul Otbe as "a great historical personage," for "The Sinhalese of the Eastern Province

CHAPTER XII

COAST VEDDAS

THE Coast Veddas or Verdas occupy a number of settlements in the Tamil zone on the east coast. They exceed in number both the Village Veddas of Bintenne and their wilder neighbours of the borders of Uva and the Eastern Province; this is no doubt due to the fact that in the majority of Coast Veddas there is a large admixture of Tamil blood, and the comparatively thriving condition of their settlements must be attributed to the same cause. The date of their first arrival on the coast and of their subsequent intermarriage with the Tamils is quite uncertain; the latter state that there have always been Veddas in the neighbourhood of the sites they now occupy, but the Veddas themselves have a tradition that they come from inland. Knox does not mention them, but Nevill considers that they come from Sabaragamuwa (Sufferagam), being driven thence in the 17th century.

"The Vaeddas say that they never were related to these Coast Vaeddas, and do not know when they came to the Coast, or where they came from, nor did they ever hear that they belonged to any waruge of the race.

"The Coast Vaeddas do not know when they came or how they came, but they say that long ago their ancestors came from the Gala, far beyond the hills to the west. They also sometimes say they came from Kukulu-gammaeda and spread out along the Coast. Some say this is Kukulugam near the Verukal; others suppose it to be somewhere far away[1]."

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. 1. p. 183.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
173 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *waruge*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

241 The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
342 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

415 They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
534 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Tennent says truly, that they have "no system of caste among themselves; but, singular to say, this degraded race is still regarded by the Singhalese as of most honourable extraction, and is recognised by them as belonging to one of the highest castes;"* and he relates a legend, in which he says this belief originates; a legend, however, at which, he tells us, the Veddahs themselves smile, and of which they profess their ignorance. 648 [564]

As I shall afterwards show, I do not think this legend, which is confessedly not a Veddah tradition, has anything to do with the consideration with which, so far as their caste goes, the Singhalese regard them. Were there no better reason, the fact that the legend is by no means universal among the Singhalese residing in their vicinity, would probably be sufficient reason to reject it.

But Tennent has not been correctly informed with regard to their own belief regarding their own origin. For strange as it appears, they claim to be of royal descent. Beyond this vague assertion they profess to know nothing. They do not attempt to trace their descent from any particular king. They know nothing of their history. This is their *one* tradition; and though the neighbouring Singhalese, on whom they affect to look down, smile at their claim to such an illustrious origin, they do "regard them as of most honourable extraction," and in reply to any inquiry respecting it, only repeat the Veddah version of their royal lineage. It is said, too, that in the time of the native government the Veddahs always spoke of the king as "hoora," or "cousin."† 173

The Veddahs have no particular name by which they distinguish themselves, which would aid us in speculating on their origin. They simply call themselves "Weddah," and are so called, while they speak of the ordinary natives of the country as "Singhalese." The term "Habara," or "wild, barbarous," is applied to Veddahs, in books, and also "Vannacharakiya," which means "a hunter." 101

As Knox has told us, they speak the Singhalese language; but they do so with an accent and intonation so strange, that it sounds like some foreign tongue. It seems, as it were, "broken Singhalese," such as a man would speak to whom the language was an acquired one, so much does their pronunciation differ from that of their Kandyan neighbours. Although the identity between the Veddah dialect and Singhalese is evident, when they are compared with each other, it would require a very quick and accurate ear, indeed, to detect the similarity between them when both are spoken. 191 197

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, c. iii.

† It is reported, too, that some Veddahs do not claim royal descent, but that only a portion of them do. The Bicotean and Nilgala Veddahs certainly, say they, are "Raja-wansiya," of royal lineage.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 According to my authority the Veddas indulged in no games, unless, indeed, the custom of tossing dry leaves in the air and speculating on their position when they fell back upon the ground could be called a game. This, I am told, was only an occasional recreation, and indulged in by boys alone.

423 614 628 The limits of the hunting ground were jealously guarded by the Veddas, and anything like poaching by the members of one clan in the area recognized as belonging to another was punishable by death. Should a hunter lose his way and fall into the hands of a neighbouring clan, he would be closely watched, remaining for the time being in a sort of captivity. If the man's conduct during that time was such as to disarm suspicion he was permitted to go, and might even be accompanied to the confines of the clan's hunting ground, but he would have to proceed at once without looking back, or his conduct might lead to the belief that he was a spy, with fatal consequences.

226 The method of fishing was to hem in a piece of water by closely fencing in both ends of the stream. People would then enter the enclosed piece of water, armed with slender sticks, thrashing the water therewith till a fish was actually struck, when it would be captured. I saw this actually done in one pool on the Kumbukkan.

973 My informant told me that the Veddas were at one time harassed by a race of pygmy people, called the Nittawo, who lived in the country known as Lenama, that extended from Bagura in the Panawa Pattu in the east to the confines of the Kattaragama hills on the west.

According to him, these people lived in small troops of from 10 to 40, inhabiting caves, hollow trees, and crevices of precipices. They were about 3 feet or a little more in height, exactly like normal human beings, only in miniature. Their legs were hairy like those of the Wanduroo; they walked erect, and had no tails.

Their arms were short and very powerful, with strong hands, and talon-like finger-nails with which they tore and disembowelled whatever they captured. These generally were small animals, such as hare, mouse-deer, monkeys, iguanas, and tortoises. Their method of attack was by surrounding

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

the prey, especially if it was sleeping. In this way the Veddas occasionally fell victims, and in consequence they revenged themselves by exterminating the Pygmies. According to my authority, the Nittawo existed at the time of his grandfather, who, he asserted, took an active part with the other members of his clan in burning out one of their encampments. 173

The Nittawo were an entirely naked race; the females were shorter than the males. Their language appears to have been understood by the Veddas, and was described to me as like the twittering of birds.

My informant knew nothing of their customs, or if they made use of fire. They were, however, unarmed, and appear to have been finally exterminated by the Veddas about three or four generations ago.

I may here mention that as I was sceptical as to the story about this race, I took particular care to make inquiries at the distant village of Waradeniyawa (the furthest inhabited spot on the south of the Buttala-Wedirata) if the oldest inhabitant of that place could give me any confirmation of it. This inquiry was made when Dissan Hamy was not present, and it would have been impossible for my questions to have been anticipated. To my surprise, a very old man of the village completely confirmed in detail Dissan Hamy's description.

I also made further inquiry at another village from a headman, and he repeated the same story, adding that the Nittawo were destroyed by the Veddas out of fear.

It is difficult to reject as false a story, told devoid of the usual fantastic embellishments that characterize the history of mythical creatures such as Yakko, when it is completely confirmed by parties ignorant of what the others have said. Even though tangible evidence is not forthcoming, and it would be difficult to find any, of a people so primitive as these creatures appear to have been, I see no valid reason for disbelieving the statements made to me.

It would appear that the early Vedda and the Nittawo to some extent lived side by side, and both were primitive. In time the Nittawo were destroyed by a race who were armed, and these in turn were disintegrated and absorbed by forces they were powerless to overcome. The clan system was 174

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDAS OF GUNNER'S QUOIN

THE ferry at Periathurai marked the end of our river journey. Some miles inland was the rock called Gunner's Quoin round which Veddas lived. 131

Under a bo-tree by the river was an image of Ganesha the pot bellied, elephant-headed Hindoo god with offerings of withered lotus flowers before him. In a temple hard by, were massive bells and drums that kept deafening accompaniment on many a ceremonial day when peacock-plumed men, in the self-imposed torture of skewered cheek and pronged back, bounded hither and thither in delirious dance; and here were the implements, prongs and tridents, these frenzied devotees had dedicated to their unhearing god.

At the Tamil village of Manampitiya we were regaled with an old man's tales of the Veddas. He told us of one Patabanda only recently dead, called *walige**-Patabanda owing to his habit of wearing his loin cloth long behind. It appeared this Vedda was a fine marksman. A *rata-mahatmaya*† once wishing to test his skill pointed to a small jak fruit on a tall tree and asked him to shoot. The arrow flew true and stuck in the fruit; whereupon the Vedda feigning anger said roughly, "Now give me my arrow; it was you who asked me to shoot". The timid chief proffered money which was disdainfully refused. The Vedda then taking another arrow hit the stem of the fruit so that it fell and enabled him to recover both arrow and fruit. Thus do men pass into fable. 114 173

We were told many another tale of Veddas and their ways, and of matters connected with the ancient ruins to be found on the rock; of an anchorite who had lived in a cave there unharmed by the bears; and of ancient Vedda kings captured by stratagem and fraud.

A walk of five miles the next morning brought us to the foot of Gunner's Quoin. I was now brimming with expectancy; for I was about to see for the first time the Veddas in their homes; that aboriginal people who had time and again attracted the scholars of Europe, and in whose veins flowed the oldest blood of the inhabitants of Ceylon. They were here when Wijeya came from India in 543 B.C. and founded the Sinhalese dynasty; long earlier, when that Buddha came who preached to his followers at Mahiyangana after having put to flight the Yakkhas (Veddas?); to an even still older beginning their ancestry went, to a time in the stone age when man vied for existence with prehistoric forms. 114

To-day hardly a Vedda true to the old traditions survives; not one that uses beaten bark for apparel, or depends for sustenance solely on the jungle. The inroads of civilisation and the effects of miscegenation with the neighbouring Sinhalese or Tamils are tending surely towards the extinction of the race. Yet, for all that, many of the old Vedda traits still survive in their degenerate descendants and these are still a link with an unfathomable past. 144 178

*Tail †Kandyan chief

[p. 7]

5: Spittel II-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

115 On our return journey, passing the ruins of a remarkable aqueduct of stone—the Watawala Kandiya—beside the remains of a crumbling 173 bund, we arrived at Kurunduwina where we met a doddering ancient who claimed to have been alive when the British took Ceylon a hundred 439 years ago. It is not often one meets old folk in these unhealthy lands. Here, I thought, was one who could tell us something about Veddas of a type we could not hope to see; for within view of his hut were the Sittala Wanniya hills, the immemorial homes of the Veddas. But his decrepit mind needed much jogging.

"Are there Veddas here?" I shouted twice into his deaf old ears.

"Now none," he said.

"Did they live on the rocks yonder?" I asked. He nodded affirmatively.

"Did they come here to barter?" I persisted. His tired lack-lustre eyes flashed to a memory as he answered with surprising alacrity, "Yes they came. When they had no food they came to exchange honey and hides for food. The Vedda would sit there, place his bow there, his arrows there, and his axe there, and he would ask for betel. If any one stepped over his weapons by chance, he would leap up in anger, bite the piece of human liver he carried in his betel-bag, and ask, 'Who's this that dares to defy me?' The gleam faded from the old man's eye, his weary look returned and he uttered not another word, question as I might.

The shifting *chenas* scattered about these parts make it very difficult to say where a village begins or ends. We were resting on the banks of the Rambukkan, (a course parallel to which we had so far followed) somewhere on the confines of Payile and Idambowa, when to our surprise we saw a Buddhist priest accompanied by the inevitable *abithaya** and a tall, wild, naked fellow. A Vedda of Bingoda the latter was said to be. [609] We tried to engage him in talk, but he would have none of it; seated on his haunches he stared at us with a hang-dog apathy eloquent of hunger; this melted away in a broad grin as he left us, greedily chewing the handful of muscatels and biscuits we gave him.

The usual route from here to Potuliyadda lay through the village of Mullagama. As this involved a detour we decided on a more direct if less used track; a decision we afterwards regretted as it lost us the interesting Veddas of Bingoda, and incidentally a clue to the discrepancy between Seligmann's statement and local report regarding the Veddas of the "Nuwaragala hills"—a missed opportunity the full significance of which we were only to realise some five years later after miles of arduous and unnecessary travel. For the present we were told that [621] the Veddas of Bingoda consisted of only three families, and that, though they forsook their huts for caves during the honey season, they were, if anything, less of the real Vedda than those of Henebedde.

Our journey was now an uncertainty; for the guides were doubtful both of the route and the likelihood of water. The jungle, hitherto dense, gave place to an occasional glade. Late in the evening we found ourselves in a spacious *talawa*, rank with tall grass that quite obliterated our path. Here we were benighted, just as we found a pool adequate to our needs. It was an interesting place, a veritable sanctuary, hill-encircled; an ideal

*A neophyte, attendant on a priest.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

13 causeway over an abysmal ravine. We had not the stomach to tempt those ways.

Below us stretched a vast forest studded with the tree-clad hills of Omuna, Henanagalla and many another; and over the red-topped *hongs* we caught the glimpse of the Mahaweli as it cleft the wilderness of trees.

173 To this retreat once came an ascetic who lived alone, lost in meditation, for months. His evening chant could be heard at Horiwila three miles away. The bears that came to drink at the pools in the caves did him no harm. In a hidden vault, so the story goes, he found a gold-lettered slab and a phial of oil. He made the wisdom of the script his own, and drank the oil; then descended the rock, and ever after went about as one obsessed.

115 Sinna's droll talk relieved the irksomeness of our descent. Indicating [301] a wild jasmine, he told us they were the flowers Vedda women strung on creeper-stems for the adornment of their hair. He was for leaving us at the foot of the hill and continuing his search for food for his waiting family. But we took him to camp, fed him abundantly on rice and venison and gave him a heavy hamper besides. It was pleasant to picture the rare joy of his home-coming.

000 At Manampitiya old Kanapan-*vidane* met us with two limes which he graciously presented to us. This charming Tamil custom is often the prelude to a villainous request. Kanapan gave us cordial welcome, eyed solicitously our unkempt figures, and chided us in a kindly, paternal way for undertaking so 'terrible' a journey. "Why wander in the wilderness when you can play about the highways in your car?" he said. His conversation, though varied kept reverting to one theme—the delinquencies of the village school-master, now away on a holiday. Kanapan had a penchant for denunciation; on a previous occasion it was the tyranny of an apothecary, now it concerned the amours of a pedagogue.

"Is that the sort of man to teach young children?" he concluded disgustedly. "A man who breaks up quiet homes. The woman does not even care for him; he bewitched her with charmed food. A respectable home wrecked by a worthless fellow!" and he spat with scorn.

Perhaps it was the full bottle of whisky standing tantalisingly on the table that induced him to confide in us that the village tavern had now been closed for over two years, during which time he had not touched a drink; he had almost forgotten the taste of liquor he said wistfully.

"Then you are a total abstainer now?" I ventured.

"What's to be done, sir, I have to be," he sighed.

"I suppose you wouldn't have a drink now if one were given you?" I asked.

"How can I refuse when a gentleman offers," said he, taking the wind out of my sails. "With your favour, sir, I will. Cha," he continued with sudden affection, "I feared you had been to the war and got killed. How glad I am to see you again, sir."

We poured him a bumper which he swallowed neat, placing the empty cup within easy reach beside him. He reverted to the school-master;

5: Spittel D-5 (da. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

flesh which they tore out and ate. They were afraid only of the buffalo and the dog. The Veddas, not very long ago, are said to have herded the last of them into a cave and destroyed them. Brute or man, persistent rumour in jungle countries brings the *Nittaewo* within the realm of the probable. 776

Entering the forest at Siyambala Anduwa, and working north, we strove to maintain a route as far removed as possible from civilisation represented by the coast road on the one hand, and the Badulla-Batticaloa road on the other.

Two miles within the jungle was the old path, now over-grown and abandoned, from Badulla to Pottuvil. It led hereabouts through a narrow pass guarded, it is said, a few generations ago by the Karande Hela Vedda who, having fenced it across, levied toll on travellers. Intercepting, as he did, a trade route from the interior to the coast, we may be certain he made a good thing of it, getting his share both of the *kurrukhan*, maize, vegetables and fruit of the *Vanni*, as well as of the paddy, salt and dry fish of the Coast. 173

Kandanketiya, nine miles from Siyambala Anduwa, boasts an ancient temple of the era of Dutugemunu. We found it in the keeping of a doddering priest of eighty, who showed us round, all the while muttering "hu-hu, hu-hu," his only form of comment. His bed-room, dark, airless and dirty, was better adapted to mice and spiders than human beings. A great brass spittoon, emptied he told us once in two weeks, was the proudest thing there. A stupendous bo-tree, planted by himself, mocked with its vigour the withered frame of him who had tended it. Throwing open the doors of his little temple, without much ado he bade us enter the holy of holies, and pointed proudly to pictures of *devas* and harpies, half spurred-fowl half woman, who he confidently asserted lived in the Himalayas. Incidentally he indicated a money-box on the altar. But no sooner were our donations secure than his interest in us rapidly declined, reaching its climax when we told him we were going: "All right, go," he said, settling down comfortably on his bed. 172

A hornbill flying repeatedly to a large tree attracted our attention. Perching itself wood-pecker-wise on the trunk, it fed the occupant of a hole there with berries which it brought out of its crop one by one. We were told this was the male feeding the female he had deprived of feathers and shut up in the hole. We suggested there might be young. "Not so," said a woman; "where then are the feathers and droppings at the root of the tree?" Here was an opportunity to test the truth of gossip we had heard regarding the domestic amenities of hornbills. A man was sent up to the nest. Squeezing his hand through the narrow opening he produced an egg; then seized something by the beak, and unsuccessfully tried to pull it through. With an axe he enlarged the hole and soon handed down to us a veritable travesty of a bird. Scared out of her wits, voiceless, featherless, with half-opened beak, she flapped pathetic wings and tumbled ludicrously about in attempts to escape. She was obviously unfit for existence in the outer world and we returned her to her dark abode. Rumour was right, the male hornbill took no risks. 136

Bowala village lies at the northern end of Westminster Abbey. Buried as we were in the forest depths, we had not seen the hill since leaving the heights of Haputale. Suddenly the leviathan bulked over the trees. "There, that is why it is called Govinda Hela*," said our guide pointing 361 [103]

*Goa inda hela—rock where the monitor lizard is.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
[283 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded
824] to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards
762 the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Unapana *waruge*, like all the other *waruges*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *waruge* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *waruge* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *waruge* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *waruges* after similar occurrences under *nabudu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gamana*).

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season.

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *kanava* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukhan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukhan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukhan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter, he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more."

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas.

8: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

181 sophisticated Vedda knows what is expected of him he will act up to
152 the expectation right enough. Personally I have never yet met a Vedda who could not laugh. The truth is that the Vedda will laugh with the best of us when there is occasion; but he is a stranger to the conventional, hypocritical smile of civilisation, meant only to please and so uncertain an index of the heart. The Vedda's face, like a child's, is a mirror to his mind.

His natural expression is one of apathy and moroseness. Schooled to hardship and privation, he is neither greatly distraught by sorrow nor transported by joy He expresses his emotions with more moderation than we; he is the greater fatalist; and accepts with stoic equanimity the hard conditions of his life which have wrought into his expression a dour indifference, a decorous gravity.

There is something naturally fierce in his nature; and it does not do to anger him. The tradition is undoubtedly true that the Veddas, at one time, carried in their betel bags fragments of human liver which they chewed when roused, to give fire to their frenzy. And this is probably the origin of the Sinhalese threat, "I'll eat your liver!" There is a spot in the Eastern Province which commemorates to this
● [173] day an early incident of colonisation: A Vedda had once way-laid and killed a European soldier, and going up to him could hear the ticking of his watch; examining this he said, "His life is still here," and dashed it to pieces on a rock.

When a Vedda returns from an expedition no one must speak to him until he has rested and it has pleased him to talk first. One who had accompanied us once on a hunt nearly killed a Sinhalese boy who innocently asked him what he had brought, the moment he arrived. Most sportsmen, Vedda or not, are impatient of cross-examination when fatigued—especially if unsuccessful.

771 The Veddas have no conception of a supreme being; nor have they any myth or theory bearing on cosmogony. The panorama of the heavens is beyond their questioning; but its supremacy is instinctively avowed: "*Mā Suriya Deyyo*" (by the Sun God) is an oath by which
195 the Vedda vouches his good faith.

776 Like animals, concerned only with their immediate needs, they take the world very much as they find it. But if the aloof heavens leave their imaginations untouched, not so their immediate environment. Here exist real powers more within the pale of their comprehension, influencing every act of their lives, overshadowing their credulous minds, and affording at least some data on which to found a faith. Is it surprising then that they people Nature with sentient beings, unseen, but very evident by their acts. And what spirits more comprehensible to the primitive mind, more inspiratory of faith and fear, than those of one's

---

Another strange thing about the Veddas, and one which may possibly be connected with their lack of humour, is the fact that every one of them is a George Washington, unable to tell a lie or to conceive of anyone else telling a lie.

They cannot even believe that any one would take the property of anyone else, and association with civilisation has failed to convince them that it is possible.

With all this—or, rather without all this—the Veddas are a peaceable, gentle, quiet people. They take wives without any marriage ceremony, and are faithful and constant to them, supporting them to death.

Aberdeen Paper, 1922

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

us to the consideration of the advent of metal in Ceylon. We know of no fact indicating that this was not worked in the island before the advent of Vijaya, on the contrary, Vijaya and his band were obviously only one of many parties of settlers who came from India in prehistoric times. Perhaps the record in the Mahavansa of the coming of Buddha to Mahayangana refers to one such immigrant party, and the legend of Rama may with even more probability be taken to refer to an invasion from the mainland. It is quite certain that Vijaya found some sort of stable political organisation on his arrival in the island to which he came after his followers had been repulsed from Jambudipa on account of their lawless character. The account in the Mahavansa by no means suggests that Ceylon was absolutely *terra incognita*, and the readiness with which communication with the mainland was kept up, and the facility with which other bands of adventurers arrive, confirms this.

Although these bands probably came from the valley of the Ganges there is evidence that there were highly civilised maritime powers in Southern India 2000 years ago. The Mahavansa states in the most matter of fact way that Vijaya sought and obtained the hand of a Hindu bride, the daughter of the king of an important Tamil state, and nothing is said as to difficulties encountered by his ambassadors in proceeding to the court of the Pandyan king, or by the princess in coming to Ceylon. Again a Pandyan king twice sent ambassadors to Rome to Augustus Caesar, B.C. 26 and 20, and Strabo records that the annual exports to India reached the large sum of 55,000,000 sesterces (nearly £500,000)[1]. There is therefore every reason to believe that the early colonists from India were metal workers. Indeed, the matter becomes almost a certainty when it is remembered that no authenticated polished stone adze or axe head has been discovered in Ceylon, although many

[1] For these facts I am indebted to a work *The Tamils eighteen hundred years ago*, by Mr V. Kanakasabhai Pillai (Madras and Bangalore, 1904). Mr Pillai further states (p. 3) that from a "careful study of ancient Tamil poems" he is "led to think that some of the earliest works were undoubtedly composed more than two thousand years ago, and that the Tamil people acquired wealth and civilisation at this early period by their commercial intercourse with foreign nations such as the Arabs, Greeks, Romans and Japanese."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 ancient sites have been excavated in certain districts, and gemming operations involving the digging out and examination of thousands of tons of gravel have taken place.

Probably the Nagas referred to in the Mahavansa are an immigrant race, and Mr Parker suggests that they may have been an offshoot of the Nayars of South-west India. Whether this is so or not the Nagas, according to Sinhalese historical works, drove the aborigines out of North and West Ceylon and "all Ceylon down to about Madawachchiya was known as Nagadipa (the Island of the Nagas) for many centuries after Christ[1]." Further, the compiler of the Mahavansa who wrote about the end of the fifth century A.D. relates that after appearing to the "yakkhas" at Mahayangana, Buddha visited Nagadipa where he composed a quarrel between Mahodara and Culodara a maternal uncle and nephew concerning the ownership of a "gem-set throne." It is further recorded that "the maternal uncle of Mahodara Mani Akkhika, the Naga king of Kalyani" near Colombo, was visited by Buddha at Kalyani on which account the Kalyani dagaba was subsequently built[2].

[1] This information is taken from one of Mr Parker's letters.

[2] The general tendency at the present time seems to be to regard the Nagas as mythical beings connected with the water. We cannot regard this belief as well founded, although it is only necessary to look through Brigade Surgeon C. F. Oldham's book (*The Sun and the Serpent*, London, 1905), to appreciate how many Nagas are regarded as demigods or heroes at the present day. But considering the extensive distribution of ancestor worship throughout India, this cannot be taken as an argument against the existence of human beings called Nagas, who must be distinguished from their deified dead.

There are at the present day powerful tribes called Nagas in Assam yet, as pointed out by Brigade Surgeon Oldham, the folklore of Northern India is full of legends connected with the supernatural powers of the Nagas. "These demigods are still propitiated, before any other deity, when the country is suffering from drought or excessive rain. And tradition says that human sacrifices were common, on such occasions, in days gone by." (*Op. cit.* pp. 49, 50.)

Burnouf (quoted by Oldham, *op. cit.* pp. 146, 147), records that in the time of Asoka the Nagas were numerous and powerful, for when "this king wishing to divide the relics of Buddha amongst the new stupas which he had built, went with an army to remove the relics from the old stupa at Ramagrama, the Nagas refused to allow him to do so. And Asoka, powerful as he was, did not persist.

"In the Vishnu Purana (IV, xxiv, 479, cited by Oldham, p. 147), it is said that nine Nagas will reign in Padmavati, Kantipura, and Mathura," and Oldham quotes Sir A. Cunningham to the effect that "these serpent chiefs, whose names he gives

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

All these facts suggest that metal must have been known in Ceylon before the invasion by Vijaya, and once introduced, there is no doubt that within a few years metal would have been distributed throughout the whole island. 174

Although the Veddas are all agreed that they were never otherwise in habits and culture than they are at the present time, every Sinhalese in the Vedirata believes that they once had great, powerful and wealthy chiefs and that they possessed hoards of gold and gems. Nevill, who takes somewhat their view, says: "Sinhalese, who are old and intelligent, and who have lived among Vaeddas, all agree that in ancient times Vaeddas...were often very rich and powerful. In such cases their wealth was put into gold cooking vessels, and strings of gems, etc., for their women. Poorer men had copper cooking vessels. The last of these gold vessels were lost by them during the long guerilla wars between the Kandians of Velasse and Dumbara, and Europeans, especially the English. The tradition is positive, and seems reliable. Nigala Banda, a splendid old Kandian chief, now Ratemahatmaya of Lower Bintenne, whose ancestors have lived amongst the Vaeddas of Nilgala from time immemorial, assures me there is no mistake in this, but their former use of gold cooking vessels is clearly true, and that people now-a-days have no idea how proud and powerful they were, until the *maha kaeraella* (the long war with the English)."

We could discover no reason for this belief, which seems to be effectually disposed of by the evidence of the very old Sinhalese informant whom we quote at the beginning of the next chapter. It is, however, firmly rooted in the minds of the majority of the Kandyan Sinhalese and is probably in part due to confusion between Veddas and Kandyans of mixed Vedda descent who until recently called themselves Veddas or were known as Veddas to their neighbours. Many such men living in the Vedirata took care to keep in touch with the

from their coins, held most of the country between the Jumna and the Narbada; and that they ruled as independent princes during the first two centuries of the Christian era" (*loc. cit.*). Mr Vincent Smith points out that the defeat of a Naga chief, Ganapati Naga, is recorded on one of the pillars set up by Samudra Gupta who reigned in the fourth century A.D. (*Early History of India*, 1908, p. 268).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 Veddas, who to some extent looked upon them as chiefs and protectors, and to whom they made presents of game and honey. Another factor leading to the belief in the former glory of the Veddas is the persistence in popular form of the legend of Vijaya and Kuweni, which though absolutely unknown to the Veddas is firmly established among the Sinhalese.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XVII

CONCLUSIONS

In the first chapter we have given an account of those facts in the history and pre-history of Ceylon which must be taken into account in any investigation of the Veddas, and we referred (p. 27) to the common Sinhalese belief that the Veddas were once rich and powerful. We stated that we could find no adequate reason for this belief, which is held only by the Sinhalese and is dismissed with contempt by all Veddas. It seemed to us that we had said enough on the subject, but the appearance of Mr Parker's recent work, *Ancient Ceylon*, which must always remain authoritative for much which concerns the Island, has persuaded us of the necessity for stating at greater length the reasons for our opinion. 114

Mr Parker's views on the subject of the former civilisation of the Veddas will be found on pp. 103 to 112 of *Ancient Ceylon*, and we cannot do better than begin our argument by quoting a considerable part of pp. 111 and 112 in which he both states the problem and summarises his views as to its solution.

"In dealing with the position of the Vaeddas, we are faced with this difficulty—that a portion of the race was relatively civilised in ancient times, while certain members of it are found at the present day almost in the state occupied by some of the most primitive peoples. We must adopt a theory which will include all the facts of the case; and not one which ignores some of the most important and significant and incontrovertible historical details and traditions. We cannot select the smallest and wildest group of Vaeddas, and because of their simple life as hunters place the whole race in the position which they con-

[p. 413]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 tinue to occupy...partly by accident and partly of their own free
114 choice.

"My conclusion therefore is that whether there has been any retrogression of the present Forest Vaeddas from a certain low state of civilisation or not, in very early times a great part of the race had reached a much more advanced state of culture than the wilder members of it, whose more or less isolated life either as hunters, or as hunters-and-villagers, did not in many cases induce them to feel any desire to participate in it. This more civilised portion has absorbed the Gangetic settlers, and acquired their status and language, and with some intermixture of Dravidian blood, or in many instances without it, has become the existing Kandian Sinhalese race.

"The ancestors of the present few hunting Vaeddas—who now most probably number much less than one hundred—either abandoned, some centuries after Christ, a form of village life in which they were partly or chiefly hunters, and reverted to the forest life of their forefathers; or, like some of the wild hunting tribes of the South Indian hills, remained, at least until very recent years, in nearly the original condition of the first comers to Ceylon, apparently simply because they preferred the free untrammelled life in the woods, and found their accustomed habits and household articles suited to all the requirements of a hunter's existence in the forests of Ceylon. The evidence afforded by the caves appears to me to be in favour of the former theory, which is also supported by the loss of their original language and their adoption of the Sinhalese tongue.

"The majority, however, of those who did not coalesce with the Gangetic settlers and their descendants, or accept their mode of life and culture, have, in comparatively modern times, and in certain instances partly through compulsion—since portions of the forests in which they were accustomed to hunt have been cu down in order to permit rice and millet cultivation—to some extent adopted the more civilised existence of their neighbours. Many keep buffaloes, and all but those few who live only by hunting and fishing, grow millet and other plants suited to their jungle clearings. An exceptional few in favourable sites for it even cultivate rice, and, as some of them informed me, in recent

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

years have settled down permanently and have planted such fruit trees as Coconuts, Areka-nuts, and Plantains about their houses." 174 114

Mr Parker admits such intercourse between the races as is necessary to allow intermarriage and a considerable amount of social contact-metamorphosis, so that we are in complete agreement with him concerning the "majority" of whom he speaks in the last paragraph, and no one will doubt "that in very early times a great part of the race had reached a much more advanced state of culture than the wilder members of it." It therefore only remains to discuss his conclusions concerning those of whom he speaks as the "present Forest Vaeddas."

We hold that there can be little doubt as to which of the two hypotheses put forward by Mr Parker is the correct one, and in spite of the fact that he leans towards the opposite view we shall now proceed to summarise our reasons for believing that the few unsophisticated Veddas of the present day do in fact represent the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon.

In the first place let us consider their physical characters. Experts in comparative anatomy will turn to the work of the Sarasins to estimate for themselves the significance of the primitive osteological characters they describe; it is only necessary here to refer to the more obvious external characters in which the Veddas differ from the Sinhalese. A single glance at the photograph reproduced in Plate III shows that two men in this group differ in general appearance and in their greater stature from their comrades; these two men, as has been mentioned on p. 16, are half-breeds, as are those shown in figure 1 of Plate XIV. The younger man might pass for a Sinhalese and in features closely recalls the Kandyan Sinhalese figured by Deniker[1], who does not at all resemble the relatively broad faced and broad nosed Veddas shown in Plates III, IV, V and VII. Further, among the measurements given in Chapter I the average height of 24 male Veddas measured by the Sarasins is given as 1·55 m. (about 60½ inches), while the average height of 10 Kandyan Sinhalese whom they also measured is 1·61 m. or 174

[1] *Races of Man*, 1900, p. 416.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

194 about 63½ inches[1]. We may also refer to the measurements of Sinhalese made by M. Emile Deschamps and given in his book [113] *Au Pays des Veddas* (pp. 464 and 465). M. Deschamps has informed us that his measurements were all made on Kandyans, among whom he found that the average height of 16 males was 1·60 m. (about 63 inches) while the average cephalic index of 14 males was 75·9.

On the cultural side the evidence, though less obvious, is, we believe, no less convincing. There is as far as we can ascertain no evidence of there ever having been an organisation into exogamous clans among the Sinhalese, but there is not the least doubt that this exists among the Veddas, among whom it must therefore be considered to have arisen, and we know that this is characteristic of many of the more primitive Jungle (Dravidian) peoples of India[2]. The Vedda cult of the dead must also be looked upon as a primitive and not an adopted feature since it is found among many Indian jungle tribes. There is no need to labour this point since the information given us by Mr Parker and quoted on pp. 14 and 142 indicates, not that the Vedda cult of the dead is derived from Bandar worship, but that this has arisen among the Sinhalese from a cult previously existing in Ceylon. These considerations seem to us to put beyond doubt the fact that the present day Veddas are the lineal descendants in culture as well as in physique of the early (Dravidian) people who inhabited Ceylon, before it was colonised by an Aryan-speaking people, though they do not rebut the "evidence afforded by the caves" (Parker *loc. cit.*) or explain the adoption by the Veddas of the Sinhalese language.

The caves, however, do not seem to us to present any insuperable difficulty. A very small number of caves or rock

[1] We may here quote the opinion of Mr Edgar Thurston who, on looking at a number of photographs of Veddas, made the remark that he should not have known them from photographs of members of a number of Indian Jungle Tribes.

[2] This is not the place to discuss the meaning of the term "Dravidian" or the Dravidian problem; we use the term to signify the short, dark, dolichocephalic peoples of the Deccan. Dr Haddon considers that the Veddas should be classed with the Kurumbas, Irulas and some other Jungle Tribes of the Deccan as pre-Dravidians (*Races of Man*, pp. 7 and 13).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

shelters have been excavated, and although the drip-ledges and other signs of stone working on those we have ourselves examined indicate that they were inhabited by Sinhalese about 2000 years ago, there are doubtless many others which were not used in this way, and we see no difficulty in believing that when, during the efflorescence of Buddhism, these caves were inhabited by monks, those Veddas who were not drawn within the ever widening circle of Sinhalese influence withdrew to other shelters in the wilder parts of the country, their descendants, who had preserved their independence in the jungle, returning in time to what is now the Vedirata and re-occupying the caves. It was not perhaps necessary for the Veddas to migrate to another part of the country; this at least is Mr Parker's view, who holds that it "is clear that in many instances little establishments of only two or three monks must have occupied the caves on some of the most secluded of these hills, buried in the depths of the dense forests of the wildest parts of the Island. In such sites the aborigines could have regained possession of their caves with ease and impunity, and with practically no fear of punishment by the Sinhalese authorities. In the histories also, there is no hint of any quarrels with the natives after the time when Pandukabhaya became king[1]."

We believe that there is nothing *a priori* improbable in these views, and the records of "wild" Veddas all through historic times show that there was always some part of the country so thinly settled as to allow them to persist as a jungle tribe.

We come now to the question of language. Mr Parker's translations of the invocations we collected, and Mr Gunasekara's examination of our vocabularies and songs, indicate that no trace of the old Vedda language has survived. This does not, however, prove that the Veddas who were the ancestors of the present "wild" Veddas were a highly civilised race who had adopted all the customs of their Aryan-speaking neighbours; it is generally admitted that a people may adopt a foreign language while retaining its old customs and without greatly altering its old method of life.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 31.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 171 The case of the Bhumij of Western Bengal is particularly illuminating. "Here a pure Dravidian race have lost their original language and now speak only Bengali. They still retain a set of totemistic exogamous sub-divisions closely resembling those of the Mundas and the Santals. But they are beginning to forget the totems which the names of the sub-divisions denote, and the names themselves will probably soon be abandoned in favour of more aristocratic designations. The tribe will then have become a caste in the full sense of the word, and will go on stripping itself of all customs likely to betray its true descent. The physical characteristics of its members will alone survive[1]." Further, "some of the leading men of the tribe, who call themselves Bhuinhars, and hold large landed tenures on terms of police service, have set up as Rajputs, and keep a low class of Brahmans as their family priests. They have, as a rule, borrowed the Rajput class titles, but cannot conform with the Rajput rules of intermarriage, and marry within a narrow circle of pseudo-Rajputs like themselves[2]." The rest of the tribe, numbering at the last census 370,239, are divided into a number of exogamous groups, which include the Sabusi (*sal* fish), the Hansda (wild goose), the Lang (mushroom), Sandiliya (a bird) and Hemron (areca palm) clans.

174 Mr Parker (*op. cit.* p. 96) lays some stress on "the fact" that the Veddas "understand and use" the "classical expression" Nirindu "chief of men" which occurs in an invocation (Chapter X, No 16) we obtained from the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya. We may perhaps point out that very many expressions occur in the invocations given in Chapter X which the Veddas do not understand at all, or to which they attach a secondary and incorrect meaning. That the expression is classical and is "never employed in modern colloquial Sinhalese" is not surprising, for as we have shown in Chapter XV the time at which the Veddas gave up their own language and assumed the Sinhalese is relatively remote, so that their charms and invocations may reasonably be expected to contain archaic expressions. We may also refer to the passage (already quoted on p. 417) from Mr Parker's

[1] H. H. Risley, *People of India*, p. 74.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 94, 95

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

work in which he speaks of the existence of small and scattered Buddhist establishments in the midst of the jungle in which the Veddas still lived. We can imagine no condition more favourable for the passage of classical expressions and formulae into the Vedda language and religion. 174

The use of rice and coconuts in the offerings to the *yaku* also demands discussion. We have shown that many of the *yaku* ceremonies are essentially acts of communion uniting the living with the spirits of the dead, and we have hinted our belief that the reason for rice and coconut being almost essential parts of the offering is that they are the foods of which the Veddas are especially fond and which they regard as great delicacies. It is, however, obvious that there might be another reason for the almost constant offering of these foods; if we regard the Veddas as having fallen from a higher state in which they were cultivators then the necessity of offering just these foods to the *yaku* would be a survival from the times when rice and coconuts were offered by the civilised ancestors of the present day Veddas.

This period might theoretically coincide either with the time referred to in the Mahawansa when equal thrones were set up at Anuradhapura by king Pandukabhaya for himself and "the yakkha chief Citta[1]," or it might have been long before the time of the conquest of Ceylon by the northern invaders, in which event it must be assumed that the Veddas learnt to cultivate rice and to grow coconuts from the Nagas or some other immigrant race.

Concerning these two possibilities we can only say that we have already on pp. 9 and 10 stated our views as to the significance of the elevation of the chief Citta and the political organization of his followers. With regard to the possible origin of the offerings of rice and coconut in the times before the invasion, the Nagas doubtless exercised some influence on the aborigines among whom they settled, yet there is every reason to believe that outside Nagadipa, this influence was not widely spread throughout the Island, at least in any developed form.

The Mahawansa differentiates very clearly between Nagas

[1] *Op. cit.* Ch. x, p. 43.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

●174 and Yakkas and the conditions it chronicles at the conquest seem to us to indicate the existence of a wild jungle people such as we know existed at the time when Europeans first came in contact with the Sinhalese.

We take this opportunity of alluding to the following literary evidence which shows the existence of a jungle people in Ceylon in the 4th, 7th, and 11th centuries.

Tennant has drawn attention to the treatise *De Moribus Brackmanorum* written in the 4th century A.D. and ascribed to Palladius. In this the author cites the account of the Βεσαδες given him by a Theban scholar who, having failed to prosper as an advocate, had turned traveller and explorer. The Theban stated that "when in Ceylon, he obtained pepper from the Besadae, and succeeded in getting so near them as to be able to describe accurately their appearance, their low stature and feeble configuration, their large heads and shaggy uncut hair—a description which in every particular agrees with the aspect of the Veddahs at the present day. His expression that he succeeded in 'getting near' them, ἔφθασα ἐγγὺς τῶν καλουμένων Βεσάδων, shows their propensity to conceal themselves even when bringing the articles which they had collected in the woods to sell[1]."

Further information concerning the Βεσαδες is given by the Sarasins (*op. cit.* pp. 578, 579) who used the Greek account in the edition of Bissaeus, ignoring the poor translation of this into Latin which Bissaeus also gives. The Theban relates "that having fallen in with some Indian trading boats which were crossing over (to Ceylon) from Axume, he sought to penetrate further into the interior (of the Island) and suddenly arrived in the vicinity of the so-called Βιθσαδες (in this place written Θηβαιδες, doubtless in error) who gather pepper. But this people is by far the smallest and weakest, they live in rock-caves, and know how to climb over the most intricately massed rocks and thus gather pepper from the bushes; for these are small trees as the scholar informs us.....

"The Βιθσαδες are little men, with large heads and long and

[1] Tennant, *op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 593 n.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

straight hair; whereas on the other hand the others, the negros (Ethiopians) and the Indians, are black and powerful, and curly haired. There, he says, I was stopped by the one in power (δυναστεύων) and asked about my business and how I dared to force my way into their land; and while they could not accept my explanation because they did not understand our language, I could not understand their questions because I did not know theirs.....Their loud voices, their bloodshot eyes, and the savage gnashing of their teeth inspired me with fear.....Held captive.....I.....did them service, the task of cooking being allotted to me." 174

References in Arabic and Chinese writers have also been collected by Tennant, who notes (*op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 272 n.) that in the 7th century the Chinese traveller Hioueng Thsang remarked that the "Yakkhos" had retreated to the south-east part of Ceylon, while in the first half of the 11th century the Arabic geographer, Alberuni, described the "silent trade" as carried on with the *ginn* or, according to others, with men who were absolute savages.

We have already cited passages which show that there were Veddas living a free life in the jungle in the 17th century, and it can scarcely be suggested that between the 12th and 17th centuries the Veddas ceased to lead this sort of life and for a time adopted the civilisation of the Sinhalese to again lapse into wild life in the jungle about the time that European influence began to be felt in the Island.

There is one matter which seems to us more difficult to understand than any other, and which, if the Veddas had not kept up their division into exogamous clans, it would be difficult to explain otherwise than by their having at one time adopted Sinhalese habits and customs and having later reverted to a wandering jungle life. We refer to their terms of relationship which, as already set forth in Chapter III, are identical with those employed by the Sinhalese. We consider that this must be accounted for in the same way as the assumption by the Veddas of an Aryan language, and that the factors which determined this at the same time led to the adoption of the Aryan terms of relationship.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 In conclusion we may state our opinion of the relationship of the Veddas to the jungle tribes of India and to the civilised races of Ceylon. We regard them as part of the same race as the so-called Dravidian jungle tribes of Southern India. Perhaps the few surviving "wild" Veddas have altered less socially than the people of the Indian jungle groups, and are therefore to be regarded as more primitive than these, but even this is and must remain uncertain until we know more of the social life of the Indian jungle tribes. Turning to the historic races of the Island, we believe that the Kandyans and indeed all the "up country" Sinhalese have absorbed a considerable amount of Vedda blood, and that their customs have been influenced by the Veddas, who, in turn, have learned to speak an Aryan language. The Tamils do not appear to owe anything to the Veddas, though the religion of those Veddas who live in or near the Tamil zone has been influenced by the latter.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 those only who are the most barbarous, who have preserved in all essentials their isolation from other races intact, that we must expect to find the most marked peculiarities.

101 The term Veddah—or Weddah—in itself, indicates no particular race. It simply means "a hunter", and is, in India, applied to aboriginal or barbarous tribes generally.*

In this sense, a great portion of the population of the eastern parts of Ceylon appears, at some period or another, to have been so called. There are still extensive districts known as "Weddirata", or the country of the Veddahs, the inhabitants of which, although they are, owing to the remoteness of their situation, less civilized than the bulk of the people of the island, are not Veddahs, but Singhalese, in kindred, religion, and customs.

101 It is highly probable that the people of these remote districts and of others, where Veddah descent is still claimed, are more 174 directly derived from the race which originally stocked the island than those who inhabit such parts of it as were more accessible to the settlers from Continental India, who, in process of time superseded the aborigines.†

131 But the people distinguished in Ceylon, by the name of Veddahs—wholly distinct, as I have said, even from those who, though now Singhalese, yet describe themselves as descended from Veddah ancestors, are to be found in the districts of Batti-

* Weddà (Singhalese) an archer; some trace it to Bedda (Jungle). Introduction to Alwis' Sidath Sangarawa.

Vedân (Tamil), a hunter—one who lives in the woods; a name given to rude tribes, aborigines in the Indian peninsula. Vedan (Tamil), corruptly Vaddan, Veddah, also Beddah, or Weden—a hunter, a fowler; a name given to wild tribes, inhabiting the hills and forests of the south of India almost in a state of nature—probably the aboriginal race of the peninsula. Prof. Wilson's *Glossary of Revenue and Judicial Terms.* The word Veddah is still used in Ceylon as a hunter, and so applied to persons, not "Veddah" in the limited sense of the word.

† The Weddirates were, under the native government, exempted from 648 all service save military—the most honourable; and rendered tribute to the king, of beeswax, dried flesh, and honey, which was continued for some time after we obtained possession of the Kandyan provinces. But the inhabitants of these districts marry and associate with those of the adjoining districts, and are apparently the same people. There may exist some eth- 142 nical difference; indeed, I think even an unscientific eye can detect a difference in the appearance, not only of these people, but of the Wanniahs of the northern and central parts of Ceylon, when compared with the ordinary natives. I have tried to obtain skulls of the different races, of which there are many in the island, viz., Tamils, Moors, Singhalese of the low country and of the Kandyan provinces, the people of the Weddiratas —Wanniahs of Neweraka-lawiya and Batticalas—Mookwas of the north-west and east provinces, Malays, Goorowas, Rhodias, etc., but it is most difficult to obtain them. The subject may be worthy of the attention of the Ethnological Society, though beside the object of this paper.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot 782
be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, 776
with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to pro- [346]
tect their votive offerings.

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medi- 755
cine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the 769
patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, [775]
so universal amongst Buddhists.

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it 771
can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often 174
repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded.

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, [821]
although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Weddo-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapāna-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapāna-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddirates, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not 789
known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon,

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

fact, neither scruple is now a religious one with them. Their 262
aversion to beef and fowls is an hereditary prejudice, now become 171
a custom amongst them.

The names borne by many of them are the designations of 551
Hindú gods and goddesses. It seems clear then, that these 171
Hindú customs and prejudices—these Hindú names, which we find still lingering amongst a people which does not profess that faith, and for twenty centuries have been far removed from those who do, indicate either that the Veddahs once professed it, or lived in the closest intercourse with those who did.* [174]

The complicated and artificial ceremonial of that religion has naturally died away during the long ages of isolation in which the Veddahs have lived; the vestiges of its former existence among them have been preserved only in some of its strongest prejudices, and in the names derived from the Hindú mythology which have descended as customary family designations to the Veddahs of the present day.†

I should hardly say that the cock is "respected" in the neighbourhood of 171
Katagam; but fowls are rarely eaten by the people there, who, if they eat them, must undergo a course of purification. A fowl curry involves the necessity of an ablution of the head with limes and saffron. Peafowls, too, are rejected as an article of food in that part of the island, for a peacock is represented as the vehicle of the gods: of all this, however, and of the existence of Skanda or of Katragam, the Veddahs are profoundly ignorant. The names of Skanda are common appellations among Veddah men, and that of Valli, Skanda's consort, a common name for Veddah women.

* Let it be remembered that the Veddahs, of whom I am writing, have never had any communication with the Tamil-speaking Veddahs who inhabit the seacoast of the Batticaloa district, who are in direct contiguity with Hindús. [The inference drawn is not warranted by the fact referred to. The Hindús occasionally have names taken from those of foreign languages. Thus the Regent of Nepal, a pure and high-caste Hindú, bore a name consisting of two Persian words. EDIT.]

† It was not for years after I had collected this information regarding the superstitions of the Veddahs, that I read the Laws of Menu. It is impossible not to be struck with the similarity, if not identity, of their rude worship and its precepts; *e.g.*

"72. But whoever cherishes not the five orders of beings—those who demand hospitality—those whom he ought to maintain—*his departed forefathers* and himself—that man lives not, even though he breathes."

The Brahman is ordered to make an oblation every day to the following divinities, viz.:—

"First to Agni, *god of fire*, and to the *lunar god*;" .... to the "*goddess of the day*"; .... the *goddess of the earth and sky*"; to the "*winds*" and "*water gods*"; the "*gods of large trees*"; to the spirits "*that walk in light*", and those "*who walk in darkness.*" The reverence of deceased ancestors is then insisted on. "The Pitris, or great progenitors, are free from all wrath—intent on purity—even exempt from sensual passions—endued with exalted qualities."

"The divine Manes are always pleased with an oblation *in empty glades*,

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

171 But what is Hindú is, so to speak, the *dead* part of their religious belief. What is in daily practice, bears the closest resemblance to the NÁt worship of the aboriginal tribes of India.*

I have, in the preceding pages, faithfully recorded the habits, 174 customs, and superstitions of the "wilder sort" of the Veddahs. To have discussed the "tamer sort," or those who, for a considerable period, have maintained intercourse with the Singhalese or people of the country, would have been a mere waste of time; or to have considered them in connection with their more barbarous brethren would have been to have fallen into the very error, which has marred the exceedingly interesting notice of the aboriginal race of Ceylon, which Tennent has given us. It would have been like weaving a woof of bleached and unbleached threads, so intermingled and complicated that a clear perception of either were impossible. I have confined myself, therefore, exclusively to the most barbarous specimens of the race, for wild as the wildest of the Batticalao district are, they are less barbarous than these.

I now propose to consider the evidence I have collected, with a 174 view to fixing the ethnical origin of these Veddahs. I have shewn that the term "Veddah" has no distinctive signification—that it may be, and is applied to barbarous races generally, who depend on hunting for their support, and hence, to the wild tribes in India, who are supposed to be the aborigines of the country.

It has always been assumed, that the Veddahs of Ceylon are the descendants of the race which originally peopled the island, or, at any rate, of that which inhabited it prior to its conquest and colonization by Wijaya and his followers.† Of this, there can be

---

naturally clean, on the banks of rivers, and in solitary spots." Sir William Jones's works.

* A paper "On the Veddahs of Bintenne", by the Rev. J. Gillings, was published in the Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1853. Mr. Gilling's paper treats of the Veddahs inhabiting that portion of Bintenne which is in the district of Batticalon, and it shews how materially they differ from the Veddahs of Nigala and the Badulla Bintenne, whom I have just described. He states that they have intermarried with the Singhalese, with whom they are "mixed up to a large extent"—that "adultery and polygamy are still common among them"—that "theft and lying are prevalent"; and he speaks of divorce as habitual. The absence of these practices among the Veddahs of the Badulla district is clearly to be accounted for by the greater isolation in which they have lived.

† Nothing can be more charming than that portion of Tennent's work in which he undertakes the proof that they are the descendants of the Yakkhos, as the Buddhistical writers termed the aborigines. And we may well forgive him for giving way to the temptation of reviving exploded customs, and discussing them in the present tense, in order to prove that the habits of the Veddahs, in the year of grace 1860, are identical with those of the Besodu, in A.D. 400; for there can be no doubt that, about a century ago

Z:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174

little doubt; and if additional proof were needed, I may add the curious fact, that there is probably at this moment—there certainly was in 1855—in use among the Veddahs, one at least of the few Yakkho names, mentioned in the Mahawanso. For in the name, Pusamittya—unknown among the Singhalese—we have no difficulty in recognising the designation of that Yakkho princess, whose wedding festivities afforded to Kuweni a fitting opportunity for the execution of her treacherous scheme for the establishment of Wijaya's power, by the slaughter of her own countrymen.*

Tennent argues that the aborigines of Ceylon were probably a branch of the same stock which colonized the Dekkan, both on account of the similarity of the demon worship, said to be practised by them, with the superstitions found among the wild tribes, who undoubtedly represent the aboriginal race of the Peninsula; and on account of the affinity of Singhalese with the group of languages still in use in the Dekkan, a fact fully and clearly established by the labours of Mr. Ellis of Madras.

Though the results of my own careful and personal inquiries into the customs and superstitions of the Veddahs, do not disclose actual demon worship, they establish, I think, their identity with those of many of the hill tribes of India, and fully justify the assumption of the common origin of the people. It is true, that the customs of all barbarous races must closely resemble each other, being alike derived in so many instances from the objects of nature, common to all whose home is the forest and the mountain.

But in the worship of their departed ancestors, and the spirits of the dead, the belief in the nameless genii of the rocks and rivers, of the hills and trees and forests; the invocation of the sun and moon; the absence of idolatry; the abhorrence of polygamy; the absence of divorce, or separation; the equality of rank; the value attached to the bow, arrow, and hunting-dog; the offerings to the God of the chase, and the charms to protect them from wild beasts, the Veddahs of Ceylon and many of the

---

perhaps, the peculiarities mentioned by the ancient travellers did exist among the Veddahs of Ceylon.

* "Thereupon she, being desirous of conferring the whole sovereignty on her lord, replied.... In the city Siriwattha, in this island, is a Yakkho sovereign (Kalaseno), and in the Yakkho city (Lankapura) there is another sovereign. Having conducted his daughter (*Pusamitta*) thither, her mother (Kondanamika) is now bestowing that daughter at a marriage festival on the sovereign there..... Such an assemblage will not occur again. Lord! this very day extirpate the Yakkhos." Turnour's *Mahawanso*, chap. viii, p. 47. Vide also Tennent's remarks on the historical value of this ancient chronicle, and Turnour's introduction to his valuable translation of the work.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

●174 wild tribes of India are identical: the points of resemblance are too close to be mere fortuitous coincidences.*

* See the accounts of wild tribes of India in the Journals of the Royal Asiatic Society; of the Bengal Asiatic Society; and of that of Singapore. But especially see the account of the Khonds, one of the Pullindas, or wild tribes of Orissa, by Capt. MacPherson, vol. vii, Journal Royal Asiatic Soc. They worship the sun and moon, the spirits of hills, of stones, and of forests. They propitiate the god of the chase with ceremonies not unlike those of the Veddahs, the weapons of the hunter bearing a prominent part in them. Can the "Bulenda Silenda", classified among their local divinities, of which unfortunately no particulars are given, have any relation to the "Bilinda" or "Bilindoo" of the Veddahs ? It is worthy of note that the language of Uriya or Orissa is said to bear a marked resemblance to the Singhalese.

See also an account of the Puttuwas or Juangnas, who inhabit certain of the tributary Mehals of Cuttack, by Mr. Samuels of the Bengal civil service. Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society, 1846. They resemble the Veddahs, apparently, in pursuits, in the absence of distinction of rank, of idolatry, and of priesthood, in their homage to "nameless spirits, which they believe inhabit the woods and mountains", in their worship of deceased ancestors and prayers for protection from wild beasts. See also the notices of the tribes of Northern Cachar. The Meekirs "worship the sun and moon, and large rocks, and trees in the forest, which they consider the abiding places of unknown and invisible deities." Among the Kookies, "a deity exists in every tree", and polygamy is forbidden. See also the *Tamulian* tribes in the valley of Assam, described by Mr. Hodgson in the Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society, 1849. "The Kocchs sacrifice to the sun, moon, and stars, to the gods of the rivers, hills, and woods", and "to deceased parents, though they believe not in a future state." The religion of the Bodo and Dhimal is "the natural religion of man, viz. the worship of the most striking and influential of sensible objects, of the starry host, of the terrene elements." They have river gods, forest gods, mountain gods, sun, moon, earth, old gods, and young gods (see a former note on the Veddah's Bilindoo and Witera Yakkoon). Vide also the accounts of the Mechs, and other tribes. In the Tenesserim provinces, adjoining Pegu and Siam, there exists among the aboriginal races the same Nat or spirit-worship. The same worship prevails among the hill tribes between Burmah and Arracan. The Rev. S. Hobbs, formerly a missionary at Tinnevelly, has given me some interesting particulars of a hill tribe, calling themselves, and called by the natives round them, "Mâle arasars", "mountain kings", or simply "arasars", "kings"; among whom he long laboured. They inhabit the hills bordering on the Travancore territory, and in many instances they greatly resemble the Veddahs. See the account of the Hill Arrians residing to the eastward of Cottayam, in the Madras Church Missionary Record, June 1860, who "worship the spirits of their ancestors, and certain local deities supposed to reside in most of the high peaks and rugged rocks." The chastity of their women is another point of resemblance, and their love of truth. See the same publication for January 1862, report by the Rev. J. G. Beüttle. He speaks of "various hill tribes who, though standing in no relationship whatever with the Arrians, yet, like them, call themselves the 'Lords of the Hills'; addressing any one that comes within their reach 'thou'." They subsist on roots, honey, and the produce of the chase. They belong to Travancore. See also the Church Missionary Record for June 1861. The Rev. F. N. Alexander's report on the Koi mission, in which mention is made of the Kois who "worship the spirits of the mountains",

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174

The Veddahs, then, are descended from Yakkhos, or aborigines of Ceylon, who were of the same stock, *i. e.* Tamulian, as the aborigines of the Dekkan—a race not Brahminical in faith, nor Sanscrit in speech.* But if, as Tennent believes, the Veddahs are a mere remnant of this ancient race, which fled before the advance of Wijaya and his followers, never blending with the invaders, as the bulk of the aboriginal population undoubtedly did, we should find among them now—for they have never to this day mixed with the people of the country—only such characteristics as would belong to the savage tribes to which they are allied, and as would be indicative of a state of barbarism, from which they had never emerged.

Assuredly, we should *not* find marked traces of the Brahminical faith—direct allusions to the Hindú gods and well-known personages in the Puranas—names still in use in Bengal, but unknown in Ceylon, neither Tamil nor Singhalese, but Sanscrit, the language of the Aryans.

All this seems to prove that at some period of their history they were in close and intimate communication with the Sanscrit-speaking Brahminical race of Bengal. Yet we know they are the descendants of the rude Tamulian aborigines.

Whence came these Hindú customs and these Hindú names? Not from contact with, or contiguity to, Hindú races; for the surrounding people, in whose neighbourhood they have lived for centuries, are Buddhist; and there is not even a trace of Buddhism to be found among them.

Whence arose that obstinate love of isolation which has kept them aloof even from those of undoubted Veddah descent? Why do these naked savages affect to look down upon the civilized Singhalese? And, lastly, whence did they derive that remarkable custom which sanctioned the marriage of a man with his younger sister—that strange tradition that they are the descendants of kings?

A glance at the early history of Ceylon will, I think, throw a

---

and call themselves "Doralu", "lords", and their women "Dorasánalu", "ladies", etc. I wish to add here that, at the time I noted down the customs and superstitions of the Veddahs, I had never seen any account of the wild tribes of India. Vide remarks at p. 304, with regard to the names of Skanda and his consort—favourite deities with the Veddahs of India, though unknown to the Veddahs of Ceylon.

* "The Tamulians include the whole of the aborigines of India, whether civilized or uncivilized, from Cape Comorin to the snows, except the inhabitants of the great mountain belt confining the plains of India, towards Thibet, China, and Ava, which are derived from the Thibetan and Indo-Chinese stock." Hodgson on the Aborigines of North Eastern India, Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal, 1849.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 light on this part of the subject. The following is abbreviated from the Mahawanso:—

The King of Wangu* had a beautiful daughter, of whom it was predicted that she should wed a lion, which accordingly came to pass. By her lion-husband she had twins, a son and daughter, named, from their paternal origin, Siha-bahov and Siha-si-wali. The son, when he was sixteen, began to weary of the paternal den, and contrived one day, when his father was out hunting, to escape from it, with his mother on one shoulder, and his sister on the other. The bereaved lion was inconsolable; he neither ate nor drank, and laid waste the country round, in testimony of his grief. The "government" of Wangu (the king appears to have been dead) offered a reward for his death; and Siha-bahov, more patriotic than dutiful, or more mercenary than either, had the satisfaction of presenting the head of his father to the subjects of his grandfather, whose "virtuous ministers, exulting in the exploit, with one accord made him king;" but he preferred the "land of his nativity, the forests of Lala," where he founded the city of Siha-pura, and, marrying his sister, Siha-si-wali, he reigned as king of that country. His wife brought him twins sixteen times! The eldest of the family was Wijaya.

Wijaya appears to have led rather a "fast life," and turned out "a very lawless character," so much so that the people complained to his father. At last, they clamoured for his execution; and the king, first compelling him and each of his seven hundred companions to have half the beard and head shaved, put them on boardship, and turned them adrift without oars or sails.

They drifted to Ceylon, and landed, B.C. 543, on the north-west coast, near Putlaw, where marrying Kuweni, a Yakkho chieftainess, he acquired, by her means, a footing in the island. She betrayed into his hands her own countrymen, the chief of whom he put to death, and, founding the city of Tamana Nuwera,† he assumed the title of king. Having made use of Kuweni to establish his power, he, with a heartlessness worthy of modern times, deserted her for a more advantageous alliance. The repudiated wife protested against being forced to seek a refuge among her own countrymen, but she had served Wijaya's purpose, and he left her to her fate. In despair, she, with the son and daughter

* In the Valley of the Ganges.

† Vide Mr. Cagie Chitty's paper on the "Ruins of Tamana Nuwera," in the sixth volume of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. A local tradition, which represented Wijaya to have landed on a point of land called Tundamuni, a little east of Putlam, was verified by the discovery by the late Mr. Caulfeild, of the Ceylon Civil Service, of the ruins of Tamana Nuwera on the east bank of the Mee-oya, in the forest Kandukalliwall. There is a Tank near still called Tamanavilla.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

she had borne him, Jiwahalto and Disala, sought a home in Lankápura, that city of her own people which she had betrayed into the hands of Wijaya.* 174●

But her treachery had not been forgotten; she was instantly put to death, and her children were only saved from a similar fate by the intervention of their maternal uncle, Kumaro, with whom they escaped to "the neighbourhood of the Sumanta mountain," *i.e.*, the country near Adam's peak, and "the elder having grown up married his sister," according to the custom of his father's royal race—a custom afterwards recognized in the Singhalese royal families,† "and settled there, becoming numerous by their sons and daughters, under the protection of the king they resided there, retaining the attributes of the Yakkho," that is relapsing from the more civilized habits of the Hindu invaders, with whom on their father's side they were so closely allied, into the wild life of their maternal ancestors, the untamed aborigines of the island.‡

There, then, amidst the mountains, far removed from the scene of their mother's treachery, brief triumph and death—the children of Wijaya the Indian conqueror and Kuweni the native chieftainess found a refuge, separated from their mother's justly incensed people by upwards of a hundred miles of dense forest, and beyond the reach of their father's followers, now estranged from them, if not hostile too.

There they founded a wild race, condemned as it were from its very origin to barbarism, which was known by the name of Pulindah,§ and there can still be traced the vestiges of their wandering life, and there still exists the tradition that the country once was peopled by Veddahs, who gradually retired towards Bintenne and Wellassé.‖

---

* See a former note.

† Only, however, when no other suitable alliance was procurable. This practice was sanctioned among the ancient Egyptians and Persians. Atopa, daughter of Cyrus, married, first, her own brother Cambyses. The Peruvian Incas married their sisters; but the practice was confined to royalty.

‡ The extracts quoted above are from Turnour's *Mahawanso*. The following is a literal translation of the same passage, in the copy of the *Mahawanso*, in the Asgiria Wihasse in Kandy:—"They repaired to the rock Sumanta kooba; and being permitted by king Wijaya to dwell there, they became man and wife, and had children and grandchildren. Thus, a wansiya (a race) sprung up, called Pulindah."

§ Vide note at page 185 of Wilson's Vishnu Purana. "Pulinda is applied to any wild or barbarous tribe;" and they are met with in the deserts along the Indus, the mountains and forests across Central India. What more natural than that Wijaya's followers and descendants should give the same terms to the wild tribes here? Pulinda, one of the fifty-six countries of the Hindu geography.

‖ Wellassé, in the district of Badulla. Nilgala is a subdivision of Wellassé.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 I have said that the Veddahs have but one tradition of their origin, that they are descended from kings. I have described that peculiar custom which not only sanctions but prescribes, as the most fitting of alliances, the marriage of a brother with his younger sister. This tradition prevails, and this custom obtains, or did obtain, amongst all the tribes of wild Veddahs which I have endeavoured to describe, tribes absolutely illiterate, in the lowest depth of ignorance, utterly unknown to each other, as effectually severed by the intervening hills and forests as if the Atlantic were spread between their hunting grounds.

The bare assertion by a naked savage in the rudest state of barbarism that he is the descendant of kings, seems, at first, a sheer absurdity, though it naturally suggests the inquiry how the claim to so ambitious an origin could have arisen, and having arisen, how it should be so pertinaciously adhered to by tribes unknown to each other.

The custom which sanctions such revolting marriages seems, at first sight, simply a proof of the extreme depth of barbarism to which the race has sunk. But when we consider the tradition in connection with the fact that the Singhalese invariably admit the Veddahs to be of the highest caste, while they in turn affect to look down upon the Singhalese; and when we regard the custom in connection with the story of the marriage of the son and daughter of Wijaya, himself the offspring of a similar connection; when we read the legend of their flight from both father's and mother's kindred to the forests, where, resuming the wild life of their maternal ancestors, they founded a wild race; when we find even yet the district which tradition gives as their refuge, still called by a name indicative of their former existence in it, and still abounding with traces of them—though not a Veddah can be remembered there; and when we can trace among the Veddahs of the present day the remains of Brahmanism—Wijaya's creed—intermingled with the Nât worship, practised by Kuweni's nation; and when there are still in use among them names of Sanskrit affinity, common in India, though, rare among themselves, unknown in Ceylon; it is impossible to resist the conclusion that the wild tribes of the Veddahs are not the "mere remnants of the untamed aborigines," but the descendants of the ill-fated Kuweni and the faithless Wijaya; that they are indeed, as they profess themselves, "the descendants of kings."*

* I arrived at this conclusion by the process I have described, the fact, if it be a fact, gradually dawning on me as I continued my investigations. I was very glad to find my theory corroborated in Mr. De Blur's *Sidath Sangarawa*, which I saw for the first time in May 1860. In the Introduction, p. viii, he says—"Hence, it is by no means improbable, nor therefore

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Why or when they abandoned their sanctuary in the Sumanto mountains* who can tell? Probably, as Tennent says, of "a large section of the natives," they, with too good reason, fled before the advance of the Indian adventurers, at once their kindred and their foes,† and withdrew into the forests and hunting grounds in the south-east of the island."

174

unreasonable to suppose, that the limited number of Wijaya's followers, by intermarriage with the more favoured (Yakko) natives, became united into one nation; while the less favoured betook themselves to the utmost recesses of the jungle, where they settled themselves as a distinct tribe of Singhalese, now known as Veddahs. For, *without tracing the Veddahs to the descendants of the natural children of Wijaya*, or to a very small portion of the (Yakko) aborigines of this island, it is difficult to assign to them an origin common with the amalgamated race of Singhalese."

The Kols, a wild tribe in the district of Ellore in Southern India, give an account of their own origin, not unlike that which I attribute to the Veddahs. They say they are descended from Beemadu, brother of Dharma Raja, who had an intrigue with a wild woman of the woods, and that they are sprung from the fruit of this connection (*Madras Church Missionary Record*, June 1861). Beemadu was (in Hindú mythology) one of the five brothers of Dharma Raja, the Hindú Pluto, and (in history) one of the five sons of Pándu, king of the Cúrú tribe, near Delhi.

* Percival says, chap. xiii,—"Those bordering on the district of Jaffnapalatin" (probably Wanniahs are here meant), "and the tribes who inhabit the west and north-west quarters of the island, *between Adam's Peak and the Raygam and Pusdoon Korles*, are the only Bedahs who have been seen by Europeans, and are much less wild and ferocious than those who live in the forests of Bintan." I cannot ascertain Percival's authority for Veddahs having been in these districts so recently. I have made careful inquiries, both in these Korles and the district of Saffragam; and though traces of their former existence there are evident and numerous, there is every reason to believe that many centuries have passed since they were there. Fields, villages, and families yet retain the name of Veddahs, as Weddeya pangoo, Wedde coombore, Wedde watte, Wedde ela, Wedde gala, Weddegé, etc., in the district of Saffragam, which is the country at the foot of Adam's Peak, and in the Raygam Korle. Indeed, Saffragam, or Habara gamowa, means the district of Veddahs, or barbarous people; and in this form of the word, the former existence of Veddahs again can be traced, as Habara goddegé, Habara kadowa, etc. It is traditional throughout Saffragam, that once Veddahs predominated over Singhalese in that district, and that, as the latter gained ground, the former withdrew towards Bintenu and Wellassé. But Mr. Macready, of the Civil Service, has given me very important proof of the existence of Veddahs "near the Sumanta mountains." He has given me the translation of some stanzas from a Singhalese poem, written about 400 years ago, called the Pirawi Sandesa, or the Dove's Message. The poem treats of a message sent, by means of a dove, from Cotta (near Colombo) to Vishnu at Dondera, at the extreme south of the island. The dove takes its course exactly over the districts lying below Adam's Peak. The poet addresses the dove, and tells her she will see "the daughters of the Veddahs" clothed in Ritl bark, their hair adorned with peacock's plumes. So wild are they that the poet describes the herds of deer as being startled at the sight of them.

† Tennent makes an unaccountable mistake when he says, vol. i, chap.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

●174 That the bulk of the aborigines amalgamated with their conquerors, and became one people with them, there is ample proof; but the race of Kuweni probably held aloof from all. She, betraying and betrayed, met her doom on the scene of her treachery.* Her children and immediate kinsfolk, outcasts both from the conquering and conquered races, fled to the forests. A life of isolation was to them not a matter of choice but of necessity. In their seclusion they naturally retained, with the superstition of their mother's people, some remnant of their father's faith, with which they must have been in some degree familiar. They preserved the high-sounding names of India, and, with the pride of rank, adhered to the custom of the marriage of a brother with his younger sister, which was not only the practice of their father's family, but a mark of their royal blood.

Such is the story of the Veddahs. And if my theory be correct it adds a curious chapter to the history of Ceylon.

SPECIMEN OF VEDDAH DIALECT.

(*Vowels to be pronounced as in Italian.*)

192
197

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
The sun	Irra podja	Ira	"Podja", probably a corruption of podiya (Singhalese), a small thing.
The moon	Pāna podja	Handa	Pāna (Singh.), a lamp. Handa pāna (Singh.) moonlight.
The stars	Tarčoka gajja	Tarakāwa	"Gajja", probably a corruption of sediya (Singh.), anything round. It can hardly be the Sanscrit word gajja, as it would be inappropriate as regards lights apparently so much smaller than the sun and moon.

vii, p. 371,—"Even the children of Wijaya by his first wife, Kuweni, united themselves with their maternal connections, on the repudiation of their mother, and retained the attributes of the Yakkhos." He refers, as his authority, to the seventh chapter of the *Mahawanso;* but this proves the exact contrary. It is there distinctly stated that, so far from doing so, they were compelled to flee with their uncle to avoid their mother's fate, and that Wijaya himself came to their refuge, assigning to them a place of security from their incensed "maternal connections" in "the Sumanta mountain," probably Saffragam, far removed from the scene of their mother's brief triumph and death (the present district of Putlam).

* One copy of the *Mahawanso* describes the scene of her death as near Tamenawillo, *i. e.*, Tamenanewera, near Putlam. Her spirit is still supposed to haunt a well in the neighbourhood, whence she issues forth, invisible, and pelts with great stones rash treasure-hunters who invade her solitude in search of the treasure they believe is buried near.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

the prey, especially if it was sleeping. In this way the Veddas 173
occasionally fell victims, and in consequence they revenged themselves by exterminating the Pygmies. According to my authority, the Nittawo existed at the time of his grandfather, who, he asserted, took an active part with the other members of his clan in burning out one of their encampments.

The Nittawo were an entirely naked race; the females were shorter than the males. Their language appears to have been understood by the Veddas, and was described to me as like the twittering of birds.

My informant knew nothing of their customs, or if they made use of fire. They were, however, unarmed, and appear to have been finally exterminated by the Veddas about three or four generations ago.

I may here mention that as I was sceptical as to the story about this race, I took particular care to make inquiries at the distant village of Waradeniyawa (the furthest inhabited spot on the south of the Buttala-Wedirata) if the oldest inhabitant of that place could give me any confirmation of it. This inquiry was made when Dissan Hamy was not present, and it would have been impossible for my questions to have been anticipated. To my surprise, a very old man of the village completely confirmed in detail Dissan Hamy's description.

I also made further inquiry at another village from a headman, and he repeated the same story, adding that the Nittawo were destroyed by the Veddas out of fear.

It is difficult to reject as false a story, told devoid of the usual fantastic embellishments that characterize the history of mythical creatures such as Yakko, when it is completely confirmed by parties ignorant of what the others have said. Even though tangible evidence is not forthcoming, and it would be difficult to find any, of a people so primitive as these creatures appear to have been, I see no valid reason for disbelieving the statements made to me.

It would appear that the early Vedda and the Nittawo to 174
some extent lived side by side, and both were primitive. In time the Nittawo were destroyed by a race who were armed, and these in turn were disintegrated and absorbed by forces they were powerless to overcome. The clan system was

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 effectual so long as there were no influences to weaken it, but when once a preponderating force came to surround these clans, their chance of survival was small, and to prevent individual extinction amalgamation presented the path of minimum resistance.

The effect of this amalgamation was to break down the primitive methods, and concurrently to infuse new blood, and with it to stay, or lessen, the forces that were weakening an already over-inbred stock.

101 If we refer to certain statistics, as recently as 1840 we find
161 that a rough enumeration of the so-called Rock-Veddas disclosed that only thirty families in Bintenna then existed.

Since then the increase of civilized races pressed with yearly greater insistence, till we are forced to conclude that the primitive Vedda is now no more, or nearly so.

142 In my Paper read at the meeting of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society on September 19, 1914, I have described the features of the Vedda family I found at Setawa, but I venture here to repeat it for easy reference.

The man Dissan Hamy is about 5 ft. 10 in. in height, thin, small round the chest, with rather short arms, slender legs, with hardly any calf development. He does not know his age. His head is small, with small dark-brown beady eyes
[302] set far back in their sockets. His hair is short, not tied in a knot, staring, and frizzy. His younger brother is shorter in stature, but with the same character of hair on the head. The elder has short, scanty, and bristly moustaches, but in both brothers there is a marked scarcity of hair on the face and body. Dissan Hamy's two sisters are both of normal height, and dress like the other women of the country. They are about 5 ft. 3 in. in height, with slender limbs. Both women are mothers, and both indicated the small breast development that appears to be characteristic of women residing
[302 in the arid parts of the country I explored. In both women
354] the hair is short and frizzy. Their infants had shaved heads.

I remarked that the skin of Dissan Hamy's body is darker than that of the other members of the family. The nose is strongly formed, with thin dilated nostrils. The mouth is rather wide, with lips of no unusual thickness.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 . AX5 Vedda AX5

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

THERE is little of hunting in these pages, much of the forest-folk and their ways. I have purposely refrained, except in one section, from introducing incidents of sport—of which, truth to tell, I have had small share—into a narrative primarily designed to describe the more human and homely aspects of jungle life, especially where as it concerns the Veddas—the last remnant of Ceylon's aboriginal race. 121

Regarding the origin of the Veddas, I incline to the view that they are an off-shoot of one of the wild, autochthonous tribes of India, who crossed over to Ceylon, in prehistoric times, when the two lands were one, and subsequently got cut off by the inroad of the sea. They appear to be very akin to the Gonds of India. Indeed, the description of a present day Gond might just as well apply to the Vedda :—" A man of small sturdy build, with piercing eyes and a free athletic carriage..... axe hitched on shoulder, bow and arrows in hand ".* 174 [142]

I must acknowledge help I have received from many friends. Apart from those to whom reference is made in foot-notes in the text I am indebted to Mr. F. Lewis for much valuable advice in the planning of some of our journeys ; to him and Mr. C. Drieberg I owe the botanical names of trees. Three of the trips described here were made in the company of Mr. Leigh Smith, to whom, I take this opportunity, of expressing my gratitude for much valuable help in the preparation of my manuscript for the press. 000

The pen and ink illustrations are by Mr. E. F. Van Dort.

Colombo R. L. SPITTEL

[p. v]
[p. vi is blank]

* " Rifle and Romance in the Indian Jungle ", by A. I. R. Glasford

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 height. Clear rock-strewn streams abound, their banks
brightened by the deep green leaves and the bright red flowers
137 of the *ratwal* (*Ixora coccinea*). Scattered masses of rock often
of great size form convenient shelters for the Veddas, and assist
the rapid drainage of the country, which does not become water-
logged even during torrential rains. This beautiful country is
rich in game. To the east, where many Veddas have drifted,
the jungle is thicker, the land lies lower, and is generally less
healthy. The Nuwaragala Hills to the north of the Nilgala
ranges are perhaps the wildest part of the island and are more
densely clothed in jungle, but there are plenty of streams, while
the slope of the country permits of ready drainage.

The coastal zone north of Batticaloa inhabited by the coast
Veddas is flat and sandy, and the vegetation though dense
is often less tall and less abundant than in other parts of the
country. Salt water marshes are common, and the country
is cut into by numerous lagoons and creeks, often bounded
by a fringe of mangroves which stretches some distance up
the mouths of the rivers. Although this area may now, and
131 for yet a few years, be rightly called the Vedda country it must
161 not be thought that any considerable number of its inhabitants
563 are Veddas, or that they exercise any territorial or political
influence; on the contrary, they constitute an insignificant
fraction of the Tamil and Sinhalese inhabitants before whom
they are rapidly disappearing, partly by intermarriage and
absorption, partly owing to misery and a high death rate
brought about by sheer inability to cope with the new state
of affairs that the increased settlement of this, the wildest part
of the island, has brought about.

Formerly the Vedda country is known to have embraced
131 the whole of the Uva, and much of the Central and North
175 Central Provinces, while there is no reason to suppose that their
territory did not extend beyond these limits. Indeed there is
no reasonable doubt that the Veddas are identical with the
"Yakkas" of the Mahavansa and other native chronicles.

The seventh chapter of the Mahawansa relates the arrival in
175 Ceylon, B.C. 543, of Vijaya who married Kuweni an aboriginal
princess (*Yakkini*) and by her assistance destroyed a great

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

number of her people, and established the earliest Sinhalese kingdom. Later, after she had borne him a son and a daughter, Vijaya being urged by his followers to take a royal bride sent an embassy to Madura, asking for the hand of the daughter of King Pandava. The latter agreed to the alliance. Vijaya "receiving the announcement of the arrival of this royal maiden, and considering it impossible that the princess could live with him at the same time with the yakkini, he thus explained himself to Kuweni: 'A daughter of royalty is a timid being; on that account, leaving the children with me, depart from my house.' She replied: 'On thy account, having murdered yakkhas, I dread these yakkhas: now I am discarded by both parties; whither can I take myself?' 'Within my dominions (said he) to any place thou pleasest which is unconnected with yakkhas; and I will maintain thee with a thousand bali offerings.' She who had been thus interdicted (from uniting herself with the yakkhas) with clamorous lamentation, taking her children with her, in the character of an inhuman being, wandered to that very city (Lankapura) of inhuman inhabitants. She left her children outside the yakkha city. The yakkhas, on seeing her enter the city, quickly surrounded her, crying out: 'It is for the purpose of spying us that she has come back!' And when the yakkhas were greatly excited, one of them, whose anger was greatly kindled, put an end to the life of the yakkini by a blow of his hand. Her uncle, a yakkha (named Kumara), happening to proceed out of the yakkha city, seeing these children outside the town, 'Whose children are ye?' said he. Being informed 'Kuveni's' he said, 'Your mother is murdered: if ye should be seen here, they would murder you also: fly quickly.' Instantly departing thence, they repaired to the (neighbourhood of the) Sumanakuta (Adam's Peak). The elder having grown up, married his sister, and settled there. Becoming numerous by their sons and daughters, under the protection of the king, they resided in the Malaya district. This is the origin of the Pulindas (hill-men)."

Such chronicles though interesting tell us little or nothing concerning the habits and customs of those Veddas who did not adopt a Sinhalese mode of life; the same may be said

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 of the earliest foreign records such as that found in the tract *De Moribus Brachmanorum* written about 400 A.D., the author of which professes to have obtained his information from a Theban traveller.

[114] To Robert Knox, who wrote in 1681 after a captivity in Ceylon lasting 20 years, belongs the credit of having first accurately described the Veddas. "Of these *Natives* there be two sorts *Wild* and *Tame*. I will begin with the former. For as in these Woods there are Wild *Beasts* so Wild *Men* also. The Land of *Bintan* is all covered with mighty Woods, filled [101] with abundance of *Deer*. In this Land are many of these wild men; they call them *Vaddahs*, dwelling near no other Inhabitants. They speak the *Chingulayes* Language. They kill *Deer*, 175 and dry the Flesh over the fire, and the people of the Countrey 105 come and buy it of them. They never Till any ground for Corn, their Food being only Flesh. They are very expert with their Bows. They have a little ax, which they stick by their sides, to cut hony out of hollow Trees. Some few, which are near Inhabitants, have commerce with other people. They have no Towns nor Houses, only live by the waters under a Tree, with some boughs cut and laid about them, to give notice when any wild Beasts come near, which they may hear by their rustling and trampling upon them. Many of these Habitations we saw when we fled through the Woods, but God be praised the *Vaddahs* were gone.

"Some of the tamer sort of these men are in a kind of Subjection to the King. For if they be found, tho it must be with a great search in the woods, they will acknowledge his Officers, and will bring to them *Elephant-teeth*, and *Honey*, and *Wax*, and *Deer's Flesh*; but the others in lieu thereof do give them near as much, in Arrows, Cloth, etc. fearing lest they should otherwise appear no more.

"It had been reported to me by many people, that the wilder sort of them, when they want Arrows, will carry their load of Flesh in the night, and hang it up in a *Smith's* Shop, also a Leaf cut in the form they will have their Arrows made, and hang by it. Which if the *Smith* do make according to their Pattern they will requite, and bring him more Flesh:

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

but if he make them not, they will do him a mischief one time or another by shooting in the night. If the Smith make the Arrows, he leaves them in the same place, where the *Veddahs* hung the Flesh. 175 105

* * * * * * * *

"About *Hourly* the remotest of the King's Dominions there are many of them, that are pretty tame, and come and buy and sell among the people. The King once having occasion of an hasty Expedition against the *Dutch*, the Governour summoned them all in to go with him, which they did. And with their Bows and Arrows did as good service as any of the rest but afterwards when they returned home again, they removed farther in the Woods, and would be seen no more, for fear of being afterwards prest again to serve the King.

"They never cut their hair but tye it up on their Crowns in a bunch. The cloth they use, is not broad nor large, scarcely enough to cover their Buttocks. The *wilder* and *tamer* sort of them do both observe a Religion. They have a God peculiar to themselves. The *tamer* do build Temples, the wild only bring their sacrifice under Trees, and while it is offering, dance round it, both men and women.

"They have their bounds in the Woods among themselves, and one company of them is not to shoot nor gather hony or fruit beyond those bounds. Neer the borders stood a *Jack-Tree*; one *Vaddah* being gathering some fruit from this Tree, another *Vaddah* of the next division saw him, and told him he had nothing to do to gather *Jacks* from that Tree, for that belonged to them. They fell to words and from words to blows, and one of them shot the other. At which more of them met and fell to skirmishing so briskly with their Bows and Arrows, that twenty or thirty of them were left dead upon the spot.

"They are so curious of their Arrows that no smith can please them: The King once to gratifie them for a great Present they brought him, gave all of them of his best made Arrow-blades: which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a Rock by a River and ground them into another form. The Arrows they use are of a

1;Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

195 different fashion from all other, and the *Chingulays* will not
105 use them.

"They have a peculiar way by themselves of *preserving Flesh*. They cut a hollow Tree and put honey in it, and then fill it up with flesh, and stop it up with clay. Which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want.

"It has usually been told me that their way of *catching Elephants* is, that when the Elephant lyes asleep they strike their ax into the sole of his foot, and so laming him he is in their power to take him. But I take this for a fable, because I know the sole of the Elephants foot is so hard, that no axe can pierce it at a blow; and he is so wakeful that they can have no opportunity to do it.

"For portions with their Daughters in marriage they give hunting Dogs. They are reported to be courteous. Some of the *Chingulays* in discontent will leave their houses and friends, and go and live among them, where they are civilly entertained. The tamer sort of them, as hath been said, will sometimes appear, and hold some kind of trade with the tame Inhabitants, but the wilder called *Ramba-Vaddahs* never show themselves."

From Knox's account it is evident that in his time or a little
175 before this, some of the Veddas were in touch with the court
648 and were even sufficiently amenable to discipline to be of use as an auxiliary fighting force, indeed, there is abundant evidence that long before this a part of the inhabitants of Ceylon, with enough Vedda blood in them for their contemporaries to call them Veddas, were politically organized and constituted a force whom the rulers of the island found it necessary to consider. Upon this subject we cannot do better than quote part of a letter from Mr H. Parker in which this authority states his views on this subject. "At the time when Sinhalese history begins, a part of them [Veddas] had reached a far more advanced state than the others. They were politically organised, and according to the Mahavansa had a supreme king and subordinate chiefs 80 years after Wijaya became king[1].

[1] "He established the yakkhas Kalavela in the eastern quarter of the city [Anuradhapura]; and the chief of the yakkhas, Citta, he established on the lower side of the Abhaya tank. He (the king), who knew how to accord his protection with

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

"The invaders, or rather settlers, from the valley of the Ganges intermarried with these more advanced natives, and became the Sinhalese of the present day (with a later mixture of Tamil or Indian blood). 175 648

"The wilder natives continued to lead the life of their primitive ancestors, and only to a very limited extent intermarried with the Sinhalese.

"Three or four centuries ago the Vaeddas were spread over the Matale district and the North-western Province, and I believe Sabaragamuwa[1]." 175

discrimination, established the slave born of the yakkha tribe, who had formerly rendered him great service, at the southern gate of the city. He established within the garden of the royal palace the mare-faced yakkhini, and provided annually demon offerings to them as well as to others.

"In the days of public festivity, this monarch, seated on a throne of equal eminence with the yakkha chief Citta, caused joyous spectacles, representing the actions of the devas as well as of mortals to be exhibited.....

"This monarch befriending the interests of the yakkhas, with the co-operation of Kalavela and Citta, who had the power (though yakkhas) of rendering themselves invisible (in the human world), conjointly with them, enjoyed his prosperity." *Mahawansa*, Chapter x, p. 44 (Tournour's translation). Further, the same king "provided...a temple [or "tala tree," the readings differ] for the Vyadha-deva" which Mr Parker states must refer to the Vedda God.

[1] Additional evidence for this is given by Nevill who says—"I have unpublished MSS. which represent the Vaeddas as found in the forests north of Putlam at the time of Bhawaneka Bahu Raja of Kotta (about 1466 A.D.), and another which represents Vaeddas as the chief inhabitants of the Matale district in the region of Raja Sinha, about 1633 A.D." (*Taprobanian*, Vol. II, April 1883, p. 30). With regard to Veddas in Sabaragamuwa, Bailey notes that—"Though traces of their former existence there are evident and numerous, there is every reason to believe that many centuries have passed since they were there. Fields, villages and families yet retain the name Veddahs, as Weddeya pangoo, Wedde coombore, Wedde watte, Wedde ella, Wedde gala, Weddege etc.....Indeed, Saffragam, or Habara gamowa, means the district of Veddahs, or barbarous people: and in this form of the word, the former existence of Veddahs again can be traced, as Habara goddege, Habara kadowa, etc. It is traditional throughout Saffragam, that once Veddahs predominated over Sinhalese in that district, and that, as the latter gained ground, the former withdrew towards Bintenne and Wellassa.....Mr Macready, of the Civil Service, has given me very important proof of the existence of Veddahs 'near the Semanta mountains' [Adam's Peak]. He has given me the translation of some stanzas from a Sinhalese poem, written about 400 years ago, called the Pirawi Sandesa, or the dove's message. The poem treats of a message sent, by means of a dove, from Cotta (near Colombo) to Vishnu at Dondera, at the extreme south of the island. The dove takes its course exactly over the district lying below Adam's Peak. The poet addresses the dove, and tells her she will see 'the daughters of the Veddahs' clothed in Riti bark, their hair adorned with peacock's plumes. So wild are they that the poet describes the herds of deer as being startled at the sight of them." ("Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 "A 16th century MS.—the *Wanni Kaḍa-in Pota*—records the appointment of a Vaedda chief as Bandara Mudiyanse (a title applied only to high caste chiefs); at the king's orders (Bhuvanaika Bahu of Kotta) he fixed the boundaries of four districts or "Pattus" of the North-western Province. His name was Panikki Vaedda[1], he caught elephants and took some to the king, with another Vaedda chief, a Registrar or Secretary, called Liyana Vaedda. I have an early 17th century MS. which gives an account of part of a civil war in the Matale District, carried on by his nephew against the king who imprisoned Knox. Among the insurgent leaders were first, three Sinhalese chiefs of Matale, and after them are enumerated a number of Vaedda chiefs (including one woman) who are all expressly said to be Vaeddas; of the 'Vaedda wasagama'; one of them was the chief of Bibile[2]."

[172] Ceylon," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* 1863, Vol. II, p. 313.) Within the last few months the matter has been rendered almost certain by the discovery by the late James Parsons to the N.E. of Ratnapura of quartz implements of the type figured in Plate VIII.

[1] The mention of the existence of a chief called Panikki Vedda is especially interesting since Panikkia Yaka reputed to be the spirit (*yaka*) of a long dead Vedda chief, who was especially skilled in hunting buffalo and elephant, is honoured among the Henebedda Veddas. This record shows that the memory of this "Vedda" chief has been maintained among the local peasant Sinhalese, who themselves are partly of Vedda descent, until it recently passed to the Henebedda Veddas. (Cf. Religion, Chapter VI.)

[2] The present day Sinhalese of the Vedirata say that such Vedda chiefs as those here recorded were called *wanniya* and repaired annually to Kandy with offerings of honey, wax, and venison for the king, who might also invite their presence on special occasions when they would attend, each *wanniya* bringing with him a ceremonial fanlike ornament (still used by the Sinhalese chiefs) called *awuṭata* (literally "fan"), with an ornament made of wood or ivory on the top called *horuṇḍuwa*, or *kota*. Mr Bibile told us the following story of what happened on one occasion when the *wanniya* stayed near Kandy with one Galebandar who seems to have been a Vedda. The king instructed Galebandar to remove the *kota* from his guests' *awuṭata* without their knowledge. On the day of the audience these *kota* were missing, and as there was no time to get others the Vedda chiefs had to go before the king without them. The king questioned them: "Where are your *kota*? Lost!" and the king said "Henceforth only I will have the right to *kota* and you Vedda chiefs have no right to them." And the king called the Vedda chiefs *bandar*, each *wanniya* being given a name, e.g. Mahabandar, Hantanebandar, Talabandar, Kirtibandar, Rangotibandar, Rattebandar, Pebandar, Motubandar, Kapuruhandar, and so forth, and henceforth the Veddas must needs go to Kandy yearly taking tribute to the king. And their people took their chiefs' names as community names, e.g. Danigala and Henebedda are Mahabandar. It did not appear that *bandar* names of this sort were generally known to the Veddas, and we confess that we at present attach no importance to the story we

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175

Veddas are also mentioned in an old family record translated by Nevill which he terms the *Nadu Kadu Chronicle* and which he considers cannot be later than the sixteenth century[1].

The following references to Veddas are taken from the chronicle, for, though they obviously refer to settled and civilised Veddas who may have had little Vedda blood in their veins, they are interesting as showing the social and political influence exerted by these.

The first passage concerns two Pattani soldiers engaged by the Sinhalese chief as guards.

"Then he took them with him, thinking they will be good to guard against the troubles caused by the Vedas. He kept them as a guard against the Vedas of Pala Vekama."

The next reference runs: "The chief of all the Vedas was Karadiyan. What was their service? It was to erect temporary

have cited, which is only given here because we feel that it is possible that in the hands of competent historians it may prove to be of some use.

[1] "Report reached me that a valuable record existed, kept in hereditary and exclusive possession by an old family in the district of Nadu Kadu. Nadu Kadu is the modern Tamil name of the Na-deniya, or Naga-divayinna, of the Eastern Province of Ceylon, and is situated to the south of Batticalon. It was, in early times, an independent or feudatory principality, sometimes one, sometimes the other; and it was here Sada Tisa, brother of Dutugemunu, ruled.....The record evidently refers to a time when this district was depopulated of its former Sinhalese land-owners, and all cultivation of rice had been abandoned. It tells us how a band of Sinhalese took up these lands, and redeemed them, preserving friendly relations with the Vaeddas, Malabars, and Mukkuvars, who held the forests and coast.

"The record is said to have been in Sinhalese, but was translated into Tamil by the ancestors of the family from whom I procured it, the hereditary managers of the Thiru Kowil temple. They said that during the guerilla warfare between the English and the Vanni Chiefs and Dissavas of Uva and Velassie, the Sinhalese villagers of the district migrated (? were deported) to the Kandian hills and their place was filled up by emigrants from Jaffna, Tamil Vellalans. Hence the Sinhalese record became useless, and was translated. It bears on its face the proof of this translation, in many odd changes and expressions.

"The settlers were a family of Sinhalese nobles of high rank, whose ladies held the hereditary dignity of foster-mother to the royal princes.....

"They were banished to Erukamam, then a deserted site, but anciently the capital of Sada Tisa. We have incidentally an interesting glimpse at the household of a feudal noble, of this period, about the thirteenth century,.....

"The work of cutting down the trees that had overgrown the rice-lands was done by the Vaeddahs, doubtless for a share of the crop, and the powerful Wanni Rajas were gratified with separate tracts, reclaimed for their exclusive benefit, just as among their Kandian hills, the settlers had been accustomed to sow the mutettu lands, the crop of which went to the feudal chief." *Taprobanian*, Vol. II, p. 197.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175

buildings and screens; and they were allowed if they erected a dam for Sevuka field at Sunga Ford, and took charge of the land, stacking the crop, to thresh and take each the grain of one sheath. Over every one the Vedas were the chief men."

Again it says: "The Veda Puliyan was the chief of the Seven Wanams of Akkara Pattu. On the way to Akkara Pattu is Puliyan Tivu, he remaining there, used to send to the Muthaliyar and his family, wax, honey and other things...."

"Because he supplied pingos (i.e. presents) for the Seven Wanam, Rajapaksa Muthaliyar gave Kandi in marriage to the Veda Puliyan and he lived at Puliyan Tivu."

The next reference is by no means clear, but it shows how intermarriage between Veddas and Sinhalese might come about. The last few lines of this passage are especially difficult to understand; they seem to show that the Vedda grandfather of the girl given to the washer had recognised rights in his grandchildren, and that he was of enough importance to be propitiated with gifts of cloth.

"Besides this, Nilame Rala and his wife and people, going to Sitawakka, returned by the Bintenne road to Nadu Kadu. Whilst so coming, a Veda woman brought forth a child on the path at Sellapattu, and without cleansing it or securing the umbilical cord, left it on the path. They seeing that child, brought it up. The Veda woman returning for the child could not see it, but found the tracks of many people on the path, and went away thinking they had taken it. They brought up the child with the name of Para Natchi (Mistress Road). She was given in marriage to one Muttuvan and had 16 daughters. Of these fifteen were given in marriage, and the youngest was unmarried. Then the washer who came with them, having lost his wife, was single...they gave him in marriage the youngest daughter of the Veda woman. Children were born to these. The Sellapattu Veda hearing of this, year by year began to sell the children. That custom exists among the Paravar also, and among the Sandar. As he did so, saying they must make gifts to that Veda, buying ten cubits of broad-cloth, tearing it into pieces of four cubits, they gave it to the Veda[1]."

[1] *The Tajrolanam*, Vol. II, p. 140.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It is clear that in the condition of affairs here recorded there must for many centuries have been a zone of contact between Veddas and Sinhalese, and that contact metamorphosis must have occurred in both peoples. There is abundant evidence of this, and we should not insist further on this point if it were not necessary to combat a view which, if not clearly expressed, nevertheless seems to dominate much that has been written on the Veddas. We refer to the belief that although the Veddas have been much influenced by the Sinhalese, the latter owe little or nothing to the Veddas. The former proposition finds its fullest exposition in the statement so often made to us in Ceylon that "there are no real Veddas left"; but with the exception of Nevill, we cannot find that anyone who has written on Ceylon has held that the Veddas have strongly influenced the Sinhalese[1]. That this influence was, however, of importance is shown by the fact that the families of the present aristocracy of the Vedda country are proud of their Vedda descent, which is equally acknowledged by themselves and the less wild Veddas. Thus Mr W. R. Bibile Ratemahatmaya pointed out to me that long ago his people were Veddas, and that even after certain of his ancestors had settled down and had intermarried so as to be classed as Sinhalese, there were subsequent infusions of Vedda blood into the family. It was clear that this relationship to the Veddas was the reason for the prestige he undoubtedly enjoyed among the Danigala and the Henebedda Veddas. For the same reason one of his relatives was allowed to pasture his cattle on Henebedda

[1] Since the above was written we have learnt from Mr Parker that he regards the Kandyan Sinhalese as essentially Veddas with an infusion of foreign blood, and this view is stated in *Ancient Ceylon* (cf. especially p. 30).

It appears to us that the considerable physical differences which undoubtedly exist between the Veddas and Kandyan Sinhalese do not support this belief in anything like its extreme form, though it is but reasonable to suppose that there is Vedda blood in the inhabitants of the Kandyan districts. We do not think this is the case to any very large extent for, although constantly on the look out for Sinhalese who resembled Veddas, we did not see any except in the present Vedirata, and even there we did not see many. Further, the measurements of the Sarasins show that there is a difference of 61 mm. or nearly 2½ inches in the stature of Veddas and Kandyan Sinhalese. The actual figures which are taken from the tables at the end of the Sarasins' volume are as follows, the average of 24 Vedda men was 1·553 m. and the average of 10 Kandyans was 1·614 m.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 territory in the neighbourhood of Pattiavelagalge cave described
177 in Chapter V. This was about 100 years ago, and may have been connected with the troubles of the revolution which undoubtedly led to an influx of Sinhalese into the wilds of the Vedda country.

Further, the eschatological beliefs of the Kandyan Sinhalese furnish abundant evidence that these have been influenced by the Veddas, and certain of these beliefs can be explained on no other hypothesis, unless it be asserted that the beliefs of the Veddas and those of the invading Sinhalese were from the first nearly identical. We refer particularly to the *bandara* beliefs described on pp. 141 to 145, which have probably attained to the position they now hold because, as pointed out to us by Mr Parker, it is in accordance with Sinhalese Buddhist teaching that the spirits of the deceased may become *yaku*. This of course might merely imply that Sinhalese Buddhism had originally been influenced by the Vedda Cult of the Dead, but that this is not the explanation is shown by the fact—for information concerning which we are indebted to Mr Parker—that the Low-Country Sinhalese have nothing of the Kandyan "hero and ancestor worship" as it is styled by this authority[1].

114 Sir James Emerson Tennant devoted a chapter of his monumental work to the Veddas, but interesting as this chapter is it contains "little else than a comparison of the habits of the people of the island, as observed by the ancient voyagers in the fourth and fifth centuries, with the traditional...customs of the Veddahs as reported by Knox. The accomplished author throws no new light on the wild tribes of the Veddahs as they are. On the contrary, his account of them is in some important particulars defective, and even inaccurate. He glances casually at those tribes which are in the wildest state, touching with precision none of their peculiarities, and dwells in detail upon those only, which, from long association with the Sinhalese and Tamil races, have lost much of their originality. Of the ancient aborigines he has compiled much that is curious. Of the existing Veddahs he has given us little besides an epitome of former notices."

[1] We again quote from one of Mr Parker's letters.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

175

Before passing to a brief detailed investigation of the influences roughly classified as above, it may not be out of place to examine the historical records that apply to the area at the moment under consideration. Thus, we find Arugam Bay corresponds to Mardi, or Morduli Portus, in the time of Ptolemy. Okanda Bay is the same as Bocana—as the sound nearly implies; Kumuna, according to the Sanskrit, is the same as Gonagramuka; while the Kumbukkan river appears in Ptolemy's time to have been called Baracus fluvius.

From this it may be inferred that at least two bays on our eastern coast, south of Batticaloa, were known to the Romans, in addition to the perennial Kumbukkan-aar, and it may be deduced with probable certainty that these bays were ports of call, while the Kumbukkan river was more than likely to have been well known as being the one spot on the east coast where fresh water could always be obtained in both monsoons, for trading boats of light draught.

From this circumstance alone it is probable that the traders of the Roman period had dealings at Kumuna, while Okanda and Arugam Bays both offered a safe anchorage to the traders' vessels.

The whole of the Panawa Pattu from a point south of Komari was included in the region called in Sanskrit times Lambakarna, which, according to Pliny and Ptolemy's map, covered Bocani, of which Bocana (= Okanda) was the port.

Passing to more modern maps, we find about 1681 Knox gives Pottin for Pottuvil; Coemena for Kumuna; and Konokan-aar for the Kumbukkan, showing that these places had, up to that time, sufficient importance to find their recognition in maps of the day. Knox, moreover, distinctly shows Pannoa or Panova Regnum, implying that that part of the country was under a sovereign at that time, insignificant though he may have been.

This evidence, however, which might be elaborated but for pressure on the space of this Paper, points to the definite conclusion that for a considerable period a large extent of our eastern coast was well known, even to the traders of the western world, and we must anticipate, therefore, that in the course of that trade there would be an exchange of

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 commodities which would produce both directly and indirectly its effect upon local plant life, either by the introduction of species of economic value, or by the direct export of woods found at hand.

137 In support of this it is noticeable that to the north-west of Pottuvil, Palu (*Mimusops luxandra*) and Satinwood (*Chloroxylon swietenia*) are comparatively abundant, as contrasted with the scarcity of the same species on the banks of the Kumbukkan river. Again, while Mi (*Bassia longifolia*) is abundant on the Kumbukkan, it may be called rare west of Pottuvil. As this last-named is an introduction of great value, it was spared where it existed near towns, but was neglected in those localities where the population had no permanent settlement, as we find is the case with the majority of the Maha Wedirata "villages" of the present day, and it is only in some places of old establishment that we find the Mi tree now.

361 The present population is very much scattered, its distribution being undoubtedly governed by the presence or absence of water; hence it will be found that the so-called villages are at considerable distances apart, and only where a supply of water can be got, however small or impure, all the year round. On the other hand, one finds the example of an unpopulated area bounded by a perennial stream, as in the case of the valley of the Kumbukkan river for the last thirty miles of its course. Here, however, we have the instance of a stream that rises to an enormous flood that inundates the country to a depth of many feet on both its banks, thus drowning out, in the wet season, any annual cultivation, and leaving the place parched and dry during the periods of drought—two factors sufficient to keep back a people unprepared to establish strong measures to secure permanent occupation.

Nor is this all. The Kumbukkan river, after it passes the foot of the isolated mass of the Monaragala hills, enters a country that afforded the Veddas their best hunting ground, and the Veddas appear in their early history to have been a race of people who depended almost entirely on the chase, using for their dwellings the rudest shelters of caves and temporary branch huts. They had no inducement to build

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

PREFACE

THE Veddas have been regarded as one of the most primitive of existing races, and it has long been felt desirable that their social life and religious ideas should be investigated as thoroughly as possible. The welcome opportunity of conducting this research was afforded me on the initiative of Dr A.C. Haddon, who suggested to the Honourable Mr John Ferguson and Dr Arthur Willey that it was desirable that the Ceylon Government should continue its enlightened policy of studying the anthropology, archaeology and history of Ceylon and its peoples. This proposal received the warmest support of the Governor, Sir Henry Blake, G.C.M.G., and his successor the present Governor, His Excellency Sir Henry E. McCallum, G.C.M.G., A.D.C., of the Colonial Secretary and of the other members of the Legislative Council who made a liberal grant covering the expenses of the expedition in the field. 121 122

Not only was the work urgently needed on account of its scientific importance, but it was known that the Veddas were a numerically small people verging on extinction, and so affected by contact with Tamils and Sinhalese that if they were not studied promptly there was every possibility that it would soon be too late to study them at all; indeed, with all my efforts I was able to meet only four families, and hear of two more, who I believe had never practised cultivation. Pure-blooded Veddas are not quite so rare as this statement implies. The Danigala community, the best known "wild" Veddas of Ceylon, are still reasonably pure-blooded, though they have adopted many Sinhalese habits, including cultivation, and have assumed the rôle of professional primitive man. They are commonly fetched to be interviewed by travellers at the nearest rest house, where they appear clad only in the traditional scanty Vedda garment, whereas, when not on show, they dress very much as the neighbouring peasant Sinhalese. 121 161 177

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It is clear that in the condition of affairs here recorded there must for many centuries have been a zone of contact between Veddas and Sinhalese, and that contact metamorphosis must have occurred in both peoples. There is abundant evidence of this, and we should not insist further on this point if it were not necessary to combat a view which, if not clearly expressed, nevertheless seems to dominate much that has been written on the Veddas. We refer to the belief that although the Veddas have been much influenced by the Sinhalese, the latter owe little or nothing to the Veddas. The former proposition finds its fullest exposition in the statement so often made to us in Ceylon that "there are no real Veddas left"; but with the exception of Nevill, we cannot find that anyone who has written on Ceylon has held that the Veddas have strongly influenced the Sinhalese[1]. That this influence was, however, of importance is shown by the fact that the families of the present aristocracy of the Vedda country are proud of their Vedda descent, which is equally acknowledged by themselves and the less wild Veddas. Thus Mr W. R. Bibile Ratemahatmaya pointed out to me that long ago his people were Veddas, and that even after certain of his ancestors had settled down and had intermarried so as to be classed as Sinhalese, there were subsequent infusions of Vedda blood into the family. It was clear that this relationship to the Veddas was the reason for the prestige he undoubtedly enjoyed among the Danigala and the Henebedda Veddas. For the same reason one of his relatives was allowed to pasture his cattle on Henebedda

[1] Since the above was written we have learnt from Mr Parker that he regards the Kandyan Sinhalese as essentially Veddas with an infusion of foreign blood, and this view is stated in *Ancient Ceylon* (cf. especially p. 30).

It appears to us that the considerable physical differences which undoubtedly exist between the Veddas and Kandyan Sinhalese do not support this belief in anything like its extreme form, though it is but reasonable to suppose that there is Vedda blood in the inhabitants of the Kandyan districts. We do not think this is the case to any very large extent for, although constantly on the look out for Sinhalese who resembled Veddas, we did not see any except in the present Vedirata, and even there we did not see many. Further, the measurements of the Sarasins show that there is a difference of 61 mm. or nearly 2½ inches in the stature of Veddas and Kandyan Sinhalese. The actual figures which are taken from the tables at the end of the Sarasins' volume are as follows, the average of 24 Vedda men was 1·553 m. and the average of 10 Kandyans was 1·614 m.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 territory in the neighbourhood of Pattiavelagalge cave described
177 in Chapter v. This was about 100 years ago, and may have been connected with the troubles of the revolution which undoubtedly led to an influx of Sinhalese into the wilds of the Vedda country.

Further, the eschatological beliefs of the Kandyan Sinhalese furnish abundant evidence that these have been influenced by the Veddas, and certain of these beliefs can be explained on no other hypothesis, unless it be asserted that the beliefs of the Veddas and those of the invading Sinhalese were from the first nearly identical. We refer particularly to the *bandara* beliefs described on pp. 141 to 145, which have probably attained to the position they now hold because, as pointed out to us by Mr Parker, it is in accordance with Sinhalese Buddhist teaching that the spirits of the deceased may become *yaku*. This of course might merely imply that Sinhalese Buddhism had originally been influenced by the Vedda Cult of the Dead, but that this is not the explanation is shown by the fact—for information concerning which we are indebted to Mr Parker—that the Low-Country Sinhalese have nothing of the Kandyan "hero and ancestor worship" as it is styled by this authority[1].

114 Sir James Emerson Tennant devoted a chapter of his monumental work to the Veddas, but interesting as this chapter is it contains "little else than a comparison of the habits of the people of the island, as observed by the ancient voyagers in the fourth and fifth centuries, with the traditional...customs of the Veddahs as reported by Knox. The accomplished author throws no new light on the wild tribes of the Veddahs as they are. On the contrary, his account of them is in some important particulars defective, and even inaccurate. He glances casually at those tribes which are in the wildest state, touching with precision none of their peculiarities, and dwells in detail upon those only, which, from long association with the Sinhalese and Tamil races, have lost much of their originality. Of the ancient aborigines he has compiled much that is curious. Of the existing Veddahs he has given us little besides an epitome of former notices."

[1] We again quote from one of Mr Parker's letters.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

231 for the Sinhalese of Potuliyadde, receiving every fifth calf that is born. The community has, or recently had, ten or more head of cattle of their own and have sold bulls to the brother-in-law of our *tavalam*[1] leader for as much as 30 Rs., indeed, our *tavalam* leader stated that he had himself visited the Danigala chena and
291 had also seen the cattle. On this occasion Kaira and his sons wore a coloured cloth as the Sinhalese do and their women wore a *kambaya* and coloured breast handkerchief. Mr Bibile was
621 able to confirm some of these statements from his own know-
● 177 ledge and on making investigations among the local villagers
609 discovered that there was a whole community living on the chena settlement, some of whom had married Sinhalese. Indeed it appeared that not only have members of this community learnt to play the part of professional primitive man, but there has even been specialisation, for as far as we could learn, the men we met at the look-out hut are those who always receive visitors or come to Bibile when sent for, while the others whom we did not see do not pose as wild Veddas. Probably the part they now play had only recently crystallised into a professional rôle, but it must be remembered that so long ago as 1863 Bailey discussing these Veddas, or their fathers, says "they were brought in from the forests to be 'looked at'" and he adds, "I never saw that contempt for money which Tennant supposes is still existing[2]."

Kovil Vanamai. In the Eastern Province in the neighbour-
101 hood of Devulani tank the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are found, this term being applied to a number of groups of Veddas living in this neighbourhood. The name Kovil Vanamai means temple
[346] precincts and seems to have arisen from there being one or more temples in this part of the country, while some of these shrines are traditionally associated with Veddas, apparently with old settled coast and village Veddas, for we have no reason to think that the ancestors of the folk we saw at Bandaraduwa, or the other wilder Veddas of fifty years ago, were in any way guardians of the temples or dependent on their
511 bounty. Although at the present day the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are represented by scattered groups, for the most part

[1] A *tavalam* is a train of pack bulls.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *kodoi*, *tira* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure i) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *waruge* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *waruge* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Arachi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they had been called upon to pay a chena tax as well as 1·50 Rs. per adult male road tax. Of course they were unable to collect this money and they dreaded the ensuing penalty, that of serving on the roads, for should the two young men leave the settlement the old man and woman and the girl must starve, the first being too old to work and the woman a cripple. Their plight would have been just as bad had the young man gone to work on some Sinhalese rice fields in order to earn the money[1].

Degenerate Veddas in the neighbourhood of the main Badulla-Batticaloa road[2]. The main road from Badulla to the east coast passes through country that was once the centre of the Vedirata, and on either side of it at a distance of some 2—6 miles are various settlements of half-bred and degenerate Veddas who will soon be entirely lost among the Sinhalese. Plate XIV, figure 1, represents two men of this class: it is obvious that the young man would pass for a Sinhalese, indeed in spite of his bow and arrows and traditional scanty Vedda garb the condition of his hair shows that he has at least been following a Sinhalese mode of life. It is possible that the whole Vedda get-up may have been assumed for our benefit, though in view of the comparative skill with which he handled his bow we do not think this likely. The old man was doubtless one of the last degenerate Veddas of the district.

Before passing to village Veddas a word must be said concerning the Omuni folk and those of Unuwatura Bubula. Sir James Emerson Tennant, in his work *Ceylon* published in 1859, states that Mr Atherton, A.G.A., in conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, attempted to civilise the Veddas[3]. In 1838 "cottages were built for them in their own district, rice land assigned to them, wells dug, coconuts planted, two communities were speedily settled at Vippammadvo." A

[1] This is a not uncommon practice at the present day.

[2] This road is only some forty or fifty years old, Mr Warren tells me that "the old road from Badulla to Batticaloa joined the road from Alutnuwara. It crossed the present cart road about Kallodi and must have worked its way in the neighbourhood of the present road to Tumpalancholai and so to the ferry into Batticaloa." Part of this track is still used as a short cut. "There was another road from Passera through Medagama past Makakandiyaweva to Mandur; *favilam* travel that way now."

[3] Tennant, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 447.

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 school was founded and two other settlements fromed at
621 Oomany and Villengelavelly. However, the enterprise was soon
797 abandoned owing to the misconduct of some of the teachers. "But," continues Tennant, "the good effects of even this temporary experiment were apparent; not one of the Veddas returned to his cave and savage habits... The other colony at Oomany continues to the present day prosperous and successful, twenty-five families are resident around it, rice and other grains are produced in sufficiency and coconuts are planted near the cottages. The only desertions have been the departures of those in search of employment, who have removed to other villages in quest of it. The school was closed in 1847 owing to there being no more children at the time requiring instruction..."

177 The colony can no longer be called "prosperous and success-
62 ful," indeed, we found it in a state of semi-starvation. Before 1838, when these people were induced to settle, there can be little doubt that they were living in a somewhat similar condition to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas of the present day, but since then there has been a considerable infusion of foreign blood, for it has long been the habit of criminals and others desirous of concealment, to seek refuge with the village Veddas, who usually receive them kindly and accept them as members of their community. Since the artificial origin of this settlement is known it cannot be regarded as belonging to the village Veddas, but rather to a colony of degenerate settled Veddas.

511 Omuni. At Maha Oya three half-bred Veddas from Omuni
687 were seen who had been brought in by the Sinhalese headman to work on the road as they had not paid their "road tax." It was unnecessary for them to plead they were poor and hungry, for their miserable condition showed this all too clearly. Happily Mr. S. W. Woodhouse, the district judge, was then in Maha Oya and realising that while these men were absent from their village, their women and children would be in a worse plight than ever, he excused them their tax and sent them back to
511 Omuni. About a week later we visited Omuni and although we were met with the customary gift of honey to which were added a few berries, it was obvious that the settlement was really short of food and this in spite of a number of families having left some

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

months previously to wander into Tamankaduwa where they 511
hoped to get yams and perhaps some game. A number of women left the village immediately after our arrival, explaining that if they did not go and find some yams they and their children would get nothing to eat that night. Some of the men possessed bows and arrows but game was scarce, and their [262]
living was obviously precarious, yams, monitor lizards, honey and berries forming their staple diet. Fowls were kept and were 231
taken down to the road (10 miles distant) to sell. Like all Veddas they possessed dogs, invaluable to them in catching monitor lizards when there is no bigger game to hunt, and their care for them was shown by a small shelter which they had built in order to shade a bitch with a litter of puppies.

In physical characters these Veddas[1] somewhat resembled the 142
neighbouring Sinhalese, but were less stoutly built; this appearance may however in part have been due to malnutrition. Their headman is a short, well-nourished, exceedingly active and intelligent individual, whose only Vedda characteristic is his short stature. Plate XIV, figure 2, represents a number of Omuni women.

Unuwatura Bubula. The position of the Unuwatura 101
Bubula Veddas is extremely difficult to understand, they occupy 177
two small groups of huts (one of which is shown in Plate XV, figure 1) a little distance from the huts of some peasant Sinhalese. They formerly lived at Mudugala and have doubtless been in close contact with the Sinhalese for many generations, but whether they are the remains of village Vedda settlements or are settled wild Veddas cannot be stated with certainty, though the latter seems more probable. It must be explained that though this community has mixed much with the Sinhalese and has doubtless been much influenced by them, they have their own shamans and they perform their own rites quite apart from their Sinhalese neighbours. Unfortunately the shaman of these people who knew most about the customs and rites of this community was ill, having overtaxed his strength at the first ceremony performed for us, and was not able to talk much, but he was present at most of our conversations and was thus a check on the younger man, but for the reason indicated many

[1] [i.e., Veddas of Onuwi. – Analyst]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours' influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain 177 degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut [562] because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the [783] women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura 144 Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded, 141 since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

184 The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to 361 describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *kile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanliness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is 184
evidence that a hundred years ago there were organized com- 361
munities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century.

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the 621
jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here [177]
was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the surrounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure [142]
2), though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, [609]
people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility.

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this [197]
condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always 622
speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an 156
extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1926
AX5 Vedda AX5

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
977 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
431 the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX3 Vedda AX5

these village Veddas, though they seem to be of a somewhat 157
morose disposition. He also said they take no interest in things unknown to them. However, the phonograph attracted as much attention and interest as it always had from Veddas and Sinhalese alike, and we distinctly saw one Vedda smile when his song was reproduced.

The chena settlement at Wallampelle was seen, but here it 144
appeared that much intermarriage had taken place with the Sinhalese.

Malgode. There are a number of people very mixed blooded, 144
but calling themselves Veddas, living at Malgode on the shores 177
of Horaborawewa, a beautiful tank traditionally associated with 361
the Veddas. They have dropped their old Vedda customs so entirely that the local Sinhalese no longer look upon them as true village Veddas, an attitude that has perhaps been fostered by the fact that here in Uva where the Veddas are exempt from all taxation these people pay road tax. Such at least was [651]
the point of view of the Arachi of Alutnuwara, "how can these people be Veddas?—they pay road tax." In spite of this there 511
is no doubt that they are largely of Vedda descent and in many instances remember their *uruwas*. They live in very poorly built houses and depend largely on the seeds of the lotus for food. They still pose as pure-blooded Veddas to white visitors, and have been recently described by Drs H. M. Hillier and W. H. Furness, 3rd. "We followed the jungle path along the eastern shore of the lake, sometimes over outcrops of granite, or down by the lake side...and after following our guide through thick undergrowth for half-an-hour, suddenly, and without warning, we came out into a cleared space, where there was the merest excuse for a hut, and beside it a man and woman squatting side by side and cooking something in a blackened earthen pot, which rested on a fire of twigs and branches; a little beyond them were more huts and more women and children—lo! the Village Veddaha. The elderly man and woman whom we first saw had between them scarcely a yard of coarse cloth as clothing, their hair hung loose in disheveled twists and strings about their faces, and they both squatted so low that their knees stood up above their shoulders. But the most impressive thing about

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they saved a little money and bought a patch of land of about 11 acres from Government, which land they now cultivate with paddy.... There are sixteen houses in the Vedda Settlement of Rotawewa, and the householders in every case are descendants of Veddas. They are Sinhalese without any signs of Tamil admixture." 105 L21

They say they are of the Morane *warige*, and they seem not to know any other *warige*. Mr Horsburgh however states that "there is one other Vedda village in Sinhala Pattuwa besides Rotawewa, viz. Gallinda, with about three families who are the same people as those of Rotawewa." [619]

As a matter of convenience we have prepared a tabular summary of the conditions prevailing at the various settlements of wild and village Veddas that we visited. Besides those mentioned, many other families and even isolated individuals exist scattered throughout the Vedirata, especially in the neighbourhood of the Badulla-Batticaloa road near Maha Oya and Kallodi. These folk are in the last stage of degeneration, having given up their own wandering life and habits; they have mostly drifted into Sinhalese villages there to die out miserably. 105 177 511

195
177
511

Place	Health	Game	Chena	Cattle	Foreign Influence	Remarks
Henebedda	Good	Plentiful	Good	Kept for Sinhalese	Slight among the old men, considerable among the young	A thriving and vigorous community
Danigala	Good	Plentiful	Good	Kept for themselves	Considerable	Live much as Sinhalese, but pretend to live by hunting and honey alone
Kovil Vanamai	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Considerable	Fast dying out, or at the best losing their Vedda identity; all live on chenas and always we believe in association with Sinhalese
Uniche	...	Scarce	?	?	Foreign influence is principally Tamil	We did not see these people in their own settlement
Sitala Wanniya	Good	Plentiful	None	None	Very slight	The older men of this community had never made chena
Galineda	Poor	Scarce	Very poor	None	Probably slight	We only saw a colony of this group who had settled at Godatalawa
Omuni	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Dominant	A few chickens were kept for sale, these people were wretchedly poor and most of them decidedly ill-nourished
Unuwatura Bubula	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Dominant	
Village Veddas						
Dambani &c.	Good	Scarce	Good	Many tame buffalo	Considerable	An anomalous but thriving group (cf. pp. 49 to 53)
Elakotaliya	Good	Scarce	Good	Cattle	...	These groups live in well built mud huts on flourishing chenas and appear to be prosperous and comfortable. They appear to possess more Tamil than Vedda blood
Kalukalaeba	Good	Scarce	Good	Cattle	...	
Yakure	Good	Scarce	Good	Large herds of cattle	...	These people live in well built huts in a compact settlement which might almost be called a town. They have a Sinhalese headman.

[p.58]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

601 such favourite names as Kaira, Poromala and Handuna leads to
551 confusion, not only in the minds of strangers, but also we believe in the minds of the Veddas themselves.

Sinhalese who come in contact with the Veddas find the same
601 difficulty, and the individuals of certain communities, e.g.
551 Danigala, have each a Sinhalese name by which they are known
177 to the peasant Sinhalese, and which in many instances they themselves recognise, so that some Veddas actually know each other by these Sinhalese names, and give them when asked their own names or those of their companions. This is the explanation of the majority of Sinhalese names occurring in the
601 genealogies. Again, the fact that among the Veddas there is no system of hereditary chieftainship, or any other custom such
[622 as the vendetta, forcing a man to know and remember his grand-
628] fathers, cannot but have assisted to bring about the forgetfulness of previous generations, which with the rarest exceptions makes everyone entirely ignorant of his grandparents. In the case of the Danigala and Henebedda Veddas there was an additional difficulty to be met in conducting our investigations. The men
601 of these communities who for the most part belonged to the
614 Morane and Unapane clans, traditionally the proudest and most
554 important of the Vedda *warugu*, had to a certain extent intermarried with Sinhalese and also with the Veddas of Namadewa clan, a *warugu* which in this part of the country is regarded as of inferior status. They are most anxious to conceal instances of both these classes of marriage and lied freely concerning them and this is the reason for certain lacunae in their genealogies, which in the case of the Danigala community could not have been given at all had not Mr Bibile's position as Ratemahatmaya, i.e. hereditary overlord or "laird" of this part of the country, enabled him to make inquiries from the surrounding peasantry, and thus check, and in many instances correct, the information we obtained from the Veddas themselves.

621 A Vedda community consists of from one to five families who share the rights of hunting over a tract of land, of gathering honey upon it, fishing its streams, and using the rock shelters. But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

with the Sinhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests[1].

"I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The 'wilder sort' have had too little communication with Sinhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessities of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrowheads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax, and honey, elk flesh and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Sinhalese, or 'the ubiquitous Moors'[2]."

There are no puberty ceremonies for either sex, except among certain Veddas who have been much influenced by Tamils or Sinhalese, among whom the girls are isolated for a short time at puberty. Thus although the following ceremony is observed at puberty by the Uniche Veddas, there is no doubt that it has been borrowed from the local Sinhalese who have a similar ceremony, though according to our information the latter people do not break the pot. When a girl becomes unwell for the first time one of her *naena* places a pot of water on her head and goes with her to some place where there is a *nuga* tree. Here the *naena* takes the pot from the girl's head and dashes it on the ground so that the pot breaks. The girl is then secluded in a specially built shelter in which she stays until the end of the period, when she washes and returns to her parents' house. During her seclusion she is attended by a girl, always one of her *naena*, who brings her food in a vessel set apart for this purpose but which is not cooked at a special fire. Among the wilder Veddas no special measures are taken when a woman menstruates, she is allowed to eat the ordinary food, and to sleep in the cave as usual. But among all the village Veddas, and most of those who have mixed at all with the Sinhalese, the menstruous women are strictly isolated, a little shelter being built for them a few paces from the family hut (Plate XX). At Bendiyagalge, where the Henebedda and Kolombedda people were staying at the time of our visit, menstruous women stayed apart at one corner of the cave, they were fed from the pot in

[1] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285—286. [2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 291.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

With regard to the existence of message sticks mentioned in the last paragraph, very careful inquiries were made of Veddas, Sinhalese peasants and Sinhalese headmen, including Mr Bibile, Ratemahatmaya. There seemed no doubt that among the peasant Sinhalese messages were traditionally transmitted by the conveyance of certain objects. We are unable to say whether this system was ever well developed and applied to many of the emergencies of life, but it seemed to be the general impression among our informants that the practice was formerly more common than at present. We were able, however, to hear of two messages habitually sent in this way among the more backward jungle Sinhalese at the present day. The first of these was the transmission of a piece of creeper with one, two or three knots tied in it. This was sent wrapped in a fragment of cloth and was a call to the recipient to come to the sender, the urgency of the latter's need being indicated by the number of knots. We consider the use of this message object thoroughly established as a Sinhalese custom, it was in use in the neighbourhood of Bibile until recently and is still used in remoter jungle districts.

A lock of hair usually cut from the head of the dead man and twisted round a small stick and wrapped in a leaf or fragment of cloth was sent as a sign that a death had occurred. Our impression is that at the present day this is essentially a Sinhalese custom, for the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde told us that among the jungle Sinhalese when a man died away from his home, his people might be informed of his death in this way. We could not hear of this custom among the least sophisticated of the Veddas we met, though it was said to exist at Henebedda, where however, if it really occurred, it may have been due to Sinhalese influence. With regard to its existence among the Veddas apart from Sinhalese influence, it seemed to us that the importance of a lock of hair as evidence of land transfer (described on p. 114) renders it unlikely that hair would be sent as evidence of death. The care that the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde took when bringing me his "seisin" to photograph, of which a lock of hair was an important part, was very noticeable[1].

[1] On the other hand the custom may have been derived from the Vedda practice,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Even Nevill missed the essentials of the Vedda cult of the dead, though he shows that he knew something of what actually occurred. "The Vaedda religion seems to have been such that the spirit alone was recognised as human, and the flesh, when the spirit has left it, receives neither veneration nor superstitious reverence. Where the life left the body, there the body was left....Two or five days after the death, however, the relations were invited to the scene of funeral and a feast was held...to satisfy relations there had been no foul play....

"The Vaeddas of Bintenne, however, having assembled relations and neighbours, procure rice, or other grain, and decorate the pot in which it is cooked with sprays of the liniya tree[1], a shrub with leaves like our hazel, but with bright scarlet flowers. If no flowers can be got, bits of red cotton or other cloth should be used. The celebrant then dances round the pot of food, with an arrow in his hand, singing any chant he knows, and making obeisance to the food by a wave of the arrow. The food is then distributed....

"It is evident this custom cannot apply to those who formerly did not eat grain. These, however, were few. Roasted game would probably with such take the place of grain, and the latter seems only used as the best and most unusual food procurable, much as our poor try to provide cake, and not bread and cheese, etc. at weddings....

"Bodies were never buried until the English Government endeavoured to enforce burial. The Vaeddas have not the least objection to the corpse being buried, but object greatly to being forced to dig the grave...[2]."

Although the Sarasins underestimated the importance of the Vedda cult of the dead, and failed to discover that even "Nature" Veddas make offerings to the spirits of their departed, their opinions and conclusions are necessarily given at some length on account of the undoubted importance of their work. "The Veddas of Dewilane told us that after death they became spirits or yakas, but as to whether these persisted (*lebten*) or not they never thought; they did not pray to them nor honour them. The 'Nature' Veddas from Danigala...told us in 1885

[1] *Helictera isora*, L. [2] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 179.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had never thought the matter over. Nevertheless they honour the names which like the Sinhalese they call Yakas with food, dances or offerings. Any monotheistic idea of God is absent both in 'Nature' and in 'Culture' Veddas[1]."

The three strata of belief to which we referred at the beginning of this chapter and which exist among the Veddas of the present day, have not fused so thoroughly that there is any great difficulty in isolating them. We believe they may be tabulated as follows:

I. The Cult of the dead, including the cult of the spirits of recent ancestors, i.e. of the Nae Yaku and the *yaku* of certain Veddas who have been long dead and may well be regarded as heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka.

II. The Cult of foreign spirits, who have become naturalised and have taken the friendly protective nature of the Vedda *yaku*.

III. The Cult of foreign spirits who, though not often regarded as such, have retained their foreign nature and are in the main terrible or even hostile.

Another feature of the last stratum of thought is the endowment of true Vedda *yaku* with foreign attributes[2]. When the history of the island is considered, it is not surprising that the first condition, which may be considered the primitive religion of the Veddas, should nowhere be found standing alone at the present day. It is impossible to say how much the Indian invaders influenced the aboriginal inhabitants of Lanka (Ceylon) when they took possession of the island under Vijeyo about 500 B.C., for the few references made to Veddas in the ancient chronicles of the country throw no light on this subject.

Knox mentions that Veddas paid a tribute of game and honey to the Sinhalese, and in his day there were "wild and tame" Veddas, and it is certain that from the middle ages onwards there was a considerable amount of intercourse between at least the tamer Veddas and the Sinhalese. Therefore it is natural that foreign beliefs should have gradually infiltrated the native Vedda cult.

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] The invocation (No. XLI) to Ambarapoti Kirisinnā given on p. 316 is an excellent example of this. Bilindi Yaka is here treated as if he were a Sinhalese or Tamil deity.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nae Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas.

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaka* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death.

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*kaduwa*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness.

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 256), had been naturalised and were said to represent *aude*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and rocks were known; they were said not to be worshipped, although they were looked upon with awe and respect as they were believed to cause sickness.

These spirits are the Maha Yakini who are especially associated with the hills Nuwaragala, Walimbagala and a rock called Kalumal Ela. The chief of the Maha Yakini is the Maha Kiriamma, and the other Maha Yakini are her attendants. Although associated with rocks and hill-tops they are not invoked before taking honey in these places. It was stated that the Maha Yakini were formerly living people—old women—and that they were especially fond of children and might even steal them. It is for this reason that infants are protected by an arrow struck in the ground, and it is clear that something of their character as old Vedda women still survives in spite of their generally more or less unfriendly attributes.

Concerning the Maha Kiriamma nothing definite could be learnt: our informant had heard it said that she had been invoked in the old days, but knew nothing of this himself. Handuna said that what little knowledge they had of the Maha Kiriamma had travelled to them from the Bintenne Veddas near Horaborawewa[1].

In the Sitala Wanniya community, therefore, the second stratum is well developed and the third is indicated. The second and third strata, though probably not recently introduced, are, however, entirely subsidiary to the primitive cult of the friendly dead.

The Bandaraduwa community is one in which the second stratum is so highly developed that at first sight it appears dominant, for after a death offerings are made to the Buddhist priest, but this is only done as an additional means of propitiation of the *Nae Yaku* who are still considered of the first importance, to whom an offering is made on the seventh day after death. Further, Kande Yaka is still closely associated with the *Nae Yaku* and is invoked with them, but he is no longer formally regarded as the Lord of the Dead, that function has been usurped by Kanda Swami or Skanda known to these Veddas as "the Kataragam

[1] As invocation to the Maha Kiriamma (No. XXXIII), a fragment of a much longer formula (No. XXXIX), unknown to our informants, is given in Chapter X.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God." He is one of the four gods who protect Ceylon, said to have come from India, and is worshipped chiefly by Tamils, who coming from the north-east frequently pass through the territory of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas on their pilgrimage to the temple of their God in the south of the island.

The following information concerning Kataragam is taken from Mr Herbert White's *Manual of Uva*.

Although the present temple is of brick and of no architectural pretensions it is the lineal descendant of the temple endowed some 2000 years ago by Dutugamunu, King of Mogana, as a thank-offering for assistance in overcoming the Tamil King Elala[1]. But Kataragam was a holy place before this, for the Mahavansa describes how the princes of Kataragam assisted at the planting of the shoots of the sacred Bo tree and how one of the miraculously produced offshoots was planted at Kataragam itself[2].

"The aspect and natural features of the country surrounding the temple of Kataragama are not calculated to make a favourable impression upon the eye when they first meet it. There is nothing in them to attract and invite it. Everything, with the exception of the temple and the river on which it stands, at the village of Kataragama and its vicinity looks wild, dreary and monotonous....

"The population of the village may be estimated at forty, including women and children; but it is liable to fluctuation at different periods of the year, from the influx and efflux of the pilgrims who resort to the temple. And I need scarcely add that the village, its adjacent hills, and the surrounding country, are all temple lands, and their occupants are attached to the temple service as its tenants[3]."

The guardian of the temple and its lands, the latter including a domain of some 60,000 acres, is a Buddhist headman resident at Badulla, and although there are now no Veddas near Kataragam, tradition states that there were formerly many Veddas in

[1] Kataragam is situated at the south-east of the island, on the left bank of the Manik-ganga, at a distance of more than forty miles north-east of Hambantota and about sixty miles south-east of Badulla.

[2] Mahavansa, Chapter XIX.

[3] *Manual of Uva*, p. 47.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the temple forests who in some sense served the temple and were known to the Sinhalese as the Kovil Vanamai Veddas. Concerning these Nevill says: "This name means Vaeddas of the Temple wilds, and they were from time immemorial guards of the Katthiragam temple. Their district was from Kumbukan Ara to the Temple precincts, and north as far as the settled villages of Butala and Maha Vaedda Rata....They are said traditionally to descend from the Vaeddas who found the noble babe Valliamma left in the forest, and reared her as their child[1]." Writing in 1886 Nevill points out that he had himself met the last remnants of these people most of whom were, however, "too reduced by want and disease to retain any memory for old customs."

At the present day the sanctity of Kataragam is reputed to be due to the tradition that the god halted on the highest of its seven hills on his return homeward from the conquest of the Asuras. "The particular spot...where Kataragama first met Valliammal in the guise of a hungry and thirsty *pandaram*, or mendicant, and begged of her to appease his hunger and quench his thirst, when she was watching her *chena* cultivation as the adopted daughter of a Vedda chief, and preparing cakes from a composition of honey and *sami* or milled flour, is pointed out at a distance of more than four miles from the temple. The precise spot again, with footmarks of an elephant on a rock, where she had suddenly encountered the ponderous brute and entreated the *pandaram* to protect her from its attacks, is also shown to the enthusiastic pilgrim[2]."

Now Valliamma was the daughter, or the adopted daughter, of a Vedda, and to this day such Veddas as those of Bandaraduwa who have come under the influence of Hinduism, although acknowledging that the Kataragam God, whom they do not call by any other name, is greater than the *Nae Yaku*, nevertheless hold him in less awe and treat him with less formality than do the Tamils and Sinhalese.

These Veddas know nothing of the other three great gods who protect Ceylon, and they regard Valliamma as a Vedda and speak of her as their elder sister (*akka*), while the Kataragam

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. 1, p. 180.

[2] *Manual of Uva*, p. 30.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God is almost, if not quite, thought of as their brother-in-law. 776
In fact the divinity of the God and of his consort has not 777
among the Veddas reached the proportions it has among the Sinhalese and Tamils. It has already been stated that among the Sinhalese the spirits of the dead who desire to become *Baṇḍāra* present themselves to the Kataragam God, and from him obtain permission to receive offerings of cooked food (*adukku*) in return for benefits to be conferred, or to smite men with sickness and other disasters, and we were told that the Kataragam God would not refuse any spirit who approached him with this request[1].

Further, these Veddas hold that the man may become pos- 776
sessed by the Kataragam God in the same way as by the *Nae* 773
Yaku, and the god is worshipped at certain shrines in the Kovil Vanamai district which are traditionally associated with Veddas and are said to be of Vedda origin. One of these at a place called Kokkadichchola is said to have arisen as follows.

A Vedda and his wife were cutting the trunk of a tree for honey when the tree began to bleed and they found in it not a bee's nest but an infant. The Vedda became possessed and while this condition lasted the God within him announced that he was the Kataragam God and that a temple must be built to him there. When the Vedda returned to his senses the child could not be found, but in its place was an image of the God.

Returning to the beliefs held by the Bandaraduwa people 775
concerning the *Nae Yaku*, these can be best illustrated and 769
explained by considering the events following the death of a Kovil Vanamai man called Tuta.

The day after our arrival at Bandaraduwa a Vedda called Kaira came to our camp sobbing and shaking and protesting that he could not stay long with us as his brother was dead. He seemed deeply affected, though another brother, Kaurale, who was with him appeared quite calm, which led us to suspect that his uncontrollable agitation was due to something more than mere affection for the dead man, and we soon discovered

[1] This belief in spirits of the dead obtaining license from the Kataragam God is also held by some rural Sinhalese.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the offering is placed. The dance is held at night and continues until morning when the whole community eat the offering, though only the men dance. We were shown a pot in a small cave near the settlement which was said to be kept there purposely, and which it was stated was used for boiling rice for the ceremony.

We may now consider the religious beliefs of certain communities in which the third stratum of belief already alluded to is dominant. Such communities are the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne and those of the Eastern Province and Tamankaduwa, among all of whom the *Nae Yaku* were known and reverenced, but the great Vedda heroes have all disappeared, their place having been taken by numerous Sinhalese gods and demons. Some of the village Veddas even build temples, rough bark or mud huts like their own habitations in which the various symbols of the *deviyo* and *yaku* are kept and in which the shamas dances.

Such a temple was seen at Yakure dedicated to Gange Bandar Deyo, here also were two rough stones leaning against a tree on the *bund* of Yakurewaewa which were held sacred to Gane Deyo (Ganesa).

At a place called Nadena, where there were said to be Veddas until a few years ago, on the road running inland from Patrippu in the Eastern Province, there is a temple containing an image of Ganesa and this is looked upon as a Vedda shrine. Other temples or shrines in the Eastern Province are traditionally associated with Veddas though none survive at the present day, except, we believe, at Portiv near Patrippu and at Mandur.

Village Veddas of the Bintenne.

At Dambani and the neighbouring settlements of Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the *Nae Yaku* are held to be of great importance. Reference has already been made on p. 50 to the difficulty of working with these village Veddas, and our information concerning the religious beliefs of the Dambani folk was obtained from the Arachi of Belligala; with regard to Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the little information we possess was obtained at first hand and carefully checked, and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 fowls of the majority of Veddas, or the abstinence from the flesh of fowls of the shaman in communities, the lay members of which eat fowl except before dancing. Nor does it explain the similar abstinence from pig which Mr Parker suggests may be due to the unclean nature of its food, for it is "an eater of dead bodies which might be those of human beings[1]." Further, the abstinence from the flesh of elephants, leopards and bears is hardly to be explained as due to foreign influence; we believe that these animals are not eaten because they are, and always have been, difficult to hunt by a people as poorly armed as the Veddas, who were not driven to attempt to kill them on account of the scarcity of game. There was in fact no necessity to attempt to kill them, for deer were easier to hunt and more pleasant to eat; so the Veddas gave them a wide berth and their flesh was not regarded as food, and if come by accidentally, as when a dead elephant was found in the jungle, its flesh was not eaten because it was new and strange[2].

In the same way the flesh of buffalo was not eaten, for buffalo are perhaps the most dangerous of all Indian animals to hunt, and as for the flesh of the domestic cattle, it is obvious that no Veddas except those who kept cattle or were village Veddas could have had the chance of eating this meat. Once this stage of sophistication had been reached, abstinence from the flesh of cattle might easily be dictated by contact with Hinduism, but hardly before. It is of course questionable how far the avoidance of strange food because it is strange and has not been eaten before in the community is a matter of religion, but we have thought it best to discuss the matter in this place because of the view which connects these observances with Hinduism.

Addendum.

[27] Since our return to England we have received from Mr Parker important information concerning the popular beliefs of the Kandyan Sinhalese of the North Western Province. This information bears in a most interesting manner upon the beliefs

[1] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

[2] At Baddaraduwa we were told that once, two or three generations ago, a dead elephant was found in the jungle but its flesh was not eaten.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

which we have classified as belonging to the second and third strata of the Vedda religion. We therefore propose to give a short account of these Sinhalese beliefs, but before doing this we may indicate that in our opinion the Kandyan Sinhalese must not be considered the pure or nearly pure descendants of invaders from the Ganges. On the contrary, we believe with Mr Parker that everywhere throughout the old Vedirata and in the hills west of the Mahaweliganga the present day Sinhalese possess a varying and sometimes large amount of Vedda blood. It is therefore only natural that the beliefs of these peasants should present a mixture of the beliefs of the aborigines and of the races which came later into the island. The actual working beliefs of the Sinhalese are exceedingly complicated; there is first the belief in a number of High Gods of whom Skanda—the Kataragam God—appeared to us to be the most important[1]. Then comes the ever-present fear of a countless number of demons who are responsible for misfortune and disaster, who must be constantly propitiated. The worship of these has given rise to a prodigiously elaborate system of demonology complicated by endless local variations and beliefs, intermixed with which there exists the Bandar cult of the Dead already referred to in Chapter VI. A reverence for Buddha which, as far as we could judge, is stronger in the large towns than in the jungle villages loosely holds together this mass of beliefs which the people call Buddhism[2]. It seems obvious that the Bandar cult represents the remains of the primitive Cult of the Dead which appears to have been the religion of the early non-Aryan inhabitants of the whole of Southern India.

This view has the support of Mr Parker, who writes, "The

[1] Mr Parker writes, "The most important of the Hindu Gods in the opinion of the Kandian Sinhalese is Vishnu, termed by them Mā Vis Unnānsē. I rather think that Ganēsa, termed Gānā Deviyō, should be placed next, the statues of these two, only being found in the wihāra.

"The name of Skanda, Kataragama Deviyō, is perhaps oftenest on their lips; but on the whole he does not appear to hold quite as important a position with the villagers as Ayiyanār, the son of Mōhini. Both are powerful Forest Gods."

[2] The orthodox Sinhalese Buddhists separate their beliefs in the Indian Gods and in demons from Buddhism. Mr Parker points out that "even the erection of the statues of Vishnu and Ganēsa in the wihāra is of comparatively recent date, and is not altogether approved of by the maulu."

Sinhalese demonology is very interesting.... There are many classes of Yaku; but I believe that this Bandara worship is the only indigenous portion of it. I have traced practically all the other demons to Southern India, although the Kapuralas claim that a few others, in addition to the Bandaras, are of local origin. They themselves admit that all the rest are imported from India."

Among these immigrant spiritual beings is one, the Gale Deviyo, who appears to be originally identical with the Gale Yaka of the village Veddas and the Indigollae Yaka of other groups. Mr Parker states that the Gale Deviyo is popularly supposed to have come from India with his Prime Minister Kurumbuda; he is worshipped in Uva, the North Central and North Western Provinces. "He is a beneficent God, who gives food and rain and guards the crops and prevents or checks epidemics." Two miles from the temple at Nirammulla are two caves, and in one of these Kurumbuda killed sixty priests who were there assembled, in order to take possession of the cave himself. Gale Deviyo is danced to annually in July or August on the summit of crags. The dancer, called *anumaetirala* (i.e. one subject to command) represents the god; in the temple he assumes a three-tiered hat and holds a golden katty (*ran kaetta*), and the spirit of the god enters him without any of the usual phenomena of possession. The man who made the katty (or one of his descendants) and the dhobie who washed his clothes accompany the dancer to the foot of the crag which he ascends alone. The hat, katty, and flounces which the dancer wears are kept in the temple.

"In the North Central Province the chief temple of the God is at Indigollaewa, on the southern side of Kalawaewa. The 'dancing rock' (*natana gala*) near it is called Andiyagala. In the North Western Province his chief temple is at Nirammulla, 15 miles N.E. of Kurunegala; and its two 'dancing rocks' are on Devagiriya 'the Hill of the God,' where his original temple was established in a cave which he took by force from the monks killed by Kurumbuda."

Mr Parker points out that it is quite certain that the Gale Deviyo is identical with the Gale Yaka of some at least of the village Veddas, for "there is the same service to him everywhere,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and the same tradition of his coming from Malawara-desa, our Maleiyalam, accompanied by his minister Kurumbuda, called a Yaka, but also by the Kandians a Devata or Godling.

"I got the same account of him from the Tamil-speaking Vaeddas, the Vaeddas of Maha Oya district, the forests south of it, Maduru Oya district, and the extreme south of the Batticaloa district, and the Sinhalese of Uva, North Central Province and North Western Province. He is worshipped in all these three Sinhalese districts. There can be no doubt as to his being a God of the Village Vaeddas.... All in these districts appeal to him in cases of epidemics.... The Tamil-speaking Veddas told me that although called *yaka* he is really their God of all, who taught them everything they know and the names of things and animals, and instructed them regarding their dances.

"The Tamil-speaking Vaeddas address him as 'Lord God,' 'Lord of the Country,' 'Hill Lord' (Maleiya Swami).

"The Tamil-speaking Vaeddas give me the very same account of the arrival of the Gale Yaka and the Gale Deviyo as those of Bintenne and the Sinhalese of the North Western Province. They all agree that he came from Malawara-desa—the Malayalam country—with one minister, and the only point where they do not agree is as to the place where he landed. Some say Kokkagala, others Valeichena on the coast, and the Sinhalese say he came to some hills in their part."

Mr Parker states that the Sinhalese all call Gale Deviyo the god of the Veddas, and the village Veddas told him that a ceremony similar to that described in the North Central Province is performed on Omungala and Kokkagala in the Bintenne. There are temples to him throughout all the village Vedda districts "just like their own huts that might be passed without notice unless specially informed what they are." Where there is no rocky crag on which to dance, the ceremony is performed beneath a tree, and this occurs among the coast Veddas. Mr Parker points out that Gale Deviyo must not be confused with Gale Bandar who came with four or five followers in a stone boat from India and landed near Galle.

To sum up, Mr Parker's observations show that the Gale Deviyo of the Sinhalese of the North Central Province is regarded

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

as an immigrant God from beyond the ocean. Mr Parker states that he is also the most important God of the coast Veddas, and this is supported by our observation that the coast Veddas call their most important God Kappalpei, "Ship Spirit" (Mr Parker suggests "ship demon"), and say that he came from over seas. It is therefore clear that among Sinhalese and coast Veddas a foreign spiritual agency is considered the most important of the Gods and temples are raised to him. This God is danced to on certain crags by the Sinhalese, and similar rites occur among some of the sophisticated Veddas of the Bintenne who also say that the spiritual agency Gale Yaka whom they invoke in this ceremony is a foreigner.

In many communities of Veddas, far less sophisticated than the village Veddas, we were told about spirits who inhabited rock-masses or hills such as Walimbagala, but these did not at all correspond to the Gale Deviyo of Mr Parker. It was perfectly clear that to the majority of Veddas they really were simply local unnamed *yaks*, who were spoken of by the name of the peak or rock supposed to be their favourite haunt, and in only one advanced community were these spirits bearing hill names considered to be immigrants from India[1]. We therefore consider that the Gale Yaka of the village Veddas has been adopted from the Sinhalese by the more advanced communities of Veddas where alone he is known, and that although the foreign rite of dancing to him on crags is still retained, he has to some extent taken on Vedda characters as witnessed by his invocation at the *alutyakagama* ceremony described in Chapter IX.

The temple of the Gale Deviyo at Indigollaewa in the North Central Province has already been mentioned. His wife the Kiriamma is worshipped here with him, and God and Goddess are sometimes spoken of as Indigollaewa Devia and Indigollaewa Kiriamma. Concerning him Mr Parker writes, "I collected accounts of him in all parts, and about Indigollaewa in the North Central Province where his temple is, and they all agree that he is the Gale Yaka, while the Sinhalese of Indigollaewa know him

[1] Cf. Chapter IX, in which is described the *rumale* ceremony by which these spirits are propitiated.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

only as the Gale Deviyo." "The Sinhalese of Indigollaewa and some of the settled Vaeddas near Maha Oya make offerings to the Gale Yaka and the Kiriamma, as his wife, together; no offerings, however, are made to her on the hill tops, which are reserved for the Gale Yaka.... She is a great food provider for the Vaeddas. Some call her Indigollae Kiriamma; others Kukulapola Kiriamma; but both names referred to the same person, they said."

At Unuwatura Bubula, where there is a small settlement of Veddas, we saw Gale Yaka invoked (see *alutyakagama*) in a dance in which the *Nae Yaku* and Rahu Yaku were also invoked. At the same dance a female spirit came, about whom there was some confusion, she may have been one of the *Nae Yakini*, or she may have been the Kiriamma who was certainly known. Unfortunately the Kapurale who performed this dance became ill after it and so was unable to discuss the matter with us. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all, perhaps Gale Yaka had become lord of the dead and so usurped the place of Kande Yaka, as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate dance (see p. 229, *bulatyakama*). No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka might be names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both for good and evil and for successful hunting, was volunteered, and some especially valuable beads were kept to offer him.

At Sitala Wanniya we heard of Indigollae Yaka. The invocation given in Chapter X (No. XXIII) clearly shows that he is of foreign origin, and we were told that Riri Yaka was another name for the same spirit. Now Riri Yaka is the Sinhalese and Tamil blood-devil, a demon with particularly well marked characteristics and considered extremely dangerous. There is thus no doubt that at Indigollaewa the "God of Indigollaewa" is the Gale Deviyo, and he retains this character among the village Veddas, but among the wilder Veddas he acquires Vedda characteristics, becomes an attendant on Kande Yaka, and as a foreigner may

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

be confused with other adopted and therefore little known *yaku*.

The position of the Indigollaewa Kiriamma and her relation to the Kiriamma of the Veddas is comparatively simple. Among the wilder Veddas there are certain female spirits, the *yaku* of old women called *kiriamma* (lit. grandmothers) who were especially fond of children, and would occasionally steal them. They sometimes caused sickness. Most of these live on rocks, and at Sitala Wanniya we were told that the Maha Kiriamma was the chief of these and the *Maha Yakini* were her attendants. All these *yakini* were said to be the wives of Veddas who lived long ago and in no case was the Kiriamma ever mentioned as the wife of the Gale Yaka or of Indigollae Yaka. At Unuwatura Bubula a Gale Yakini was mentioned, and this may have been the female spirit who was invoked after Gale Yaka, and in that case it seems reasonable to suppose that she was the original Maha Kiriamma or Maha Yakini of the Veddas, who has become confused with the foreign Kiriamma (identified by Mr Parker with Mohini in Ceylon), the wife of the foreign Gale Deviyo, who probably was introduced through the Sinhalese to the village Veddas at a very early date[1].

Although she does not appear to have passed from the village Veddas to the wilder Veddas, her consort has been carried on as Indigollae Yaka. Further, although when investigating the beliefs of the less sophisticated Veddas we knew nothing of the foreign Gale Yaka and the Indigollae Kiriamma, we feel confident, from much information volunteered to us, that Indigollae Yaka was an attendant spirit, and there was no connection in the minds of the Veddas between him and their own *kiriamma* who were the wives of long dead Veddas.

Even among the Sinhalese the relationship between the Gale Deviyo and the Maha Kiriamma varies in a manner that suggests that the connection between the two is late. Mr Parker writes, "The Kandians of the North West Province know of no wife of the God of the Rock, and I believe that they alone have preserved the correct tradition in this respect... for it is everywhere

[1] Reference is made on p. 188 to Mr Parker's view that Gale Deviyo is the original supreme god of the Veddas.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

agreed that when the Gale Yaka came to Ceylon he was accompanied only by Kurumbuda. No doubt she had been taken over from the Tamils, through the Sinhalese of the North Central Province, to provide a suitable wife for the Gale Yaka. Probably she is the one called the Alut Devi, the New Goddess."

There is another matter to which we may refer, namely, a suggested relationship of Kande Yaka to Kanda Swami the Kataragam God. This is a matter to which we paid much attention in the field. The circumstances which at first suggest the identity appear to be the similarity in name, and the fact that "Kandaswami's brother... an important deity in the Hindu temples is commonly called Pillaiar or 'the child.'" Further, it has been suggested that because "Kandaswami's favourite weapon is the *vel* or lance," therefore it is "most probably the original of the" ceremonial arrow "which plays so large a part in Vedda ceremonies." The passages between quotation marks are by Mr P. Arunachalam and are quoted because he has put the case for the identity of Kande Yaka and the Kataragam God more strongly than anyone else[1].

Remembering that the Veddas are bowmen and that until a few generations ago all genuine Veddas were dependent for their livelihood on the bow, the last argument seems to us of little force.

We have already (in Chapter VII) made mention of the celebrated temple at Kataragam and of the extent of its influence among the Veddas[2]. At Bandaraduwa and other places where the temple at Kataragam is known by repute, and at Henebedda in the Nilgala district, the god is called the "Kataragam God" and not Kanda Swami (*swami* "lord"). At these places Kande

[1] We quote from the report in the *Ceylon Observer* (May 26th, 1908) of Mr Arunachalam's remarks in a discussion on a paper read by one of us before the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

[2] Cf. Bailey (*op. cit.* pp. 304—305). "The far-famed Hindu Temple of Kataragam which attracts thousands of pilgrims annually from India and is regarded with awe by the Sinhalese is dedicated to Skanda...of the existence of Skanda or of Kataragam the Veddas are profoundly ignorant.". Bailey spoke of the Nilgala Veddas who at the time he wrote must have been in much the same condition as the Sitala Wanniya community is to-day.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yaka is also known, he is always looked upon as a Vedda hero famous for his prowess in killing sambur, he is regarded as a powerful but benevolent spirit who never causes sickness, and who, when invoked and given certain offerings of food, grants luck in hunting. The Kataragam God on the other hand is everywhere held in awe, and acknowledged to be the most fearful of all gods.

Although we do not consider Kande Yaka and Skanda identical we are inclined to agree with Mr Parker that "the two may have been confounded by the Gangetic settlers, Skanda being also known as Kanda Kumara, and being a Hill-god." Any such confusion would be bound to react on the beliefs of the village Veddas or of those communities which later gave rise to the village Veddas. Mr Parker continues, "In *Ancient Ceylon* I have pointed out that Kataragama was an important station in the third century B.C., and suggested that the first settlers who landed near Kirinde... may have concluded from the similarity of names that he and Skanda were the same deity."

Since the above was written Mr Parker has been so good as to send us for perusal a part of the proof sheets of his work *Ancient Ceylon*. We may perhaps be allowed to comment on his main thesis that the Gale Yaka or Gale Deviyo is the god of the earliest inhabitants of Ceylon, and therefore of the Veddas.

In the first place Mr Parker's information concerning the Gale Deviyo was obtained from village Veddas, and the Tamil-speaking Veddas whom we call coast Veddas. He also states that the cult of this God is widely spread among Sinhalese villagers of the North Central and North Western Provinces.

We have noted that we found no trace of the Gale Yaka among the wilder Veddas, although allowed to participate in their ceremonies. However, we heard of Indigollae Yaka as an attendant on Kande Yaka, and although it may be that among the peasant Sinhalese and village Veddas these names are synonymous, this is certainly not the case among the less sophisticated Veddas. Again, Mr Parker states that the emblem of the God is the *Ran-kaetta* the "Golden Bill-hook" (*Ancient Ceylon*, p. 189). This cannot be regarded as a Vedda emblem, for the bill-hook is unknown to the Veddas, who are essentially

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

bowmen, and among whom the arrow in its ordinary or ceremonial form is associated with the invocation of their dead and the other *yaku* whom they worship.

It therefore seems reasonable to suppose that the Gale Yaka is an immigrant god introduced by the Sinhalese to the village Veddas. The fact that politically organized Veddas are mentioned in the Mahavansa as possessing a temple dedicated to the Vyādha Dēva[1]—the Vedda God—in the great city of Anuradhapura in the fourth century B.C. does not seem to us to bear upon the condition of the wilder Veddas, nor do we follow Mr Parker's identification of this God with the Gale Yaka. All the facts adduced by Mr Parker seem to us to be most readily explained by the interaction of Sinhalese and village Veddas as indicated in Chapter I.

[1] Mahavansa, Chapter x, p. 43 (Tournour's translation).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bailey's remarks on these charms, which unfortunately he does not quote, are extremely pertinent. "I shall never forget the first time one of these Vedda charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation.... I was chatting to an intelligent Vedda at my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms....I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant 'behegang! wirooowee! wirooowah!' which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success[1]."

A youth, Kaira of Bingoda, wore a number of bone beads on his waist string. He refused to sell these or exchange them for other beads or cloth, and though obviously not desirous of discussing them, stated that he had made them by grinding down the bones of a bear which he had found in the jungle. Although the remains of animals are not commonly found we did ourselves find the remains of one bear which we identified with certainty by the skull which was tolerably well preserved. The wearing of these beads as a matter of personal feeling by a single Vedda, if not exactly an example of magic, seems to us to be an example of the mode of thought from which magical practices spring and perhaps an example of an early experiment in magic, which under favourable circumstances might give rise to an amulet of bear's bone.

The Veddas of Sitala Wanniya have no charms against bears or other animals and the only charms directed towards this end that we could discover were a number obviously of Sinhalese origin which we collected at Henebedda. Probably these are not of very recent introduction, for we obtained some of them from old Poromala, nicknamed Walaha. Poromala is one of the oldest men of the community and is its leader as

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 289.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX5

789
177

far as a leader can be said to exist, and he told us that he had learnt these invocations as a boy.

789
539

We regret that the names of our informants were not noted in every case in the following charms, but we give them where possible. The transliterations and translations of these charms as well as the comments on them are by Mr Parker who points out that the word *Ōn* occurring in a number of them is the Indian *Ōm*[1].

The first two charms are directed against bears.

Arini kurini, nāga patā gē ja kurē, jaḵ.

Venerable one of noble family (?). O Lord, born in a house in a rock-hole. Be off!

Mr Parker writes, "I do not know the meaning of the first two words of the spell, *arini kurini*. Probably *arini* is derived from *ārya* and the honorific ending *ni*, meaning 'the venerable one.' In that case the second word may be *kulīna*, 'of noble family,' and the whole translation would be as given. *Patā* for *pataha*, a hole, hollow or pool."

This charm was given us by Poromala of Bingoda who said he had known it a long time. Its meaning could not be ascertained in the field. The next charm was obtained from Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, who said it had been used in his youth by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas.

Ōn Dahasak Budunnē kunu gedeṇ upan Nīla Kandīgē baḍē upan Nīlāda Nīlīda, nil, pō ādā, nil, po adī, poḵ.

Ōn! Born in the womb of Nīla (the blue-black) Kandī, born from the heap of filth of a thousand Buddhas (or sages), whether (you are) Nīlā or Nīlī (the blue-black one, m. or f.). Stop! Go thou (m.)! Stop! Go thou (f.). Be off!

The first part is ordinary Sinhalese; the orders to go are in Tamil.

[1] "This word begins nearly all invocations, and it is stated in the *Vishnu Purāna* (Wilson, p. 273) that 'The syllable *Ōm* is defined to be the eternal monosyllabic Brahma.' On p. 274 Wilson adds (f. n.) 'The daily prayers of the Brahman commence with the formula *Ōm bhūḥ, bhuvaḥ, svar*; *Ōm*, earth, sky, heaven.'

"In the *Sacred Laws of the Āryas* (Bühler), I. 4, 6 (Aphorisms of Āpastamba) it is said 'The syllable "*Ōm*" is the door of heaven.' At I. 4, 8 also 'And in common life, at the occasion of ceremonies performed for the sake of welfare, the sentences shall be headed by this word, as, for instance, "(*Ōm*) an auspicious day!" "(*Ōm*) welfare."'

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 787 We were told at Bandaraduwa that if men had no luck in hunting they might thrust an arrow into the ground, decorate it with leaves of the *na* tree (*Messua ferruginea*) or the *mille*, and dance round it. If a shaman were present, which was not necessary, he would naturally take part in this, and any number might participate. This dance was performed at our request, the shaman and a Vedda called Tambia taking part in it. Two clusters of *na* leaves were tied to an arrow, one just below the feathers and another immediately above the blade. This was struck in the ground (Plate XXVII, fig. 1) and the dancers slowly moved round it singing an invocation (No. XV). Soon they both became possessed, the shaman falling into the arms of his supporter (Plate XXVII, fig. 2), almost immediately after which he came to one of the onlookers and promised him a sambar deer if he would hunt in a westerly direction early the next morning. Several times during the dance the performers touched the leaves tied to the upper part of the arrow, and bending low gathered them up to their faces (as in Plate XXVIII, fig. 1), while their hair mingled with the leaves. The shaman afterwards explained that the *yaka* first came to the arrow and the leaves tied to it, and then entered the persons of the dancers who became possessed. Before the *yaka* left the dancers bent low over the arrow shaking their heads violently, and after the dance both men salaamed to the arrow.

776 The *yaka* invoked in this dance was sometimes called Itale Yaka (Arrow Yaka), and though identical with Kande Yaka, there was nevertheless a tendency to think of Itale Yaka as a separate spirit, who was not so generally well disposed as Kande Yaka. We discovered this by the shaman refusing to sing the invocation into the phonograph when we were surrounded by children, lest his attention being attracted, the *yaka* should come, which might be dangerous to the little ones. It must be [197] remembered that the Bandaraduwa community had been much exposed to foreign influence, so that there is nothing surprising in their *yaks* having to a certain extent assumed the dangerous complexion of Sinhalese and Tamil demons.

535 Although the arrow dance originally had, and still has, a religious significance, since it is danced to procure game and as

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the onlookers, who were all willing assistants, he filled the palms of his hands with milk and bounded forward, and raising his hands with every step he scattered the milk, and in this manner the *yaka* within him showed his pleasure. Next he took the *kirikoraha* from the tripod with both hands (Plate XXXIV, fig. 1), spun it on the ground, and immediately it left his hands he fell back. The spinning was prophetic, for in that direction towards which the bowl dipped as it came to rest, there game would be found; and on this occasion it dipped to the north. When the shaman revived a few seconds later, Kande Yaka had left him, and he was possessed by Bilindi Yaka again. With shouts, gasping and trembling, he came to most of the onlookers and promised good hunting in the usual manner, then he took the *kirikoraha* and spun it, but when it left his hands the spirit departed from the shaman and he fell back.

The dance was now over, and all were eager to partake of the coconut milk which had been offered to the *yaku*, for none of it might be wasted. All the men took a little, and also fed the children with it, but the women were not allowed to partake of it. However, as the mere contact of the milk had virtue the shaman rubbed some on their heads. In other less sophisticated communities women were not looked upon as unclean, and they shared in this and other food offered to the *yaku*. As has already been stated there is little doubt that the idea of women being unclean has been borrowed from the Sinhalese, among whom it is very strongly held. A little of the contents of the *kirikoraha* might also be rubbed on the heads of the dogs which were supposed to be more likely to hunt successfully after this.

The Kirikoraha at Sitala Wanniya. Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were all invoked at the *kirikoraha* held at Sitala Wanniya. Indigollae was held to be the principal attendant of Kande Yaka, and though the invocation sung to him refers to "seven pots of blood" our informants were unable to give us any meaning for this[1].

Handuna, the shaman of the Sitala Wanniya community, did

[1] This matter is briefly discussed in Chapter X after the invocation (No. XXXII) to Indigollae Yaka.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela did so also, with the result that Kaira dropped his head forward, shook violently and nodded his head sideways in a clumsy drunken fashion, and in a few seconds, still supported, jerked his limbs forwards and moved to the offering, after which he came back to where the women were standing and fell again into the arms of Vela. His chin was thrown back and his whole body trembled, while he gasped a word or two occasionally and fanned himself with his cloth vigorously. He held the cloth over the child suffering from yaws and promised to cure him, then putting both hands on Handuna he let his head fall on the latter's chest, and while trembling and shuffling his feet asked how Handuna fared. Handuna replied that game was scarce, and Kaira then spoke to the wife of Handuna and again to Handuna, and promised help. Then leaving Handuna he danced with wild leaping steps round the *kirikoraha* and gasped that now he must go and so leapt to the *maesa*, bent his head over the offering, and fell back exhausted. But he soon began to dance again, twirling the arrow blade between his fingers, till after a short time he returned to the *maesa*, and again bent his head over the offering; then with a great shout he took the pot of rice in both hands and spun it on the ground, and as he did so the *yaka* left him and he fell back. 769 535

Spinning the pot had the same significance here as at Henebedda, the direction towards which the pot dipped showing where game would be found. In this instance the pot was so full of rice that it did not dip at all, but this was considered a good omen as game might be expected on all sides. 769 787

After all was over Handuna took an arrow, and standing by the *maesa* pointed the arrow to the pots, and called upon all the *Nae Yaku* to feed. The pots were soon removed, the rice they contained was eaten, and the betel leaves from the *kirikoraha* chewed, but the milk in the *kirikoraha* was poured over a heap of twigs laid on the ground, being thus devoted to the *yaku*. 769

Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa. Some account has already been given in Chapter II of the abnormal conditions prevailing at Bandaraduwa, so it will only be necessary to touch lightly upon this subject here. Some twenty years back these Kovil Vanamai Veddas, of whom the Bandaraduwa Veddas 177 769

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 769 are the remains, lived much the same life as the Henebedda Veddas now live, and like them were in transition between a purely hunting, honey-collecting life and the settled condition of the village Veddas who are mainly dependent on their chena produce. When we visited Bandaraduwa the Veddas were in a sorry condition and had settled down among the Sinhalese. It is true they dwelt in separate huts, but they were built on the same chena which had been allotted by the Government to them all, and like the Sinhalese they were paying taxes[1]. Naturally living in such close contact with the Sinhalese they have been influenced by them, and intermarriage has taken place, so that in many cases the Vedda identity has been lost. However, those of them who still considered themselves Veddas have retained a number of their old songs and many of their old customs, as comparison with the uncontaminated Sitala Wanniya Veddas showed. But even these customs, though Vedda at root, had been largely coloured and often overlaid by Sinhalese beliefs, so that when a death occurred not only was it necessary to make offering to the new Nae Yaka but it was equally important to propitiate the nearest Buddhist priest.

769 535 A *kirikoraha* was prepared in the usual way, and betel leaves put in it as well as the coconut milk. The shaman Tissahami, wearing a *hangala*, placed two *aude* on the *kirikoraha* and salaamed to the bowl. (Plate XXXVI, fig. 1.) Then he began to dance in the usual manner to the accompaniment of a drum played by a Vedda lad, first holding one *aude* and then one in each hand, that in the right hand being for Kande Yaka and that in the left for the *yaka* of the deceased Tuta. The use of the drum, which was of Sinhalese manufacture, must be regarded as an innovation, for although these people used them, and the Bendiyagalge people said they would if they had them, [177] the Sitala Wanniya Veddas declared that true Veddas never possessed or used a drum[2].

[1] It must be remembered that about sixty years ago Bailey, a Government official, encouraged the Veddas of Nilgala to make chena and since then the custom has spread. Sixty years ago these Veddas, and in fact all except the long established coast and village Veddas, must have lived a life very little different from that of the Sitala Wanniya group of to-day.

[2] The readiness with which this community accepted an innovation was demonstrated

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535
787

At the same time an invocation was sung, presumably to Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaka*, but our notes are not quite clear about this; it was however certain that Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nae Yaka* all came, indeed that the last was unable to come without Kande Yaka, but it was not clear when each *yaka* came and went, and it seemed quite possible for the shaman to be possessed by several *yaku* at once.

As the shaman danced he stabbed at the *kirikoraha* with both the *aude* (Plate XXXVI, fig. 2), in this way the *Nae Yaka* by whom he was possessed was pleased to show his power. Sometimes as Tissahami made the usual half turn on his heels he held the *aude* against his hips pointed end outwards. Soon he began to quiver and bend his head forward, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers, into whose arms he fell back (Plate XXXVII, fig. 1). After lying still for a few seconds he revived and began to dance wildly, stabbing the *aude* in the air; this was in order to frighten people, for although the feeling of the *Nae Yaka* towards his living relatives was friendly, provided always that he had been well treated by them and had been offered sufficient rice, coconut milk and betel leaves, the *yaka* was not averse to showing his newly acquired power. After this, in order to show his favour to his relatives the shaman went to both the brothers of the dead man in turn and sprinkled them with coconut milk from the *kirikoraha* (Plate XXXVII, fig. 2), he put his arms on their shoulders and promised them luck in hunting, and taking two betel leaves from the *kirikoraha* he put one on the chest of each man, and the leaves being wet with the milk stayed where they were placed for a short time. Suddenly leaping away the shaman, now apparently possessed by Kande Yaka and probably with the spirit of the *Nae Yaka* still within him, tracked an imaginary sambar round the dancing ground, holding the two *aude* crosswise to represent a bow and arrow. This is shown in Plate XXXVIII, fig. 1, which also shows the betel leaves on the chest

by the shaman who wanted to wear Sinhalese leggings with bells, although he said these had not been worn before in a Vedda ceremony. The leglets, which he greatly admired, had been worn by a peasant Sinhalese at a devil ceremony which had been held two days before at a village a few miles distant.

[177]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and black pigment. It closely resembled that used in the Bambura Yaka ceremony at Uniche.

535
796

(vii) The *tadiya* is well seen in Plate XLI, fig. 1. It is a short stout stick, and represents a carrying stick or *pingo* which is used throughout Ceylon; however, it was quite unlike one, as these are long and springy and resemble a bow; moreover, Veddas usually unstring their bows and use them as carrying sticks.

(viii) The *nimiti* or book (explained as book of omens, and said to be borrowed from Sinhalese ceremonies) was made of a couple of broad strips of bark in imitation of the *ola* books used in Ceylon[1].

[787]
[177]

The *haelapeta* and *ran kaduwa* were said to belong to Devatayo of those names, but nothing was known about them. Devatayo or Dewa are Sinhalese spirits distinct from the *yaku* according to Sinhalese beliefs, but Handuna, our best informant at Sitala Wanniya, said Devatayo were the same as *yaku*. Obviously they had been introduced and assimilated to the Vedda *yaku*.

After all the sticks had been painted some cooked yams were tied up in leaves and bound to one end of the *tadiya*, and some wisps of grass were tied to the other to represent monitor lizards (Plate XLI, fig. 1), the whole was then put on the lower stage of the *maesa* with cooked yams for all the *yaku*, while a portion of yams was placed on the upper stage for Koriminaala Yaka, but no reason could be discovered why his food was kept apart from the rest. The dance began by Handuna singing an invocation (No. XXIX) to Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and Kaira, who wore a *hangala*, held the *mulpola itiya* in his right hand, letting the decorated end rest in his left, then he danced slowly round and round in front of the *maesa* facing east, the direction whence the boar of the story came. The *mulpola itiya* was soon changed for the *ran kaduwa*, and now Kaira made long leaping steps, widening his circle as he moved in front of the *maesa* and

[1] The *nimiti* omen or book is perhaps the most curious of all the properties. It was said that Bambura Yaka could read and write, and that he was the only Yaka who had these accomplishments, though nothing was known as to how he had learned them. But certainly this part of the ritual was old and must be the result of quite ancient contact with a Buddhistic people.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The story relates that there was once three brothers, and one day the youngest was very angry and quarrelled with his wife. He left her in his cave and went out hunting, and when he returned he found a strange man in the cave with his wife. The stranger escaped so quickly that the angry husband could not shoot him; but he then beat his wife, and though he did not kill her he jumped into the fire and was burnt to death and became Gini Rahu Bandar or Yaka. When they died his two brothers became Rahu Yaku also.

A post was placed in the centre of the cleared dancing space, the upper end was split and bound so as to form the support for a pot containing coconut milk, a few areca nuts and betel leaves. This was called the *wilkoraha* (lake pot), for once in the old days water was required to make the coconut milk for an offering to the Rahu Yaku, and as there was no stream near by it had to be fetched from a lake; hence the name *wilkoraha*. A *maesa* (well seen in Plate LXVIII, fig. 1) about 4 ft 6 in. high was built of sticks at one side of the dancing ground, and two pots of cooked rice and coconut milk were put on it as an offering to the *yaku*. A piece of bark to represent a necklace was put on the *wilkoraha*; it was not known why it was necessary to offer a necklace to the Rahu Yaku, but it was always done[1]. Wooden *kadawa* (swords) were used when invoking Rahu Yaku; these were two flattened sticks about 18 ins. long decorated with bands of red and yellow pigment and with guards made of twigs of fresh green leaves. One of these *kadawa* without its guard is shown in fig. 11.

The use of the sword (*kadawa*) and the objects themselves are both curious, for Veddas have never used any weapon but the bow and axe, and Handuna explained that though these were called *kadawa* they really represented ceremonial arrows

[1] It was quite clear that Vedda men never wore necklaces, but *yaku*, especially dangerous *yaku*, as the Rahu Yaku were declared to be, were sometimes offered necklaces or pieces of bast to represent them. Thus at Unuwatura Bubula, Indigollae Yaka was considered especially dangerous, and the shaman kept a particular string of old and highly valued beads and used it only when making invocations to this *yaku*. These and other instances strengthen the idea expressed in Chapter VIII that beads are prized among the Veddas for their magical properties, the idea of ornament being quite secondary.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
978.
177

or *aude*, yet *ran kaduwa* the "golden sword" is mentioned in many of the songs and invocations, so that it seems that the whole of the Vedda ceremony of the invocation of the Rahu Yaku has been taken over from the Sinhalese, among whom the cult of Gini Rahu Bandar occurs. This borrowing must have occurred in ancient days, perhaps as long ago as the time when the Sinhalese invaded the Vedda country and carved the drip ledges on the caves, for as already mentioned the Sinhalese Rahu Bandar has become identified with three Vedda brothers whose spirits have retained only traces of the fierce nature of the Sinhalese demon. Once having borrowed the idea of a sword (*kaduwa*) and invocations in which it was mentioned, its name would remain, though in course of time the implement would become assimilated to the Vedda *aude*.

796
535

Handuna and Kaira put on *hangala* and stood in front of the *wilkoraha* with the *kaduwa* in their hands, and Handuna began to recite the invocation to the Rahu Yaku (No. XXXV). Kaira took up the words and repeated them, always a few words behind Handuna. Soon they began to dance slowly round the *wilkoraha* holding the *kaduwa* in the same way as the *aude* is held in dances, i.e. right hand on point and left hand at the base of the handle, and as they danced they twirled them slowly in their fingers (Plate XLVIII, fig. 1). After a short time they both swayed their bodies more and the dance became more vigorous; then they began to shiver and shake their heads and became possessed by the two elder Rahu Yaku. They shouted, leaped and raised their *kaduwa* in the air, twirled them round with their

Fig. 11. *Ran kaduwa.* ×½.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann 5-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

mortar was brought and a bowl containing coconut milk in which betel leaves floated was placed upon it. The shaman placed a betel leaf from the bowl on the *aude* and presented one to each of us in turn, as a sign of favour on the part of the Wanagata Yaku, speaking in a hoarse gasping voice and raising his arms alternately the while. He returned to the post, and, grasping the bast streamers, bent his head (Plate XLIX, fig. 2) and quivered all over before dancing round it with both *aude* in his hands; finally he clasped the post with bowed head, and the *yaku* left him.

The Alutyakagama Ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula

796

The structure of the *alutyakagama* is well shown in a number of the figures illustrating this ceremony, and is especially clear in fig. 1 of plate LII.

It seems probable that this is not a pure Vedda ceremony, but is to be regarded as an amalgamation of a dance to Kande Yaka and the Nae Yaku, whom this people called the Alutyaku (i.e. New Yaku), and of a dance to Gale Yaka only met with under this name here and at Omuni. We were unable to determine whether the *alutyakagama* structure had always been used when dancing to Gale Yaka, and had been carried from his cult to that of the Nae Yaku, or had long been considered necessary for the invocation of the Nae or Alut Yaku. Perhaps neither of these events occurred; indeed, we consider it most probable that both dances have been confused with the *kolamaduwa* or one of its early forms such as the *ruwala* ceremony which is described later on in this chapter, and which is almost certainly of foreign origin.

Unuwatura Bubula is a small and extremely poor settlement of Veddas, of whom a general description has been given on p. 47.

796
535

The dance began by Sela Kaurala repeating an invocation with a handkerchief on his head[1], while Naida Kaurala holding

[177]

[1] Unfortunately we have no exact note stating to whom this invocation was sung. It is most probable that it was to Gale Yaka, as this was the *yaku* by whom the shaman was first possessed. If this is so the fact of the handkerchief being held over the head is of interest, as Mr Parker identifies Gale Yaka with the Sinhalese Gale Devlya who is depicted with a three-tiered hat, which is also worn by his dancer, called

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

a handkerchief between his hands danced first round the *alutyakagama*, and then in and out between the posts, at times holding the handkerchief over his head (Plate L, fig. 1). We were told that these handkerchiefs would be kept apart for the *yaku* and would never be used for any purpose other than dancing. The shaman, Sela Kaurala, soon became agitated and was supported, and the Gale Yaka entered his person. Now he assumed the rapt expression of one possessed, pulled down his hair, and with a shout caught hold of the leaves hanging from the *alutyakagama*, where he continued to dance in and out of the structure, shaking and hitting the hanging leaves as he passed, but frequently stopping at the west front to take hold of the bunches of leaves while quivering all over and shouting (Plate L, fig. 2). Now a rice-mortar was brought into the *alutyakagama*, and the shaman placed the offering of cooked food upon it for the *yaku* to see and appreciate the good things provided. The *aude* was then placed on the rice pot, and the shaman, holding the leaves with both hands, shouted and shook his head, and then, taking an *aude* in either hand, picked up a few grains of rice on one of them (Plate LI, fig. 1), which he smelt, and although he did not eat them the *yaka* now pronounced the food to be good. About this time the shaman became possessed by one of the *Nae Yaku*. Three times the shaman inspected the rice, being possessed by a different *Nae Yaku* each time, and each spirit shouted his satisfaction. We were unable to discover the names of these as the shaman was taken ill after this dance, but there seemed no doubt that the dancer would know the *Nae Yaku* by whom he had been possessed. The shaman now wore two long necklaces of beads, putting them round his neck and under his arms, so as to form cross shoulder ornaments; we were told that these were for the *yakini*, but we were unable to discover whether this was one of the Alut Yakini or Gale Yakini who was mentioned in this locality.

The ceremony continued for some time as before, the shaman frequently shaking the leaves, shouting and gasping, and again inspecting the food. There was very little dancing, but this may

avumatirala, when dancing to him. Sometimes, however, when a three-tiered hat could not be obtained the dancer held a handkerchief over his head.

[117]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

from his previous fatigue, invoked Walimabagala Yaka and Yakini. The dancing of these *yaku* exactly resembled that described at the beginning of the ceremony, and is therefore not further recorded.

THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

755
535
177

It seems very doubtful whether the *kolamaduwa* as it exists at the present day should be described as a Vedda ceremony at all, though as it was danced by the Henebedda Veddas at Bendiyagalge it merits a description. It is in any case certain that the *kolamaduwa* is not often performed, as the amount of food and other properties necessary could scarcely have been found by one small Vedda community[1]; also its main objects, the curing of disease in cattle and epidemic sickness among men, would not appeal greatly to small communities of hunters dwelling in healthy surroundings. At the present day the Henebedda Veddas make rough chena and herd cattle for the Sinhalese, but the cattle have not yet become an important factor in their lives, and the people themselves do not suffer from epidemics. Further, at Bandaraduwa, on the borders of the Eastern Province, the only other place where this dance was known among Veddas, we were told that they would perform it for the Sinhalese, and that each dancer would be paid Rs. 5 for his trouble besides being given his food. Our aged Sinhalese informant, mentioned on p. 31, told us that the *kolamaduwa* was not danced by these Veddas when he was a boy, and that he considered it had arisen as an elaboration of the *ruwala* ceremony which used to be performed in those days. The *ruwala*—already described in this chapter—itself shows signs of having been introduced from the Tamils of the east coast, though probably at a comparatively remote period. Great numbers of *yaku* and *yakini* should be invoked at the *kolamaduwa*; some,

[1] According to Tissahami all the following offerings were necessary for a full ceremony. Eight measures of rice and two large pots in which to cook it, 10 coconuts, 5 bundles of yams, 50 plantains, 2 sugar canes, 100 betel leaves, 12 candles, 1 lb. sandal wood, 100 balls of jaggery, ½ lb. turmeric, 1 lb. of resin, 4 coloured cloths, 5 yards of white cloth, 4 necklets of beads, 8 small baskets and 8 cloths to cover them, 4 pairs of metal bangles, 1 bottle of ghee and flowers of various kinds.

[X3]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the spirits of people who frankly were not Veddas, such as Peradeniya Bandar; others, spirits of men like Panikki Vedda already referred to, famous for catching elephants and buffaloes, who were Veddas in little more than name. Others, if Veddas in name, yet behaved like Kandyan chiefs, if we may judge from their deeds quoted in the invocations, such as building dagabas and bringing paddy fields under cultivation. Some of the Maha Yakini are regarded as the wives of such chiefs, and Unapane Kiriamma is in this community regarded as the wife of Unapane Wanniya, the chief who first brought the paddy fields at Unapane under cultivation.

The Kolamaduwa Ceremony at Bendivagalge.

This was admittedly not a full ceremony. Although the bower was built the correct offerings were not made nor were all the *yaku* invoked, and a disturbance which took place the next evening was said to be due to the anger of the *yaku* on account of the lack of offerings (see p. 125). Plate LIII, fig. 1 shows the *kolamaduwa* with bunches of leaves hanging from the horizontal bars of the framework and a circle of leaves called *kolavegma* suspended from the centre, that is, the crossing of the horizontal bars. The shaman, Sita Wanniya, Randu Wanniya and Kaira, holding bunches of leaves in their hands, walked round the circle within the upright posts while they sang an invocation to the *yaku* to come to the leaves of the *kolamaduwa*. Soon they began to dance (Plate LIII, fig. 2) with the usual step, gently at first, but gradually swaying and bending more and more they brushed the leaves of the *kolamaduwa* with those they held in their hands at each step.

A basket covered with a cloth had been placed on a tripod in one corner of the bower, and this should have contained various offerings for the *yakini*, including flowers and beads; not having either to offer, a few leaves had been put in it. Sita Wanniya seized this basket called *pakudama*, and danced with it in both hands, then after a short time he shouted "Ah, ah!" and became possessed by the Maha Yakini. When the Sita

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911 .
AX5 Vedda AX5

forest near the hunter to make him believe that the game he is following has run away. 796

Bedi Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who breaks sticks and causes dead branches to fall and so frighten game away. 782 773

Kili Mas Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who cut up the animal whose flesh and blood were used at the first *avana*.

Polu Mas Vedda, who smoked part of the meat of this animal.

Melihi Vedda, the *yaka* who blinds hunters so that they cannot track the wounded game.

Ahuru Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first snapped his fingers to call his dogs.

Ihurun Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first whistled to his dogs to come hunting.

These eleven *yaku* are considered strong enough to kill folk and to send sickness; it appeared to us that the individuals of this group were not carefully differentiated but rather regarded as one power. [753]

The Korala of Bakiella who has already been mentioned said that a leaf cone (*gaṭuwa*) containing blood was placed on a heap of leaves with flesh from the throat, tongue and ears of the kill and the whole offered to the 64,000 Maralu Yaku and 64,000 Kadawara Yaku. The leaf cone is a distinctly Sinhalese feature and the ceremony described by the Korala had become entirely Sinhalese in character. This is borne out by the invocation which was written down for us by the Korala. 796 782 777 539

Atu avanā ē dewa mantraya Kaḍawara Riri Yakaṭa Yakinniṭa.

Vittāla nāmara sindāpoti bisawun wahansīge hrudaya pallā bikī nnu Kaḍawāra Riri Yakshayā Yakshinīṭa atu awanak aetun koṭu awanak aetun, amu mas amu riri aetun.

Adat mama andagasā kaeṭa kera dennā. Mama yana issaraṭa rakera an munayak gendāiṇ, ālī pāḍu kera dīlā, vaḍā mennā iḍ(sara)ṭa kera dīla, amaren gijat (a) marey piṭat willā, marana paikera dīlā, maessī langaṭa wīdew ennā wāgē, hambe hanwuṭa magul aetek baenda palikera wāge, ālu pāḍu (ka) ra denda Kaḍawara Riri Yakshayā Yakshīgen waranni.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXE Vedda AXE

786
782
177
539

"The invocation to Kaḍawara Riri Yakā and Yakini, when presenting blood in the shelter (made) of branches.

"There was (on a former occasion) an (open) shelter of branches, there was an enclosed shelter, there were fresh meat and fresh blood for the Kaḍawara Riri Yakshayā and Yakshini, who having guarded (?) the pool of the General Queen at Vēṭāla Nuwara (the Goblin city) became demons.

"To-day also having summoned (you) I present the (same) offering. Before I go I solicit from the Kaḍawara Riri Yakshayā and Yakshini that they will bring a head with beautiful horns (to me), that they will make good all deficiencies, make my shots unerring [lit. present (the game) before the point of the shot], should I get into difficulty that they will overcome it, decree that I shall kill (game), (enable me) to approach a calf (fem.) like the buffalo cow comes up (to it) [i.e. without alarming it], rope a lucky tusk-elephant to the post, as though defending it (?), and that they will make good all deficiencies."

The above transliteration and translation have been prepared by Mr Parker who points out that the written invocation is full of errors, and therefore difficult to translate, but it does not contain any "Vaedi expressions" and "only a few difficult words." We have consulted Mr Parker in the hope that he might be able to throw some light on the matter of the origin of the *avana*, but although his remarks are in many ways interesting and suggestive, they do not really explain the origin of the ceremony, though he is inclined to agree with us that the ceremony is of Vedda origin[1].

[1] Mr Parker writes: "The Sinhalese have also some Vaedi Yakas though they have no connection with the eleven spirit yakas of your ceremony, who are chiefly protective. There are also 'Vaedi' Kaḍawara who are minor subordinates of the Kohomba (Margosa) demon or Yaka. *Kaḍawara* is a compound Tamil word meaning according to a story that was related to me both in Ceylon (N.C.P.) and at the Trojan temple, 'the celestial who escaped' compression by Siva the Indian god, when he slaughtered in his embrace six others created by his wife, and thus made them into the Kataragam God Skanda, the Indian war God, called also Kanda Kumara, with six faces and twelve arms."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539
[177]

come may (you) be fortunate. While putting (your mouth) to a boat (shaped vessel) of human blood (and) while drinking (may you be) delighted[1].

At Sitala Wanniya Indigollae Yaka was regarded as an attendant upon Kande Yaka. It is therefore obvious that this invocation did not arise at Sitala Wanniya or among any Veddas retaining their original *yaka* beliefs, and it is in fact an excellent example of the foreign element in the Vedda religion, and is especially interesting because it is possible in this case to indicate how an invocation of horrific nature has been introduced.

This matter has been discussed in the addendum to Chapter VIII; we may, however, suggest that the boat-shaped vessel of blood may refer to the murder of the 60 priests.

What we have written on p. 165 concerning the attributes of Indigollae Yaka among the village Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula shows that he has entered their beliefs as a powerful but beneficent spirit, though revengeful of neglect or insult. At Sitala Wanniya he is a *yaka* attendant on Kande Yaka. He may have attained this position immediately on his adoption, in which case his terrifying invocation must have been subsequently introduced and carelessly attached to the friendly *yaka*. Or the invocation, which is clearly only a fragment of a long formula, may portray something of his character when first adopted, and though his attributes have been softened to the usual friendly quality of Vedda *yaka*, a portion of the invocation appropriate to him may have lingered. We consider the first of these hypotheses the more likely, but in any case the existence among the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya of the foreign Indigollae Yaka as a beneficent attendant on Kande Yaka, who is nevertheless invoked with a formula typical of a bloodthirsty Sinhalese demon, is a most interesting example of the foreign elements that we now find in the Vedda religion.

Invocation to the Maha Kiriamma.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXIII. *Sarambara warat sonda sonda nelu arti. Ewā nahanaṭa sonda sonda lipē yati, eka mupu kaḍa*[2] *haradana yati senaga pam hari Sarambara pam haraga yati Pangara-gannanā.*

[1] Deriving *lawd* from *ram*.

[2] *eka mupu kaḍa* for *eka-mupuna kaḍa*, things strung together.

CHAPTER XI

ARTS AND CRAFTS

517 It is not our purpose in this short chapter to attempt to describe systematically the crafts of the Veddas, this has already been done by the Sarasins and we shall, therefore, limit ourselves to touching on matters which especially interested us, or concerning which we have unrecorded information.

The arts and crafts of the Veddas are of the simplest nature, their belongings are few, and there is no certain attempt at ornamentation on any of these. Even personal adornment is so lacking that it may be disregarded. The highest artistic attainments of the Veddas seem to be their songs and invocations, and these, with their ceremonial dances, in which they may be said to have specialised, seem to have absorbed all that part of their mental energy which remains after providing for their daily necessities. There is no reason to believe that their artistic development was ever any higher than it is at the present day, when the only form of decorative art in which they indulge for its own sake, is rude drawing on rocks which we shall now describe[1].

Rock Drawings.

532 Figs. 1 and 2 of Plate LVI show rock drawings made by the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya at Pihilegodagalge and another cave near it. Since our return we have ascertained that other Veddas

[1] It is possible that a few individuals are pleased by simple geometrical patterns. There are traces of ornamentation on two of the pots shown in Plate LXII although this had avowedly been copied from foreign pots.

[117]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a [531] rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was [177] attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made [172] pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

TOOLS AND WEAPONS.

411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by [437] barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes 411 or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *kobbevul* 322 (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained, it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of [283 a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind 314] that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the tinbiri tree (Diospyros embryopteris).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411 648 It appears that painted and lacquered arrows were sometimes presented to the Veddas by the Sinhalese kings as signs of gratitude or favour, just as ceremonial forms of other objects were presented to particular Sinhalese[1]. Dr Willey told me of a lacquered bow and arrow which he heard of among a community of sophisticated Veddas, and which he was told ultimately found their way to the Kandy Museum. Among the peasant Sinhalese of Nilgala we heard of a lacquered arrow—said to have been lost recently—which, according to tradition, had been presented many generations ago to the Vedda ancestors of its last owner by one of the kings of Ceylon. With regard to the specimen in the Kandy Museum, the arrow is feathered in the usual Vedda style, the condition of the lacquer on it shows that it is of considerable age. The iron which is said to belong to it is loose, and it is entirely unlike any arrow head we have seen. Instead of having a tang it has a socket into which the end of the shaft must have fitted, and there is a shoulder or "stop" upon the iron. The bow shown us as having been acquired with the arrow was in much better condition and had a small band of silver or some metal resembling silver round it. According to the account given at the museum both specimens were procured from a priest who gave a history of the specimens which does not connect them with any Veddas[2].

224 177 Traps and snares are unknown among the least sophisticated Veddas, but at Danigala we saw a small deadfall trap avowedly introduced.

HONEY.

222 The importance of honey in the Vedda diet has been mentioned in Chapter IV as well as the large part it plays in barter. The honey of the *bambara* (*Apis indica*) is taken in June and July, though at other times of the year small combs are taken

[1] There is in the Colombo Museum a beautifully lacquered weaver's shuttle, presented to certain cloth makers by one of the Sinhalese kings.

[2] It was stated that the bow and arrow had been found in the verandah of a disused house with some broken articles said to have been thrown there, having been taken from the *walawwa* (house) of Molligoda Adigar. The house was in the Kegalle district. The villagers gave the bow and arrow to a priest who brought them to the museum.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clear what opportunities existed for obtaining it. Deer and pig would be killed and eaten, and snakes were said to be killed without a scruple though one informant denied that he would kill a cobra. 262

Time did not allow of any systematic study of the religion of the Verdas, but it was clear that this had been much affected by Tamil influence while yet retaining some of the more obvious outward features of the Vedda cult of the dead. Unfortunately we had no opportunity of ascertaining definitely whether the Verdas have also retained the essence of the Vedda cult, i.e. the belief in the loving-kindness and the guiding influence of the spirits of their dead, though since the leader of the dance seen at Vakarai showed the classical signs of "possession," there seems to be every reason to hold this belief at least provisionally. The dance we saw rehearsed at Vakarai was said to be performed for sickness and in thanksgiving when a good harvest had been gathered. The dance took place at night, the men dancing in relays till daylight, the women squatting on the ground, but taking no part. No food is taken during the dance, but some is placed upon the "altar" *kudaram* (lit. cage or small shed, *T*) which is eaten by all in the morning. 771 177 525 796

The temple seen at Pellanchenai, of which a rough plan is given in fig. 14, was a building some 12 feet long by about 10 broad; it faced east and the roof was carried forward for a few feet beyond the front wall in which was a door. A stout pole (marked *P*), thought to be some 30 feet long and consisting of a young tree with the bark removed, stood in front of the temple about 30 feet from the entrance. To the north of the pole and about 8 feet from it was a hole in the ground *F*, really a small well containing water, while to the south of the pole and at a distance of about 12 feet from it there was a young tree before which a small platform *T* (*kudaram*) was built, on which a rough stone rested. Some distance beyond the pole and somewhat to the south of it stood a tree *H*, apparently quite dead, with a fringe of dried leaves and small twigs round its trunk, before which were the remains of a *kudaram*; to the south-west of the pole and roughly in the position of *Y* in the plan, a limb of a tree was planted in the soil. The branches 346

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1]. 776

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe. 535 755

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated. [292] [782]

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*. 177 778

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarale*. 793

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1 535 796

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

motions, once more put their arms round them, soon after which the dancers fell limply into their arms. The leader of the dance seemed especially excited at this stage and, trembling and quivering all over, stood back to the pole and wildly waved his scarf in the air. Soon his movements became less vigorous, his head nodded on his shoulders and hung down on his chest as he addressed the other dancers in a harsh and broken voice (Plate LXXI). In view of the Vedda ceremonies which we subsequently saw we have no doubt that he prophesied good fortune. It appeared to us that this old man really presented the ordinary characteristics of Vedda "possession," i.e. the dance, though only a rehearsal, had produced the customary effects associated with it, and certainly this old man's muscles continued to quiver irregularly for some time after the dance was over. As for the remaining dancers we have no doubt that the dance remained for them as it had begun, simply a rehearsal and an amusing piece of acting.

535 796 787

Such dances are held only to cure sickness or in return for good crops, and it was emphatically denied that anything similar took place after childbirth or death.

535 796

Very little was elicited concerning death and mourning ceremonies. The corpse is washed, and it seemed that although this is usually done by a barber or *dhobie* (professional washerman) it might be done by one or more of the relatives of the dead man. The grave must be at some distance from the habitations of the living and also from their cultivation patches. No fire is lit on the grave. A feast is held a few days after burial, which appears to be called *bati bane*, and the food for this, especially rice, is provided by the near relatives of the dead man and distributed. A *kudarum* is built upon which the food is placed for "a short time" as an offering to Kapalpei, after which it is eaten by the assembled people.

764

This account agrees with that given by the Sarasins, who record that a coast Vedda, Pereman, when asked about his religion "laughed and said they had that of the Tamils, they honoured their dead by cooking rice in front of their house, folding their hands, saying a few words and then eating the rice. As they did this they spoke the name of the deceased and said: 'Help

769 177

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

us in danger, sickness etc.' When we enquired whether their dead lived on as spirits he replied, they did not consider whether the departed were living or dead, they were just spirits, in Tamil *sami* or *dewi*, in Sinhalese *yako*; all spirits were alike, neither good nor bad. Another coast Vedda named Patiniya told us that their religion was that of the Tamils. In memory of their dead, whom they called *yako*, they cooked rice and ate it; they invoked the *yaka* in sickness, etc.[1]"

Just as Kapalpei sent sickness, so death was also attributed to him, but perhaps not epidemics, for it appeared to be generally considered that a single death would satisfy him for the time, so that it would be days or weeks before he would be expected to send sickness or death again.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 498.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

caloa and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.* 131 [177] [184]

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt. [137] [136]

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in *their* barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other. 184 361 342 224

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡ 161

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter 177

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenna. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited. [177]

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. [341] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their [241] chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; [224] and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [illegible] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gàté, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticalao boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

439 now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough with the Singhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests.

224 411 They have the reputation of being expert with bow and arrow, and as it is only the larger game, such as elk, deer, etc., which they pursue, it is very probable that with their remarkable power of creeping stealthily through the jungle, they may be able to come upon their prey unawares and do execution. But they are miserable shots at a mark. I never saw more than two 411 decent hits made at several small "archery meetings," which I have, from time to time, got up for my own amusement and their pecuniary advantage. And with regard to the latter, I must con- [177] fess that I never saw that contempt for money which Tennent supposes is still existing.*

The practice of drawing the bow with the feet to which Tennent also alludes as still in use, has so long ceased, that in all my inquiries—and I was very particular on this point—I could not find a single Veddah who ever witnessed it, but it is undoubted that such a mode of archery once existed, as is traditional among them.†

224 They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no 231 distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued. Knox tells us, that dogs were given "for portions with their daughters in marriage;"‡ and Percival relates, that "before the last war broke out between us and Holland, a Dutch officer sold a couple of Weddah dogs at Surat, for 400 rix dollars, about £30."§

---

them not, they will do him a mischief one time or another by shooting in the night. If the smith make the arrows, he leaves them in the same place where the Veddahs hung the flesh." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 62. *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, and note; also vol. i, part. v, chap. ii, p. 568, 2nd edition.

* "Money to them is worthless." *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, 2nd edit. I had been told that they would refuse silver, not knowing what it was, and would accept copper. But I never had a rupee refused when I tendered it; and the word "rupee" is by no means unintelligible to them. A good many years ago, I can well believe money was worthless to them, but that was long before Tennent's time.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part iv, chap. iii, p. 439. Some wild Veddahs of the Batticaloa district shewed Mr. Birch, when making some inquiries among them at my request, how the bow was drawn with the foot, but said it was never so drawn now.

‡ Knox, part iii, chap. i. § Percival, chap. xiii.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

3: Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda Propitiation Ceremony.

The Veddas are the remnants of what may for convenience be referred to as the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon. They are found exclusively in that part of the island,—the greater part of it wild jungle country,—which is bounded on the north by the Verugal Aar, on the east by the sea, on the south by the Gal Oya, and on the west by the central mountain *massif* and the middle reaches of the Mahaweliganga. They vary greatly from group to group in the degree to which they have intermarried with their Sinhalese or Tamil neighbours, and have adopted those neigh-

101
131
177
184
[p. 187]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

177 bours' language, customs, and manner of life. In a few of the
184 remoter forest fastnesses of the interior there are still to be found more or less pure-blooded Veddas who continue to support life
144 by the precarious *chena* cultivation and by hunting: but in addition to these pure-blooded Veddas, who are a very feeble folk indeed in point of numbers, the inhabitants of many of what are generally recognized as Sinhalese villages, and the so-called "coast Veddas," who have their settlements in a few places along the eastern coast to the north of Batticaloa, are to a greater
114 or less extent of Vedda origin. The Veddas as a race have been visited and described by C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann [1] and more recently by Dr. R. L. Spittel [2] of Colombo. Of the coast Veddas
114 the Seligmanns say,—"although these coast Veddas, or Verdas as they call themselves, have intermarried with the Tamils and
796 have adopted many Tamil customs, they still have remains of the old clan system of the Veddas, and although they usually speak Tamil, the majority of them say they have a language of their own which they consider to be the old Vedda language, and which was found to be Sinhalese. They have roughly-built temples, and we were told independently in two settlements that the chief agency worshipped was called Kapalpe or Kabalpe, *i.e.*, "ship spirit." At first we feared some misunderstanding, but when one of us was shown within one of their temples, into which after some trouble he was allowed to penetrate, a small model of a ship partly square rigged was seen, and it was stated that at a
796 special ceremony this was hoisted to the top of a pole some thirty feet tall which stood outside the temple." [3] The ceremony to be described in what follows appears to be in fact that conducted for the propitiation of this "ship spirit" and of the goddess Ammal, and, if so, it is that which the Seligmanns saw rehearsed, in part
121 at any rate, at Vakarai.[4] The description, therefore, imperfect
796 and perhaps inaccurate in some details as it may be, being

[1] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *The Veddas*. See also *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 155 *et seq.*

[2] R. L. Spittel, *Wild Ceylon*.

[3] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 156, 157.

[4] *The Veddas*, pp. 335-9.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177 primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Selavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[563] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females.

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas.

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated.

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related.

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail.

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later.

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry.

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier.

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On

We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee relhee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

"How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

†*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

000 habit acquired as much through the necessity of directing their teams as from their solicitude to warn off wild beasts. The chief of the gang, as we said, was garrulous. His proclivity for vagrancy sustained a religious fervour, which betrayed itself in the incessant punctuations of his eloquence with such phrases, as "By the grace of Buddha," "If God wills," etc. With his future life he took no risks; for there was not a shrine in two provinces, Buddhistic or Hindoo, he had not visited. He shouldered his pingo impatient of departure, but lingered to honour us with a ingratiating glance; interpreting it rightly I gave him a pittance; but the same look bestowed on my friend (who had no sympathy for even amusing humbugs) was only wasted. He left us with his uproariousness ringing in our ears, and the regret, in my heart at least, that I was not of his company.

The Danigalla Veddas were within easy reach of us at Nilgalla, the picturesque frontier of the Vedda country. But, so soon after our experience with the Henebedde Veddas, we were in no mood to repeat all over again the tedious palaver that contact with them would mean. For generations the classic show-Veddas of Ceylon, within easy reach of the Bibile resthouse on the high road, they and their ancestors had often been summoned to satisfy the thirst of scientists, or the curiosity of casual visitors. On such occasions they would appear clad in the scantiest rags, equipped with bows and arrows they seldom used, and, feigning ignorance of Sinhalese, would assume that moroseness and ferocity of expression they knew to be expected of them. What wonder then, that some of the impressions carried away, gave as true a picture of the real Vedda, as a performing animal of his wild brother?

One of the younger Veddas had accompanied us all the way from Henebedde to Bibile. He had been unfortunate enough to sell our cook some bear's grease and leopard oil; and no change being available in the jungle, he had no alternative but to accompany us some twenty-five miles, burdened into the bargain with a forty-pound tent! The look of blank wonderment he bestowed on the miracle of a moving automobile is a memory difficult to efface.

[pp. 21-33 include no information on the Vedda. - Analyst]

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Unapana *weragu*, like all the other *weragu*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *weragu* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *weragu* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *weragu* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *weragu*s after similar occurrences under *nabadu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gemena*). 619 173 [551]

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season. 177 178

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *hanana* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukkan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukkan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukkan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more." [437]

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas. 161 186 731

8. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

241 THE genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark
181 by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a chena than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas
[184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a
222 large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June
177 and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his
142 outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature—
[826] and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a degree, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

322 is taken, barked, and straightened by being passed rapidly a few times
411 through a flame, and then bent over the knee or between the hands. It is shaved down to uniform thickness with an arecanut-cutter or arrow blade, and cut to suitable length, roughly gauged by holding it along the outstretched arm from the nearer nipple to the end of the middle finger, giving it an average measure of two and a half feet, or slightly less. An arrow belonging to the great bow I have mentioned, measured three and a half feet. The nock or notch is a quarter of an inch deep and cut square.

411 The arrow is feathered with the wing plumes of the owl, devil-bird,
237 jungle-cock, or large crane (*mana koha*); the owl's, besides being the
284 best, are easily picked up along dry stream beds, on the trees bordering which the birds usually roost. A feather is split unequally down the rachis, only the larger segment being used. Four such segments, about two inches long, are arranged equidistantly round the shaft, an inch and a quarter from the end, and bound neatly down with *aralu* fire, the mouth helping in the process. The first turns are merely taken round that part of the shaft, which is immediately below the feathers, then round the bared lower ends of the rachis, and then carried along, at spaced intervals, between the carefully separated barbs. Should a strand not prove long enough, it is finished off by having its end tucked in between rachis and shaft, and another is similarly begun. Finally the ruffled barbs are straightened out between the thumb and fingers moistened with saliva. A few turns of fibre just below the notch serve to give grip to the drawing fingers.

411 The arrow-head is made of flattened iron obtained from local black-
smiths. It is three to five inches long, of lanceolate shape in imitation of the *na* leaf, and sharp at the edges; serving as much as a cutting implement as an arrow. By a tang it is let into the end of the shaft to which it is firmly secured with fibre. All the strung parts of the arrow,
[824] as well as the bow-string, are finally dressed with the sticky milk of *kiri-wel* to prevent untwisting. Both bow and arrow, being very liable to the ravages of boring insects, are always kept hung over the smoke when not in use.

The method of stringing the bow is by placing one end of it, to which the string is knotted, on the ground, and then pressing on its centre either with the bent knee or by a foot thrust. A correctly strung bow should measure at its centre a span between string and belly of bow; this is rather more than the "fist-mele" (clenched fist with thumb upright) the rough estimate of European stringing.

The arrow release favoured by the Veddas is that in which the cord is drawn with the first joints of the index and middle fingers, the arrow being usually placed on the left of the bow. The style of archery is often peculiar: the arrow fitted to the bow is raised head high; the right elbow is now swung up in an awkward flourish above the head, and then brought slowly down to alignment with the eye, as the string is drawn out to its fullest extent and the arrow delivered.

DANCING

177 The ceremonial dances of the Veddas have been minutely described
and illustrated by Seligmann. The dance we are about to describe
535 seems to have been performed before him in its greatest purity at Henebedde. The differences between his description and ours must be

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

177 535

attributed to Sinhalese influence, especially the substitution of the mortar for the tripod, the drum for the slapping of hands and thighs, and the introduction of the coconut scraper and betel leaves.

The *kirihoraha* (milk-chatty)* dance has for its object the co-operation of certain ancestral spirits (*Nae Yakku*) in hunting enterprises. The occasion for it is a period of repeated ill luck, which is attributed to the disfavour of these spirits, whose names are, *Kande Yakka*, the great hunter, his brother *Bilinde Yakka* and their wives *Kudu Hora* (nest thief) and *Pol Hora* (coconut thief) respectively; also *Hath-kudu Hora* (seven-nests thief), elder brother of the two she demons. Significant signs in the ceremony are the fine bubbles that form when the coconut milk is handled, and the manner in which the coconut divides; if the halves are equal the omen is good, in unequal, bad.

535 796 [776] [787]

In a clearing was placed a mortar and on it a bowl containing a coconut with two arrows laid across the brim. Kaurala, the dancer, took care to eat no meat that morning. Having smeared his head with lime-juice and his body with saffron, he would have worn a white cloth borrowed for the purpose, had we not dissuaded him from covering his picturesque nudity, much to the disapproval of the other Veddas who feared the anger of the spirits invoked.

[262]

The dance began quietly enough. Taking up the coconut and an arrow, the performer clasped them together in his hands which he placed now on the shoulder, now on the head, now well before him, as he walked round the mortar chanting a supplication to *Kande Yakka*. Soon he began hopping alternately on each heel, making half-turns with the body so characteristic of Vedda dances, and sweeping his arms semi-circularly. Gradually the monotonous song loudened to the drum-beats, and more and more vigorous became the contortions of the dancer, whose shaggy hair covered his face and whose body streamed with sweat. So he danced for perhaps a half hour, when suddenly he became as one possessed. *Kande Yakka* had "covered" him. Shouting the fearful name he staggered to the mortar and, bending over the bowl, split the coconut in halves. He stood by panting, while the coconut was scraped, the milk prepared, and seven betel leaves were arranged around the sides of the bowl, which was then replaced on the mortar with a single arrow across it. The other arrow, with a betel leaf transfixed in its point, was now in the hands of the dancer who holding it at both ends resumed his movements. *Bilinde Yakka*, the spirit next invoked, soon possessed him. The dance was then continued to each of the other spirits, male and female, in turn. By each of these he was successively possessed. With each possession the strange, wild-eyed figure before us, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, shouted the name of the mastering demon,† and threw lifeless hands on the shoulders of one or other of the onlookers as if for support. Eventually, when the frenzy was at its height, he had just breath enough to gasp out the inspired message that the spirits were propitious and success was assured‡. With his forearm he indicated the length of the quarry's horns and, pointing to the heavens, the favourable time for starting. Then, taking up the two arrows and the bowl containing the two halves of the coconut, the milk and the betel leaves, he danced

*Coconut milk is the juice obtained by squeezing out with water the scraped kernel of the coconut.

†*Pana hiyanawa.*

‡*Hooy galgawara magalah alla thenawa.*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously. 131

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. 101 [301] [167]

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were apparently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very jealous of their women. [36] [626] 152]

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine. 576 [411]

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukhan* and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community. 342 [241]

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit! 101 361

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting. 161 177

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from 224

131 eastern part of that island in separate hordes and families. Nowadays, these Veddas can only be found in the plains of East Ceylon which territory is bordered in the south by the Arukan Aru River: it is commonly called "Mahaweddarata" meaning "Great Vedda Land." This name, however, has at present very little meaning because one can hardly find any real Veddas in that part of the country [144] but rather a population having more Singhalese than Vedda blood in their veins.

● 177 The Veddas of our times have for the greater part adopted the culture of the higher civilized population of the island of Ceylon. Really primitive Veddas hardly exist any more.

141 The Sarasins describe the Vedda people as one of short
131 stature; for the Veddas of the central districts they found an average height of 155.4 centimeters, for the tribes of the east coast one of 155.8 centimeters, and for the Veddas of the Wewatte territory one of 160.7 centimeters. However,
144 if from the number of Veddas of the central districts those
141 individuals are eliminated which show signs of interbreeding with other elements or can be regarded as such, then one will find a much shorter stature for those Veddas who seem to be of purer race; their average male's height is 153.3 centimeters, /108/ with a minimum of 146.0 centimeters and a maximum of 160.0 centimeters. On the average, the women are about 10 centimeters shorter than the males.

005 Characteristic physical features of the Veddas are:

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason
161 to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this
221 time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led
621 a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakhan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

222 Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and
411 arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted
423 of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to
621 the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

614 The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *waruge*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states
197 that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil
121 tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirakodoi*, "nothing," is said

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *kodoi*, *tiru* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure 1) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *waruge* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *waruge* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Arachi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

614 they belonged, which suggested to us that perhaps they belonged to Uru *warige* or one of the other clans which are considered of inferior status. Although the Arachi of Belligala did not know their *warige* and believed that they had really forgotten them themselves, our opinion was confirmed by information obtained later from the Arachi of Alutnuwara who said that they were of the Uru and Namadewa *warige*, while a Vedda of Horabora-wewa told us that his mother came from Dambani and she was a Namadewa woman.

576 609 As the Arachi of Belligala assured us the Bulugahaladena Veddas lived in a condition precisely similar to those of Dambani, we did not visit their village but arranged for two of them to visit us at Belligala; they greeted us in the same way as the Dambani folk, with loud and guttural voices, accentuating all the "chs," and shook hands. They brought some honey and yams. They said they could not bring *bambara* honey (for it was too early in the year) so they had brought honey from the stingless bee. After a little while they gradually dropped their [194] guttural tones, especially when they were speaking to the villagers and not to us, their voices, naturally deep, assumed a sing-song tone not unlike that of Nila of Sitala Wanniya. We consider that the gruffness of these Veddas is almost entirely affectation. They have been expected to be sullen and morose and never to laugh. For thirty years the Arachi of Belligala has acted as "show-man" to the Veddas of his district, and he always speaks to them in their "language" in similar or even fiercer tones, and he has shown them so many white men that he has quite lost count of their number. He has thus helped to keep up the fiction of "wildness," for these Veddas are not wild since they are not shy but come up, shake hands, ask for presents, and offer to dance.

178 We believe that they keep up few, if any, of the old Vedda customs; they cultivate chenas and keep cattle, their bows and arrows are probably more for show than use, for the Arachi told us that some of them possess guns while others go to the Sinhalese and borrow them. Deschamps says that Veddas never 157 laugh nor have they ever been seen to smile. Of course this is not true of the Veddas of Nilgala, nor do we think it is true of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

601 576 Terms of respect were commonly used in addressing the aged, thus although *siya* or *mutta* really mean father or grandfather, these words might be used as terms of respect in addressing any old man, and in the same way the terms *kiriamma* (grandmother) or *atta* might be used to any old woman, and we were told that *siya* was constantly used by members of the group in addressing the "senior" or patriarch. An individual of either sex would call his or her father-in-law's father *siya* or *kiriappa*, and a mother-in-law's mother is addressed as *kiriamma*.

Clan Organization.

614 178 It has already been mentioned that the Veddas at the present day are divided into clans (*waruge*); almost every man who calls himself a Vedda can give the name of his *waruge* and this applies even to many village and coast Veddas in whom there is a minimum of true Vedda blood. The clan organization of the Veddas was first pointed out by Nevill, who says: "The Veddas north of the Mahawaeli Ganga have lost their original divisions... and reduced to a few isolated families....The Vaeddas known as coast Vaeddas have abandoned most of their ancestral customs and I cannot even ascertain from them their original name. Vaeddas of the forest districts do not preserve any tradition of relationship with these Vaeddas of the coast[1]." Nevill then gives 614 the following nine names as those of the Vedda clans, to which he adds the Veddas of Tambalagama Pattu, Kattakulam Pattu and Anurajapura as true Veddas though their *waruge* names seem lost.

1. Morana waruge.
2. Unapana waruge.
3. Bandara or Rugam waruge.
4. Namada, Namadana or Nabadana waruge.
5. Ura-wadiya waruge.
6. Uruwa waruge.
7. Kowil waname.
8. Aembala or Ambala waruge.
9. Tala waruge.

(1 *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 176.)

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

4

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDAS OF GUNNER'S QUOIN

THE ferry at Periathurai marked the end of our river journey. Some miles inland was the rock called Gunner's Quoin round which Veddas lived. 131

Under a bo-tree by the river was an image of Ganesha the pot bellied, elephant-headed Hindoo god with offerings of withered lotus flowers before him. In a temple hard by, were massive bells and drums that kept deafening accompaniment on many a ceremonial day when peacock-plumed men, in the self-imposed torture of skewered cheek and pronged back, bounded hither and thither in delirious dance; and here were the implements, prongs and tridents, these frenzied devotees had dedicated to their unhearing god.

At the Tamil village of Manampitiya we were regaled with an old man's tales of the Veddas. He told us of one Patabanda only recently dead, called *walige**-Patabanda owing to his habit of wearing his loin cloth long behind. It appeared this Vedda was a fine marksman. A *rata-mahatmaya*† once wishing to test his skill pointed to a small jak fruit on a tall tree and asked him to shoot. The arrow flew true and stuck in the fruit; whereupon the Vedda feigning anger said roughly, "Now give me my arrow; it was you who asked me to shoot". The timid chief proffered money which was disdainfully refused. The Vedda then taking another arrow hit the stem of the fruit so that it fell and enabled him to recover both arrow and fruit. Thus do men pass into fable. 114 173

We were told many another tale of Veddas and their ways, and of matters connected with the ancient ruins to be found on the rock; of an anchorite who had lived in a cave there unharmed by the bears; and of ancient Vedda kings captured by stratagem and fraud.

A walk of five miles the next morning brought us to the foot of Gunner's Quoin. I was now brimming with expectancy; for I was about to see for the first time the Veddas in their homes; that aboriginal people who had time and again attracted the scholars of Europe, and in whose veins flowed the oldest blood of the inhabitants of Ceylon. They were here when Wijeya came from India in 543 B.C. and founded the Sinhalese dynasty; long earlier, when that Buddha came who preached to his followers at Mahiyangana after having put to flight the Yakkhas (Veddas?); to an even still older beginning their ancestry went, to a time in the stone age when man vied for existence with prehistoric forms. 114

To-day hardly a Vedda true to the old traditions survives; not one that uses beaten bark for apparel, or depends for sustenance solely on the jungle. The inroads of civilisation and the effects of miscegenation with the neighbouring Sinhalese or Tamils are tending surely towards the extinction of the race. Yet, for all that, many of the old Vedda traits still survive in their degenerate descendants and these are still a link with an unfathomable past. 144 178

*Tail †Kandyan chief

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Unapana *waruge*, like all the other *waruges*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *waruge* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *waruge* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *waruge* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *waruges* after similar occurrences under *nabudu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gamana*). 614 173 [551]

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season. 177 178

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *kanava* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukhan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukhan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukhan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter, he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more." [437]

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas. 161 186 731

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

sticks are easily obtainable from broken branches scattered everywhere. Gama, who was entrusted with the demonstration, chose two twigs, one the thickness of the index finger and about a foot and a half long, the other as thick as the little finger and about ten inches long. Having barked these, he whittled down the centre of the larger stick, and, in the flat surface thus produced, scooped out a shallow cavity, at one border of which he contrived a V-shaped extension. A piece of cloth about two inches square was placed on the ground under the centre of the stick which was held firmly down, cavity uppermost, by the toes of the operator, aided by the hands of an assistant. The smaller stick was then placed vertically over the other—its point, rendered bluntly conical, engaging in the cavity—and briskly rotated between the open palms. The firm downward pressure with which these movements were accompanied, caused the palms to descend the length of the stick from time to time. As often as this happened, the hands were quickly disengaged and re-applied as before to the upper part, and the twirling manoeuvre repeated. This had been done but twice when smoke was seen. Soon a small heap of charred dust like coffee-grounds accumulated round the hole, to escape down the V-shaped gutter on to the cloth. The smoke increased; there was a smell of charred wood. Suddenly a spark was thrown on to the black dust and the rag caught fire. A few dry leaves were collected and set alight. Within two minutes of the commencement of the operation there was a lively fire. When the smoke is observed to come from the accumulated dust, apart from that at the point of contact between the two sticks, it is a sign that the object is achieved. The rag is then rolled to enclose the dust—cigarette-fashion—and blown into at one end, so that it soon smokes heavily and catches fire. 372

It is strange that an art so simple in adept hands (not by any means so in those of a novice) should have been allowed to fall into disuse in wild Ceylon. I have seen refinements of this method; a coconut-shell, flat stone, or skull of a small animal for instance, being used by an assistant to press down the vertical stick, and a twist of bark to rotate it but they were less effectual than the simple procedure I have described. [178]

ARCHERY

322
411

The present day Veddas, we have seen, are poor bowmen; they have, however, not yet quite lost the art of fashioning superb bows and arrows.

The bow is made from the *mahakakala-gaha* or the *kobawela*; the stone bow (*gal-dhunna*) from the *gatawela-gaha*; the bow string from the inner sheath of the bark of *aralu-wel*.* [324]

The size of the bow is proportioned to the archer's strength. I have seen one six and a half feet long and as thick as a child's wrist; and, judging from its drawing power, no hand but a giant's could have wielded it. The usual length of a bow is from five and a half feet to five feet ten inches. It is made of a single stave, thick at the centre, without contrivance to give grip, flattened along the back, and tapering towards the horns which, without being notched, are tightly encircled by a few turns of cord to prevent the string slipping.

The arrow is made from the *ee* or *velang*† tree, the wood of which when dry is of remarkable lightness. A straight twig the girth of the finger

*Terminalia chebula.
†Pterospermum suberifolium.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

757
752
832
276
824

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kohomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *hansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *neengalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-hadurugedde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *kirinthea*.

276

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *hansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat.

832
539

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams.

342
[178]
[574]

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*," he shouts. "*Kiribala, haria, haria, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*." A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them.

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—
142 both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable.
291 A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments.† Indeed, almost the only difference
[304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have
[301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with
515 their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait,
302 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their
114 crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smok-
[276] ing is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

•181 When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*antiaris innoxia*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

element as they are in the midst of a civilized crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear. [481]

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back.

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made," and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonoomadala (*stereospermum chelonoides*), the kokala (*cyathocalyx zeylanicus*), a creeper called kobbówel, or the pandôre tree.

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zeylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the areloowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

2. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

241 THE genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark
● 181 by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a *chena* than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas
[184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a
222 large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June
·177 and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a
142 Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature—
[826] and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a degree, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

familiarity savouring even of impudence and disrespect. But that is because they know no better. I have had a Vedda address me as "*tho*," a word now used only towards a very inferior person. A Vedda once took my gun and cartridge-bag to shoot us something for dinner. He returned empty-handed and disgruntled. I inquired what ailed him. 181 [576]

"What sort of cartridges are these?" he said, throwing down the bag contemptuously. "You fire at a wanderoo, and he sits and grins at you. You fire again, and he grins the more. You want six or seven big shot for animals, not *kurrukkan* grains."

I asked him how he knew the size of the shot in my cartridges. He answered that he had looked inside. It was not until the next day that I realised the thoroughness of his investigation. Every single cartridge in the bag, some fifty or more, had its wad at a rakish tilt! When I upbraided him for the liberty, he disarmed my wrath by laughing uproariously.

On one occasion we had pitched our tent under a big tree which caught fire through the carelessness of our cook who had pursued his occupation by its foot. As I lay in bed ignorant of a blazing branch overhead, I was warned repeatedly by the carriers of the danger of my position; but to these anxieties my tiredness made me deaf. "After to-night," said a Vedda, "no devil will be able to return to Colombo!" The words were electrical in effect—and in good time too, for the branch fell just as the tent was dismantled.

The quaintness of the Vedda language is always a delight. Not knowing the art of dissembling, they say just what they think. They are capable of exquisite and spontaneous similes and metaphors. Vulgarity is natural to them, and their talk is interlarded with phrases that would make a navvy blush.

I have said that a Vedda laughed uproariously. Now, it has been stated repeatedly, by persons professing to know all about Veddas, that these people are incapable of laughter. The statements have even gone to grotesque lengths as the sub-joined extract testifies.* When a 181 152

*THEY NEVER LAUGH

MOST SOLEMN TRIBES IN THE WORLD.

Laughter, and the faculty of being merry and bright, are gifts of the gods to a world in which there is not too much sunshine at any time.

But this gift, according to the scientists who know all about these subjects, has been denied to the Veddas, the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon. It is the only people in the world who never laugh, and in consequence they are thin and flabby folk, and a fat man among the Veddas would be an extraordinary sight for sad eyes. A traveller who has studied the early races in Ceylon gives some interesting particulars about this curious tribe.

For nearly 2000 years, according to the best chronicles, these people, now almost extinct, have preserved the same characteristics, and no one, so far as history reveals, has ever seen a smile on the face of one of them or heard a laugh while in their section of Ceylon.

Why these people do not smile is a mystery. They alone of all the people on the earth know nothing of the sensation of laughter.

A scientist, who recently journeyed to Ceylon for the purpose of investigating this question, persuaded some of them to permit him to tickle them in the ribs and in the middle of their feet with straws, and never caught even the flicker of a smile on their faces, nor did he ever succeed in making one of them squirm and laugh aloud during the operation.

(*Continued on next page*)

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

181 sophisticated Vedda knows what is expected of him he will act up to
152 the expectation right enough. Personally I have never yet met a Vedda who could not laugh. The truth is that the Vedda will laugh with the best of us when there is occasion; but he is a stranger to the conventional, hypocritical smile of civilisation, meant only to please and so uncertain an index of the heart. The Vedda's face, like a child's, is a mirror to his mind.

His natural expression is one of apathy and moroseness. Schooled to hardship and privation, he is neither greatly distraught by sorrow nor transported by joy He expresses his emotions with more moderation than we; he is the greater fatalist; and accepts with stoic equanimity the hard conditions of his life which have wrought into his expression a dour indifference, a decorous gravity.

There is something naturally fierce in his nature; and it does not do to anger him. The tradition is undoubtedly true that the Veddas, at one time, carried in their betel bags fragments of human liver which they chewed when roused, to give fire to their frenzy. And this is probably the origin of the Sinhalese threat, "I'll eat your liver!" There is a spot in the Eastern Province which commemorates to this
[173] day an early incident of colonisation: A Vedda had once way-laid and killed a European soldier, and going up to him could hear the ticking of his watch; examining this he said, "His life is still here," and dashed it to pieces on a rock.

When a Vedda returns from an expedition no one must speak to him until he has rested and it has pleased him to talk first. One who had accompanied us once on a hunt nearly killed a Sinhalese boy who innocently asked him what he had brought, the moment he arrived. Most sportsmen, Vedda or not, are impatient of cross-examination when fatigued—especially if unsuccessful.

771 The Veddas have no conception of a supreme being; nor have they any myth or theory bearing on cosmogony. The panorama of the heavens is beyond their questioning; but its supremacy is instinctively avowed: "*Mā Suriya Deyyo*" (by the Sun God) is an oath by which
195 the Vedda vouches his good faith.

776 Like animals, concerned only with their immediate needs, they take the world very much as they find it. But if the aloof heavens leave their imaginations untouched, not so their immediate environment. Here exist real powers more within the pale of their comprehension, influencing every act of their lives, overshadowing their credulous minds, and affording at least some data on which to found a faith. Is it surprising then that they people Nature with sentient beings, unseen, but very evident by their acts. And what spirits more comprehensible to the primitive mind, more inspiratory of faith and fear, than those of one's

---

Another strange thing about the Veddas, and one which may possibly be connected with their lack of humour, is the fact that every one of them is a George Washington, unable to tell a lie or to conceive of anyone else telling a lie.

They cannot even believe that any one would take the property of anyone else, and association with civilisation has failed to convince them that it is possible.

With all this—or, rather without all this—the Veddas are a peaceable, gentle, quiet people. They take wives without any marriage ceremony, and are faithful and constant to them, supporting them to death.

Aberdeen Paper, 1922

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these [262] birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps 226 were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 278 water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *nahapata*, *puselpain* (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *warugu* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *kangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours'
177 influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut
[562 because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the
783] women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura
144 Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded,
141 since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

184 The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to
361 describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *hile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanliness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is evidence that a hundred years ago there were organized communities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century. 184 361

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the surrounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure 2), though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility. 621 [177] [142] [609]

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been [197] 622 156

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 them was their unhuman apathy and utter lack of interest.... Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

"At the time of our visit there were but three men and 511 seventeen women and children in Makulugulla; these were 342 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but [184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like 622] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any [356 shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

"The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place 511 consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by [352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the 354] Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry 364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were fond, but the place was free from smells, and really 361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

come, but strangely this and the nearly related Sitala Wanniya Veddas were the only communities to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road in which exogamy prevailed. The Henebedda and Kovil Vanamai Veddas all married freely within the clan. It is, however, probable that this is a recent though not quite modern innovation, since at Henebedda it was said that it was particularly fitting that Morane and Unapane should intermarry. 582 611

Nevill recognised the existence of exogamy, and presumably it was of the Bintenne Veddas that he made the following very definite statement, which applies equally well to the condition of things existing at the present day, even among such sophisticated folk as those of Omuni, where genealogies were taken in order to make quite certain of this matter. "The rule for marriage was stringent. The daughter represents her mother's family, the son also represents his mother's family. In no case did a person marry one of the same family, even though the relationship was lost in remote antiquity. Such a marriage is incest. The penalty for incest is death. Thus the daughter must marry either her father's sister's son, or her mother's brother's son, neither of whom would be of the same clan name. Failing these she may marry any of their name, and should no such bridegroom be available, marriage into a third family becomes necessary[1]." 582

If the distribution of these Vedda communities in which exogamy prevails be studied on the map it will be seen that with the exception of the Sitala Wanniya and Godatalawa (Galmede) groups all the Veddas to the west of the Badulla-Batticaloa road are exogamous, whereas those to the east of the road contract marriage within the clan. [184]

As a matter of convenience we now give a list complementary to that on pp. 71 to 74 showing what *waruge* were represented in each of the communities we visited. Danigala: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the last not acknowledged). Henebedda: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the latter properly forming the Kolombedda community and settlement). Kovil Vanamai (Bandaraduwa): Morane, Unapane, Uru (the latter forming the settlement at Uniche). In all these settlements marriage occurs within the clan. 614 582

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

with the Sinhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests[1].

"I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The 'wilder sort' have had too little communication with Sinhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessities of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrowheads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax, and honey, elk flesh and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Sinhalese, or 'the ubiquitous Moors'[2]."

There are no puberty ceremonies for either sex, except among certain Veddas who have been much influenced by Tamils or Sinhalese, among whom the girls are isolated for a short time at puberty. Thus although the following ceremony is observed at puberty by the Uniche Veddas, there is no doubt that it has been borrowed from the local Sinhalese who have a similar ceremony, though according to our information the latter people do not break the pot. When a girl becomes unwell for the first time one of her *naena* places a pot of water on her head and goes with her to some place where there is a *naga* tree. Here the *naena* takes the pot from the girl's head and dashes it on the ground so that the pot breaks. The girl is then secluded in a specially built shelter in which she stays until the end of the period, when she washes and returns to her parents' house. During her seclusion she is attended by a girl, always one of her *naena*, who brings her food in a vessel set apart for this purpose but which is not cooked at a special fire. Among the wilder Veddas no special measures are taken when a woman menstruates, she is allowed to eat the ordinary food, and to sleep in the cave as usual. But among all the village Veddas, and most of those who have mixed at all with the Sinhalese, the menstruous women are strictly isolated, a little shelter being built for them a few paces from the family hut (Plate XX). At Bendiyagalge, where the Henebedda and Kolombedda people were staying at the time of our visit, menstruous women stayed apart at one corner of the cave, they were fed from the pot in

[1] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 283—286. [2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 291.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

302 sister said, "Don't be sorry, I will give you a lock of my hair."
431 She cut a lock from her own head, which he kept until his
585 marriage when he gave it to his wife while she was still at her
593 father's cave. Then he took her to his own cave where she made him a waist string on the second or third day after marriage. To his sister who was then unmarried he gave an axe out of gratitude. Nila cut a lock from his head to give his wife, as his sister was away at the time he was married, otherwise she would have given him one. Pema did not give his wife any hair as her mother had given her some.

302 Among the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula the custom
431 of giving hair as a wedding gift was not known, yet the shaman's
585 wife had a lock which her mother had given her. She assured
184 us that only married women might wear it.

Anything like a formal divorce is unknown, but we heard of
586 one instance occurring three generations ago, in which a woman who had gone to live with her husband left him and returned to her parents. The daughter of a Bingoda man, whose nickname Kupunkarea is still remembered, was given to a boy nicknamed Kankuna "Sore Eyes." As he was lazy and took no trouble to support his wife, so that she was frequently obliged to go to her parents for food, they kept her with them. Kankuna was very angry, but he did not threaten violence or attempt to bring back his wife by force. Later she was given to a Vedda of Bandaraduwa and after his death she went to live with a Sinhalese. It was said that she was an unusually pretty girl.

595 It is quite certain that polyandry never existed among uncontaminated Veddas, but at Henebedda we met with one case that must, we think, be called by this name. Before relating this we may, however, call attention to the fact that polyandry is a tolerably common practice among the Sinhalese peasants of the Vedirata, as it is among the less educated classes in other parts of the island[1].

[1] Cf. *Papers on the Custom of Polyandry as practised in Ceylon*, Government Record Office, Colombo, in which Mr R. W. Ievers, speaking of the Kegalla district, says:—"Having been for six years in charge of a Kandyan district (Kegalla), and having to deal with land cases involving rights of inheritance, and having, as Registrar of Kandyan Marriages, to hear divorce cases, I have found that the custom of polyandry was almost universal; and that in the case of a marriage registered under

1:Seligmann & Seligmann: E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

844 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at
843 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *madu*, which fruits are
262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard
853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would
262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wandurn*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The
844 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round
[184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised
262] by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be dangerously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *katandirale* (devil dancer)
[165] would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who
834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa
551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Gange Bandar, unknown among the wilder Veddas but worshipped by all village Veddas, was known at Unuwatura Bubula. 774 [184]

OMUNI.

The history of this settlement dating back to the first half of the last century has been given on pp. 45 and 46. The Omuni folk believe there are spirits (*yaku*) everywhere in the jungle, but none have seen them; further, there are many *yaku* of each kind or species such as the Indigollae Yaku, the Dadayan Yaku and many others including the Gale Yaku called the Jungle Yaku, who do not, however, frequent the jungle around Omuni. It was said that Ganga Bandar Deyo who lives in rocks in the river is greater than any of these. Omuni was one of the first Vedda settlements we visited, and as the importance of Sinhalese and Tamil gods and demons was not then appreciated no questions concerning these were asked. It is, however, reasonable to suppose that the Kataragam God and other mighty *deviyo* are worshipped. The spirits of the dead (*Nae Yaku*) are believed to be associated with rocks; on the whole they are kindly spirits, but it is necessary to invoke and propitiate them. [775]

A *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some little time after a death has taken place, at which the shaman dances with an *aude* before a *maesa* on which is placed an offering of cooked yams and other food, and the *maesa* is decorated with special clothes kept for that purpose. The *aude* is held in the smoke arising from gum-resin thrown on glowing charcoal, and then pressed on the head of all the male members of the community. If this were not done little game would be killed. 769 782

We have an account of another ceremony performed to cure sickness and when the chena had been reaped, but it is not clear what spirits were invoked at this; presumably the most important of these were certain of the *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*, though the *Nae Yaku* may have played a subordinate part. A shed or very rough house is built and hung with special clothes reserved for this purpose, those shown to us being rather old and worn pieces of linen woven at Batticaloa. A roughly made shelf forming a sort of altar is built in the shed on which 755

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The words used in speaking of the bear are of interest from this standpoint. We believe that in most Vedda communities *walaha* the ordinary word for bear is seldom or never used[1], certainly this was the case at Sitala Wanniya where the word ordinarily used for bear was *heria*. This word was not considered a dangerous word to use when all bears were at a distance, but when there was any possibility of coming in contact with a bear the animal was spoken of as *hatera*, the meaning of this word being "enemy" or "adversary." On one occasion when with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya we came to a hill covered with irregularly weathered rocks and known to be the haunt of bears, Handuna shouted *hatera yanda* ("enemy begone") before taking an abrupt turn in the track which here skirted a mass of rock. He repeated this sentence two or three times in a loud voice and assured us that we could now proceed without running the least risk of meeting a bear, and he himself led us round the rock with every appearance of careless ease, explaining that even if bears were about they would have heard what he had said and would have moved away. Two of the Henebedda Veddas exhibited the same appearance of carelessness when guiding us to a rock-shelter which though sometimes used by Veddas had not been tenanted for some time and bore obvious signs of being the lair of a bear. Sita Wanniya, our guide, explained his attitude by his belief in the power of the charms with which he was confident he could put any bear to flight.

These charms were recited in a loud voice, in fact the last words were almost shrieked and would doubtless have turned any bear, for it is a well known fact that the Sinhalese bear fears man and only attacks when surprised or cornered. This is shown by the circumstances in which the majority of accidents with bears occur. A man coming silently along a narrow jungle track suddenly meets a bear, or disturbs one grubbing behind a white ant heap. It is then that the bear, as much frightened as the man, charges inflicting severe though seldom fatal injuries.

[1] We met with one obvious exception to this rule, the Henebedda youths Sita Wanniya and Poromala used the word *walaha* quite freely even in the jungle, and old Poromala, half of whose face was torn away by a bear some years ago, has been nicknamed Walaha, the Bear. This name was, however, given him by the Sinhalese.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

301 among the wilder Veddas at the present day. It therefore appears that although beads are worn as ornaments by the members of certain communities in the Bintenne there is no [184] evidence for their use as such among the Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road.

301 751 We may next consider certain facts which seem to indicate that beads may be sometimes treated as amulets, or at least as having magical power. At Bandaraduwa where there has been a great deal of Sinhalese influence, one woman wore a piece of knotted string round her throat which had been charmed and put on by a Sinhalese to cure her of some ailment. When we gave her a string of beads she was very pleased and immediately broke the old charmed string and put the beads round her neck in place of it.

At Bendiyagalge all the women were particularly anxious for us to give beads to their children and immediately put these round their necks, but those given to themselves were not usually put on in our presence. In both these cases there is only the suggestion that beads were regarded as anything more than ornaments, and this also holds good as regards the beads of bear's bone worn by Kaira of Bingoda already recorded, but in the following cases the relation of beads to the *yaku* is perfectly clear. The women of Unuwatura Bubula, though they possessed beads of the same kind as those worn by the 301 women of Omuni, were afraid to wear them, and gave them 791 to the shaman to keep and use in *yaku* ceremonies. In this village we found that women would not accept red beads as presents because "they were afraid," though they readily took the white beads offered them, and the shaman when dancing to the Alut Yakini wore cross shoulder straps of old beads, and similar beads were kept for Indigollae Yaka.

301 There is equally strong evidence of the definite association of beads with the *yaku* in other communities, though the reason 782 for this association could not be determined. At Sitala Wanniya a band of bast was placed upon the offering to the Rahu Yaku, and our informants said that they would have used beads instead of the bast had they possessed them. At the same place when preparing for the dance to Dola Yaka, who gives

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

at Aralu Talawa about two miles east of Peria Pillumalai in the Eastern Province on the Badulla-Batticaloa road. Now these Veddas possessed elephants and cattle, so that when two Moormen pedlars came and saw the Veddas living well and in comfort, they thought how good it would be to kill them and take their goods. The Moormen asked the Veddas to barter honey with them, and Moormen and Veddas went to the hill now called Yakagala, for there were *bambara* colonies among its rocks. The Veddas went down ladders of creepers to the combs, but before they could take the honey the ladders were cut by the Moormen and the Veddas were dashed to pieces. The Moormen came back to the settlement and when the Veddas' wives questioned them as to the whereabouts of their husbands the Moormen said they were bathing in a stream close by. The women did not believe this and, suspecting foul play, went to look for their husbands and found the bodies at the foot of the precipice. They went back to their houses, let loose the cattle and fired their houses, for they determined to kill themselves. The elder sister saw the Moormen running towards them, so standing on the edge of a precipice she called her young sister to her saying that her bangle was broken. As her younger sister stood near her she suddenly grasped her round the body and jumped over the cliff. The *yaku* of these women and of their husbands still remain in the neighbourhood of their old dwelling-place which because of them looks clean, as if folk still lived there. The rock bee still lives on this hill to which the Veddas resort to take honey.

POTTERY.

The Veddas make very rough pots. A lump of dark coloured clay is taken, patted into the desired shape, left to dry in the air, and then baked. The Henebedda Veddas who made the pots shown in Plate LXII said that these pots were placed on the fire and covered with pieces of dried wood so as to be submitted to heat on every side. The less sophisticated Veddas of Sitala Wanniya stated that they simply placed the air dried pots on the fire, when they were soon baked hard.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 Our observations on Sinhalese, were very limited, but led us to consider that the acuity of hearing of the peasant Sinhalese between the ages of 30 and 40 did not excel that of Europeans, for although a few individuals had a higher acuity than ourselves, the majority fell below us.

ENUMERATION.

802 This is a convenient place to refer to the question of counting. With regard to village Veddas our observations confirm the ● 184 experience of others that the village Veddas have adopted the Sinhalese numerals, which they use correctly, at least up to 20, but we cannot say whether they are equally accurate when using higher numbers. This facility in counting is not found among the wilder Veddas whose method among themselves on the rare occasions on which they wish to express a definite number is to take small pieces of stick and lay them on one side saying as each stick is put down *ekamai* "that is one." Beyond this the wilder Veddas have a slight knowledge of the meaning of the Sinhalese words for the lower numbers. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya made no difficulty in picking out 2, 3, or 4 pieces of stick from a heap on being given the Sinhalese number; the Sinhalese words for 5 or 6 (though he said he knew them perfectly well) led to hesitation and sometimes to failure in picking out the correct number, while larger numbers obviously failed to convey any precise idea to him. Although we interrogated only two other elderly Veddas of the wilder groups on this matter the results we obtained from them were so like those given by Handuna that we do not hesitate to accept his behaviour as typical of the old members of the less sophisticated groups of Veddas, and in support of this view we may refer to p. 33 on which we have stated the information given on this point by a very old Sinhalese informant. We do not attribute the Vedda inability to count to any lack of intelligence but simply to their having little need to be precise in the matter of numbers[1].

[1] For further information concerning this point cf. *Ancient Ceylon*, pp. 86 and 87.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

caloa and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.*

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt.

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in *their* barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other.

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenna. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited.

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. [361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in [241] wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their [224] chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gâté, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticaloa boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

171 But what is Hindú is, so to speak, the *dead* part of their religious belief. What is in daily practice, bears the closest resemblance to the Nât worship of the aboriginal tribes of India.*

I have, in the preceding pages, faithfully recorded the habits, customs, and superstitions of the "wilder sort" of the Veddahs. 194 To have discussed the "tamer sort," or those who, for a considerable period, have maintained intercourse with the Singhalese or people of the country, would have been a mere waste of time; or to have considered them in connection with their more barbarous brethren would have been to have fallen into the very error, which has marred the exceedingly interesting notice of the aboriginal race of Ceylon, which Tennent has given us. It would have been like weaving a woof of bleached and unbleached threads, so intermingled and complicated that a clear perception of either were impossible. I have confined myself, therefore, exclusively to the most barbarous specimens of the race, for wild as the wildest of the Batticalao district are, they are less barbarous than these.

I now propose to consider the evidence I have collected, with a 174 view to fixing the ethnical origin of these Veddahs. I have shewn that the term "Veddah" has no distinctive signification—that it may be, and is applied to barbarous races generally, who depend on hunting for their support, and hence, to the wild tribes in India, who are supposed to be the aborigines of the country.

It has always been assumed, that the Veddahs of Ceylon are the descendants of the race which originally peopled the island, or, at any rate, of that which inhabited it prior to its conquest and colonization by Wijaya and his followers.† Of this, there can be

---

naturally clean, on the banks of rivers, and in solitary spots." Sir William Jones's works.

* A paper "On the Veddahs of Bintenne", by the Rev. J. Gillings, was published in the Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1853. Mr. Gilling's paper treats of the Veddahs inhabiting that portion of Bintenne which is in the district of Batticaloa, and it shews how materially they differ from the Veddahs of Nigala and the Badulla Bintenne, whom I have just described. He states that they have intermarried with the Singhalese, with whom they are "mixed up to a large extent"—that "adultery and polygamy are still common among them"—that "theft and lying are prevalent"; and he speaks of divorce as habitual. The absence of these practices among the Veddahs of the Badulla district is clearly to be accounted for by the greater isolation in which they have lived.

† Nothing can be more charming than that portion of Tennent's work in which he undertakes the proof that they are the descendants of the Yakkhos, as the Buddhistical writers termed the aborigines. And we may well forgive him for giving way to the temptation of reviving exploded customs, and discussing them in the present tense, in order to prove that the habits of the Veddahs, in the year of grace 1860, are identical with those of the Beseds, in A.D. 400; for there can be no doubt that, about a century ago

3: Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda Propitiation Ceremony.

The Veddas are the remnants of what may for convenience be 101
referred to as the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon. They are 131
found exclusively in that part of the island,—the greater part of
it wild jungle country,—which is bounded on the north by the
Verugal Aar, on the east by the sea, on the south by the Gal Oya,
and on the west by the central mountain *massif* and the middle
reaches of the Mahaweliganga. They vary greatly from group to 177
group in the degree to which they have intermarried with their 184
Sinhalese or Tamil neighbours, and have adopted those neigh-

[p. 187]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

bours' language, customs, and manner of life. In a few of the remoter forest fastnesses of the interior there are still to be found more or less pure-blooded Veddas who continue to support life by the precarious *chena* cultivation and by hunting: but in addition to these pure-blooded Veddas, who are a very feeble folk indeed in point of numbers, the inhabitants of many of what are generally recognized as Sinhalese villages, and the so-called "coast Veddas," who have their settlements in a few places along the eastern coast to the north of Batticaloa, are to a greater or less extent of Vedda origin. The Veddas as a race have been visited and described by C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann [1] and more recently by Dr. R. L. Spittel [2] of Colombo. Of the coast Veddas the Seligmanns say,—"although these coast Veddas, or Verdas as they call themselves, have intermarried with the Tamils and have adopted many Tamil customs, they still have remains of the old clan system of the Veddas, and although they usually speak Tamil, the majority of them say they have a language of their own which they consider to be the old Vedda language, and which was found to be Sinhalese. They have roughly-built temples, and we were told independently in two settlements that the chief agency worshipped was called Kapalpe or Kabalpe, *i.e.*, "ship spirit." At first we feared some misunderstanding, but when one of us was shown within one of their temples, into which after some trouble he was allowed to penetrate, a small model of a ship partly square rigged was seen, and it was stated that at a special ceremony this was hoisted to the top of a pole some thirty feet tall which stood outside the temple." [3] The ceremony to be described in what follows appears to be in fact that conducted for the propitiation of this "ship spirit" and of the goddess Ammal, and, if so, it is that which the Seligmanns saw rehearsed, in part at any rate, at Vakarai.[4] The description, therefore, imperfect and perhaps inaccurate in some details as it may be, being

[1] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *The Veddas*. See also *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 155 *et seq.*

[2] R. L. Spittel, *Wild Ceylon*.

[3] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 156, 157.

[4] *The Veddas*, pp. 335-9.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese chena village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there. 131 361

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you. 101 164 [587] 855 [164 516]

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty. 361 [184 342] 101 161 [582] [164]

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect. [595 586]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

241 181 THE genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a *chena* than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas [184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 222 177 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his 142 outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature— [826] and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a degree, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

3. SOME VEDDA ARTS AND A DANCE

321

EDIBLE LIME

276 [237] THE Vedda method of making from snail-shells an edible lime, the concomitant of a betel or bark chew, is interesting. Four varieties of snail afford it :—The large, white, land snails (*wantako* or *godang bello*) ; the small, black, river snails (*alang bello* or *gadu bello*), found in dry stream beds ; the bivalved *ethal bello* ; and the convoluted *hankuro* or *lanu bello*.

The *wantako* give the best lime. Six to twelve of their shells are dropped into a small fire, and a layer of dry twigs is laid over them. The flame is now vigorously fanned with a leafy sprig, to prevent the shells getting charred. When the overlying layer of twigs is reduced to embers, and the shells glow white, they are gently picked off with a stick, taken on the palm and placed in a large leaf (*kenda* or *halmilla*). A little water is then added or, in its absence, saliva ! The leaf is quickly folded over the shells which now disintegrate and " ripen." They are then smashed up with the fingers, and the chunam is distributed.

When the small *gadu bello* are used, the process is slightly different : the burnt shells, moistened and bundled in a leaf as before, are replaced on the embers quietened down with a sprinkling of water. The chunam from these is coarser and more gritty than that from the *wantako*.

FIRE MAKING

372 Fire is obtained by jungle folk in a variety of ways. When gun-powder is to hand there is a choice of two methods : (*a*) A little powder is placed on a stone and closely surrounded with small fragments of cloth or tree cotton. It is then ignited, and the rag set on fire, by striking it sharply with an axe-head previously warmed by rubbing on a rock. (*b*) When, in addition to powder, a cap is available, the powder is put into a small square of rag with the upturned cap in its centre. Into the cap the point of a knife is inserted, and the rag is closed over and clapsed firmly against the blade. The striking of this on a stone explodes the cap, ignites the powder, and lights the rag.

These methods being too wasteful for routine use, the commonest mode of fire-making in the jungles is by means of a C-shape iron strike-a-light (*gini-kátuwa*) and a piece of chert or crystalline quartz (*irimana gal*), against which is a piece of *kitul* cotton or rag to take the spark when the two are struck together.

The most primitive, and essentially Vedda, art of making fire is by the attrition of two sticks. Although I had hitherto travelled much in Ceylon forests, always making inquiries about this mode of obtaining [194] fire, it was not until I came to Bingoda that I was able to see it done, and that with astonishing ease. In Henebedde and Bintenne the art was dead ; indeed some of the Veddas had never even heard of it !

The light *velang* stick of which arrows are made is the wood *par excellence* for fire making. Elephants being fond of the tree, the dry

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

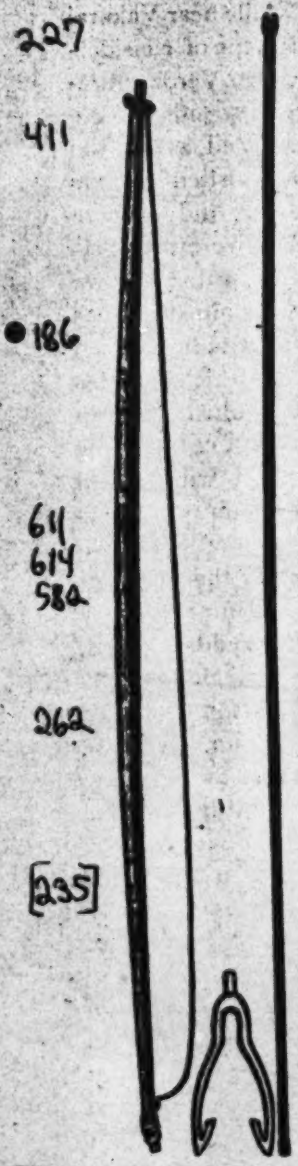


Fig. 13. Verda bow and harpoon × 1/12. Iron harpoon head × 1/3.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *waruge* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *waruge*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *waruge* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 330.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as as leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [825] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in 222 families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 252 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 757 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 262 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, 164 his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This [757] his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

were loath to purchase their intimacy with gifts. Time enough for that, when we had won them over by less humiliating means. Besides, these Veddas were evidently spoilt, and we wished to show them they were not the important personages they imagined themselves to be. 123

"We are going then," said Handuna. It was now our turn for dejection. Was it for such an ungracious issue we had travelled so far?

I had a last card, having brought some neosalvarsan, a sovereign remedy for yaws so rife among these people. The offer was received with indifference. There was only one case among them, they said, and the patient was too ill to come. This being just what we wanted, I offered to visit them the next morning. [164]

"You cannot come where we live unless we allow you," said the irrepressible Kaira. "And we won't show you our caves or anything, unless you give us presents."

Sick with exasperation and disgust at the behaviour of these impossible children, I told them they could take our offer or leave it as they chose, and turned to other work. The result was a grudging acquiescence; and, leaving a guide behind, they went away.

A word of explanation regarding the sophistication of a people so remote. They were in fact about the purest-blooded Veddas extant; indeed, it was to this very circumstance they owed their disappointing behaviour; for it had attracted Seligamann among them. What that implied may well be imagined. To obtain the valuable sociological information with which his book abounds, he had gained the confidence of these folk with scrupulous consideration and kindness, showering on them gifts of all kinds. Moreover, the patient investigation of the most intimate details of their lives by such a man, heightened their self-esteem. Of this we had an amusing illustration. I was obliged to admonish a group of Sinhalese that embarrassed us with their attentions. A Vedda sidled up and, tapping me familiarly on the shoulder, whispered, "Those people don't like us, they are jealous of us. We and you gentlemen are one; they are different!" 156 114 [186]

To dismiss these Veddas as spoilt uninteresting folk would imply failure to discern their innate simplicity, beneath the veneer of pose and importunity, for which contact with an indulgent stranger had been responsible. In their homes they still are as artless as their forbears were before ever white man set foot on these shores.

We were out hunting early that afternoon, when a sudden snapping sound arrested our attention. The Vedda we were with listened a few seconds. "Catching *talagoyas*," (monitor-lizards), he said laconically. The excited barking of a dog and rebuking human voices soon confirmed his conjecture. Going up, we found two men, one of whom carried a large quivering monitor just killed; while two dogs, still spirited with the chase, danced round their victim and growled and snapped at us. One of the men now set about to disjoint the quarry's tail at the middle, leaving it connected only by a tag of sinew; then, slitting the submandibular web, he rove the tail through till it locked at the division, making the reptile eat its own tail as it were, and carried it neatly in a loop. The monitor is best hunted at high noon; after four in the afternoon it takes to trees and holes. 224 231

5: Spittal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Unapana *waruge*, like all the other *waruges*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *waruge* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *waruge* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *waruge* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *waruges* after similar occurrences under *nabudu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gamana*). 614 173 [551]

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season. 177 178

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *kanava* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukkan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukkan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukkan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter, he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more." [437]

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas. 161 186 731

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

105 on their chena. We waited here a little while and two Veddas
.621 passed, one carrying a gun; we asked them to return to their chena and fetch some of the other villagers. Soon some twenty
[431] men and about as many women and children arrived bringing us presents of honey, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. Scarcely any of them presented the Vedda type, they were all distinctly larger and more heavily built. Except their knowledge of their *waruge* and recognition of the Nae Yaku all remains of Vedda customs seemed to have been lost.

Yakure. The inhabitants of Yakure, a village about six miles from Kalukalaeba, call themselves Veddas, though physically (Plate XVI, figure 1) they would pass as Tamils or mixed
[194] Tamils and Sinhalese, and show even less evidence of Vedda blood than do the Kalukalaeba people. Their village consists of about 40 mud houses and is compactly built; a great number of cattle was seen grazing outside the confines of the village. Like the Kalukalaeba folk they know their *waruge* and invoke the Nae Yaku, but they have a temple, a simple mud hut, and worship a number of Sinhalese gods. Some men (Plate XVI, figure 2) from a village called Ulpota near Gunner's Quoin were
[197] seen here who also appeared to have mixed blood; they knew the "Vedda language," that is to say we were able to get from them about the same number of words as we obtained at Dambani. When one of them was asked when this dialect was used he replied "only when we are sent for by the Government agent or any other white man." Among themselves they speak
[191] Sinhalese though they can also speak Tamil as it is largely the language of Tamankaduwa.

Rotawewa. There is a settlement of alleged Veddas at Rotawewa about six miles from Minerriya tank. Concerning these we were told that they cultivated rice, and were in no respect different from the neighbouring Sinhalese, while Mr Jayawardene writes: "There is only one village of Veddas in Sinhala Pattu of Tamankaduwa District, and that village is Rotawewa, about six miles from Minerriya. These Veddas lived on the chase and subsequently took to chena clearings, and when the place began to be frequented by the low-country Sinhalese and other traders, some of them were able to sell their meat to them and

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
173 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
●191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *waruge*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
241 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins
342 and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
415 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from
534 that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Tennent says truly, that they have "no system of caste among themselves; but, singular to say, this degraded race is still regarded by the Singhalese as of most honourable extraction, and is recognised by them as belonging to one of the highest castes;"* and he relates a legend, in which he says this belief originates; a legend, however, at which, he tells us, the Veddahs themselves smile, and of which they profess their ignorance. 648 [564]

As I shall afterwards show, I do not think this legend, which is confessedly not a Veddah tradition, has anything to do with the consideration with which, so far as their caste goes, the Singhalese regard them. Were there no better reason, the fact that the legend is by no means universal among the Singhalese residing in their vicinity, would probably be sufficient reason to reject it.

But Tennent has not been correctly informed with regard to their own belief regarding their own origin. For strange as it appears, they claim to be of royal descent. Beyond this vague assertion they profess to know nothing. They do not attempt to trace their descent from any particular king. They know nothing of their history. This is their *one* tradition; and though the neighbouring Singhalese, on whom they affect to look down, smile at their claim to such an illustrious origin, they do "regard them as of most honourable extraction," and in reply to any inquiry respecting it, only repeat the Veddah version of their royal lineage. It is said, too, that in the time of the native government the Veddahs always spoke of the king as "hoora," or "cousin."† 173

The Veddahs have no particular name by which they distinguish themselves, which would aid us in speculating on their origin. They simply call themselves "Weddah," and are so called, while they speak of the ordinary natives of the country as "Singhalese." The term "Habara," or "wild, barbarous," is applied to Veddahs, in books, and also "Vannacharakiya," which means "a hunter." 101

As Knox has told us, they speak the Singhalese language; but they do so with an accent and intonation so strange, that it sounds like some foreign tongue. It seems, as it were, "broken Singhalese," such as a man would speak to whom the language was an acquired one, so much does their pronunciation differ from that of their Kandyan neighbours. Although the identity between the Veddah dialect and Singhalese is evident, when they are compared with each other, it would require a very quick and accurate ear, indeed, to detect the similarity between them when both are spoken. 191 197

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, c. iii.

† It is reported, too, that some Veddahs do not claim royal descent, but that only a portion of them do. The Bicetean and Nilgala Veddahs certainly, say they, are "Raja-wansiya," of royal lineage.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

with men astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalastic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 [191] 142 301 412

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen floated away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing [136 825

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782 siderable range of beliefs are all longer and more complicated, and often contain references to events which happened before the spiritual beings to whom they are addressed attained their full power as *yaku*.

For convenience the invocations are consecutively numbered and grouped according to their purpose, for we believe that this arrangement, though not ideal, is on the whole the most suitable[1]. In each group the invocations progress from simple to more complicated.

It will be noted that in many if not all of these invocations
782 animals and articles of food are not mentioned by their usual
192 name, but are called by some other name or described by
198 a periphrasis. A special vocabulary, largely but not entirely the same as that used in invoking the *yaku*, is used by the Veddas when hunting and indeed whenever travelling through the jungle. The relation of this jungle language to the other languages of the island will be discussed in Chapter XV, meanwhile it is only necessary to note that in one form or another it is spread over a great part of the island and that it is known by the name *kaele basa* "jungle language." The object of the *kaele basa* has been well explained by Mr Parker who has allowed me to take the following quotation from the proof-sheets of his work *Ancient Ceylon*. "Strange to say, the Kandian Sinhalese and the Wanniyas apparently imitate the Vaeddas while they are hunting in the forests,...and use another series of expressions...for many...animals, to the exclusion of the usual names for them. They have acquired a belief that unless a

[1] An alternative arrangement would have been to group these invocations geographically; the following list will enable the reader to do this with ease.

List of Invocations and the localities from which each were collected.

Bandarawa. Nos. 7, 15, 26, 34.
Balugahaladeniya. Nos. 9, 10.
Dambani. Nos. 2, 12, 13.
Godamalawa. Nos. 3, 5, 20, 24.
Henebedda. Nos. 14, 19, 21.
Kalukalocha. No. 6.
Sinala Wanniya. Nos. 1, 11, 16, 18, 23, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36.
Uniche. Nos. 8, 17, 22, 28.
Unuwatuna Bubula. Nos. 25, 37.
Wellampelle. No. 4.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

special dialect be employed while they are in the forest, they cannot expect to meet with any success in seeking honey, or hunting, or in avoiding dangerous animals.

"This dialect...consists of the employment of new words not only for animals but also for a few other nouns, and for verbs used to denote acts most commonly performed on such trips. In addition, all negative (that is, unlucky) modes of expression are totally debarred from use on such occasions, as well as the words meaning 'insufficient' and 'too much,' which are inauspicious as indicating dissatisfaction with the number or quantity to which they are applied."

Although in some instances the word used when addressing the *yaku* is not the precise word used by the same Veddas while hunting it is convenient, and we think reasonable, to regard the *yaka* language as a part of the *kaele basa*.

The only other linguistic feature of these invocations that requires comment is the abundant use of the adjective *ran* "golden." The significance of this in a particular and somewhat puzzling instance is discussed in a footnote to invocation No. XXI, so that it suffices here to record our belief that among the Veddas the expression is laudatory and is the equivalent of "excellent," "admirable." In invocations used while collecting honey the expression "jewelled" is used with almost equal freedom, e.g. "golden jewelled cord" in invocation No. XXVI, and is simply to be understood as a laudatory expression.

Invocations to the Nae Yaku.

Sitala Wanniya.

I. *Āyu bōwā. Āyu bōwā. Nae hoṭṭaewī*[1], *nae sōnāwā.*
Hudu hambā welafa aḷagaha dunnā haewā bunnā.
Kisi waradak sitanna epā, epit hanawā bonawā.

Salutation! Salutation! Part of (our) relatives!
Multitude of relatives! Having called (you) at the (right) time (we) gave (you) white sambā (rice); (you) ate, (you) drank. Do not think any wrong (of us); we also eat (and) drink.

[1] *Koṭṭaewī* for *koṭṭāsaya*, a part, section.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 language, collected by himself during his long sojourn in Ceylon; and to this we shall return later.

The Vedda words for the most important animals with which
192 they are brought in contact which are given in the vocabulary at the end of this volume indicate that nouns and verbs in the Vedda dialect are largely formed by periphrasis. It may be urged that in certain cases this is done for the same reason that the common names of animals are avoided in all hunting languages, and doubtless this explains why the bear is commonly spoken of as *katera* "the enemy[1]," but it will not account for one of the words for "smoke" being "that which goes from the fire when wet," or "to bring" being "to come having taken things" or for "wind" being "that which causes the stems of trees to break." Mr Parker informs us that the expression "having taken, come," for "bring" is common in Sinhalese, while Dr L. D. Barnett, whom we have consulted on the subject of periphrases, writes that "compound actions" are often expressed by paraphrase, thus the Hindi for "bring" is *le dana*, i.e. "taking give," and "depart" is *nikal jana*, i.e. "issuing go." These examples show that there is nothing peculiar or specially significant in the existence in the Vedda dialect of such periphrasis for "bring" as that given above.

Such expressions might be survivals from a time when the Vedda vocabulary was limited, when quick precision was unnecessary or at least had not been attained, and when all ideas, except the simplest, were necessarily expressed in a roundabout fashion and generally helped out by gesture. We allude in Chapter XVI to the absolute impossibility of making even such an intelligent man as Handuna of Sitala Wanniya realise the difference between a number of periods of time all shorter than a day, and in the same chapter we point out that the older generation of unsophisticated Veddas count only by saying

[1] At Sitala Wanniya we were told that the word *kaeriya* might be used for "bear" without danger when the animal was at a distance, but that *katera* should be used if the animal were known or suspected to be close. Here too the word *katakaleli* was used for elephant avowedly to prevent these animals hearing their name and coming near. *Katera* should be written *kaetera*, but as we never heard any Vedda pronounce this word otherwise than *katera*, we use this spelling throughout.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

"one" and "one" and "one," so that the suggestion we make need not necessarily be taken to carry back the formation of the Vedda dialect to remote antiquity. 192

Further the use of periphrases is common in Sinhalese and other languages closely related to Sanskrit.

We are indebted to Dr Barnett (who tells us that the list could be greatly extended without difficulty) for the following examples of Sanskrit periphrases, many of which occur in Sinhalese in unmodified or only slightly modified forms:

dvīpi leopard, lit. "spotted."

dvirepha bee, lit. "double R-sound."

kutā'sana fire, lit. "devouring libations."

hutavāhana fire, lit. "conveying libations."

kari elephant, lit. "animal with a hand."

kṛishṇamārga fire, lit. "having a black path" (Sin. *kinumaga*).

pādapa tree, lit. "drinking with the feet."

parapushṭa cuckoo, lit. "nurtured by a stranger" (Sin. *parapuṭu*).

pārāvata dove, lit. "belonging to distant lands" (Sin. *paravi*).

sākhāmṛiga monkey or squirrel, lit. "branch-deer."

shaṭpada bee, lit. "six-legged" (Sin. *ṣapada*).

Even at the present day the vocabulary of the peasant Sinhalese is not a large one, and if from this there were taken away all ceremonial and agricultural terms, and those directly or indirectly due to European influence, it would, we believe, be surprisingly small. It is reasonable to suppose that it was no bigger centuries ago. It is therefore not surprising that the dialect which was formed by the Veddas from this vocabulary and took the place of their old language, adopted only a small number of words suitable to their jungle life, and so prepared the way for the use of large numbers of periphrases even if it did not at first necessitate their formation[1]."

[1] Perhaps the position of the Veddas linguistically at the time of the change may be compared to the position of the inhabitants of certain Melanesian Islands of the Pacific, where not only has a degraded English with an extremely limited vocabulary become the medium of communication between White and Black and between different native tribes, but the islanders in some instances when speaking to foreigners

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192
198

Although Dr Barnett considers that many of the Vedda periphrases seem to point primarily to a low level of culture, and although we believe that we should do wrong to ignore the influence of some such process as that which we have sketched, we think it probable that many of the expressions in the Vedda language (so called) arose as the result of a deliberate effort to mystify.

At the time when the Veddas began to use Sinhalese as their habitual mode of communication they would find it convenient, if not absolutely necessary, to be able to discuss matters between themselves in the presence of Sinhalese, especially Sinhalese traders, without allowing the latter to understand what they were saying. This necessity would naturally lead them to invent periphrases and onomatopoeic words while it would encourage mispronunciation and the use of archaic forms.

Further evidence in favour of this view may be gathered from other Indian tribes and even from the Veddas themselves. Dr Rivers found that the Todas have a secret language which "consists of a large number of expressions which they use in the presence of Badagas, Tamils and others, when they wish to be understood only by themselves. Many of the Badagas and Tamils with whom the Todas associate no doubt pick up some knowledge of their language, and even if this were not the case the Toda language is sufficiently like Tamil to enable a stranger to understand part of what is said. In consequence the Todas have adopted a secret code for use among themselves which they call *kalikatpimi*, literally 'stolen we tie,' while in distinction the ordinary language is called *itherkelv* or 'front fact'."[1]

Thus "cook food in milk" which in the ordinary language is *pâts âdr* literally "milk cook" becomes in the secret language

who have acquired some knowledge of their tongue purposely use simplified and incomplete grammatical forms.

Mr Parker remarks that our statement concerning the vocabulary of the present Sinhalese is valid only so far as it applies to their ordinary conversation in which they use "a simple and limited" vocabulary, but that in working through his large collection of Folk-tales he found that "the vocabulary of the villagers was a very extensive one."

[1] *The Todas*, p. 616.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

mouk udr pud udidu tarsk idskt literally "four sides come three on up put," i.e. "put what comes from the four teats upon the three (stones which support the cooking pot)." Further the leg may be called *metepol* "walk thing," also used for foot-prints, or *pâmi dâar pî pol* "thing that goes into the earth," while many other things have secret names; thus butter is called *pelthpol* "white thing" and clarified butter *hârtpol* "melted thing."

All this seems to indicate that the so-called Vedda dialect arose, at least in part, as a deliberately invented secret language, and this view is supported by an anecdote told by Nevill which shows that even at the present time the formation of periphrases and the use of onomatopoeic words comes readily to the older Veddas, allowing them to communicate with their fellows in the presence of Sinhalese without using the ordinary words.

An old Vedda who died before 1886 was "fond of encouraging the others to learn a patois which strangers could not understand, and used to illustrate its use by a story of his being overtaken by a party of pilgrims to Katragam, who insisted on his accompanying them as guide some distance. A lad, partly a Vaedda, was with him. On the way they heard a deer give the peculiar bleating cry made when they are seized by a leopard. Seeing his companions did not understand it, he went on, and entering into conversation with the boy, sent him away, saying loudly and rapidly so as not to excite suspicion, Bûs kî bâs kî adina atak gena at baruwak gena pimbina atak gena, thopa ammât appât enda kiyâpa. This means, "Bûs was said, bâs was said, bringing the bow, axe and fire-stick, tell your mother and father to come." Here the bow is called the "pulling-bough," the axe is called the "bough heavy" or "heavy in the hand," and the fire-stick, the "blowing bough," in allusion to the blowing of the spark into a flame. *Bûs* imitates the snort of the leopard as it springs on the deer, and *bâs* the cry of the deer. The old man delighted to tell this tale, showing his own wit, and would then say "and because the boy knew huntsman's craft and how to speak aloud but secretly, he slipped away and called his parents. I went back as soon as I could, and we all had a grand feast, for the leopard had not time to eat much before the boy's parents were there[1]."

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 181.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 At Sitala Wanniya we learnt for the first time that two classes of words could be distinguished in the Vedda dialect. Words of the first class are commonly employed by the Veddas among themselves or their use is compulsory when hunting or travelling in the jungle; the second class contains words which are used only in invoking the *yaku*.

The monitor lizard commonly called *munda* becomes in the *yaka* language *bimbada ganeka*, "one whose belly touches the ground"; the pig *dola* is called *hosedika*; the spotted deer *gemberupodeya* is called *depatam magala*; the sambar *kankuna* becomes *gaura magala*; and the wandura monkey *botakuna* is called *ude kelina*.

These were the only animals which were given *yaka* names at Sitala Wanniya, but betel leaves, usually known as *paengeri kola*, coconut milk *polikiri* and rice *depotulu* all used in offerings to the *yaku* are spoken of on these occasions as *nilikola*, literally "dark leaves," *ran kiri daluo* "golden bud milk" and *hudu hamba* from *sudu sambā*, lit. "white rice," respectively[1].

Probably all the wilder Veddas at one time used special words when addressing the *yaku*, for even at Rerenkadi among the sophisticated Veddas of the chena settlement we heard of the former existence of a *yaka* vocabulary, while at Lindegala the few words of the Vedda dialect that were still remembered were said to have been used especially in *yaku* ceremonies[2].

At Sitala Wanniya we obtained the expressions *yakade heremitiya*, literally "iron walking staff," for boy, and *hanukanna kilote*, "box for lime" or "lime eating box," for girl. We were not able to satisfy ourselves as to the significance of these metaphors, which were said to be used only in *yaku* ceremonies. According to one account the expression refers to the genitals of the sexes, another explanation states that a boy is a strong support to his relatives, while a girl is as precious as a supply of chewing materials.

198 The hypothesis that the Vedda language arose in part as
197 a secret language explains how it is that at the present day the

[1] *Sambā* is the name of a superior variety of rice.

[2] Nilgala, Bendiyagalge and Bandaraduwa were all visited before Sitala Wanniya where we discovered the existence of a *yaka* vocabulary, and no questions especially bearing on this matter were asked at these places.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Vedda dialect is best preserved among the Village Veddas of Bintenne. 198

The people of Dambani and Bulugahaladena whose condition we have described in Chapter II and whom we have specially in mind as typical Veddas of the Bintenne are precisely in that stage of development in which a secret language would be most useful. They do not lead, and apparently have not for a considerable number of generations led the wandering life which until recently characterised the Veddas living further to the east, nor on the other hand do they even now show any tendency to be absorbed by the peasant Sinhalese of the province in which they live. They in fact constitute small autonomous communities enjoying considerable prestige in the eyes of their neighbours both on account of their ancestry and their reputed fierceness. Not only is their dialect directly useful to them in their trading with the neighbouring Sinhalese, but as we soon discovered their use of what their neighbours consider a language different from their own greatly enhances their prestige. 197

They have thus had a motive for keeping up if not for enlarging their store of periphrases and metaphors which probably never existed among the wilder, less sophisticated Veddas, who only preserve the old names of certain animals or foods which are used in *yaku* ceremonies or which have become part of their jungle language.

From this point of view we may detect three stages in the evolution of the present Vedda dialect. In the first stage their original language is effaced by an archaic form of the Sinhalese; the formation from this of a large number of secret words constitutes the second stage, while the third stage is represented by the process of substitution of more or less modern and colloquial Sinhalese words for the majority of archaic words and forms, during which process many of the modern words underwent phonetic changes.

The following sentences taken down from men of Bulugahaladena show the characteristics of the Vedda dialect as it survives among the Village Veddas of Bintenne. The notes given after each sentence have been supplied by Mr Gunasekara, the sentences themselves are written down in the form in which 192

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 we gave them (in English) to our interpreter. We have no doubt that he translated them literally into Sinhalese, so that not only the building up of the sentences but also the repetitions and inaccuracies in the Vedda dialect are of interest.

Come here quickly.

Hanu hanikete mangacapa.

Hanikete is from the Sinhalese *haṇikaṭa* quickly.

This axe belongs to me.

Me galreke maieme.

Me is Sinhalese *maieme* from Sinhalese *mayēma, magēma* my own.

We two have come from Bulugahaladena.

Kakulai mai mangacawe Bulugahaladening.

Kakula, child, boy, then *kakulai mai* the child and I, the final *i* of each word is the equivalent of the Sinhalese *yi* (colq.) and *t*: *Mai* from the Sinhalese *mamayi*; *-ing -in* the ablative case ending. The finite verb in Sinhalese is placed last in the sentence.

Bring your bow and arrow.

Malaliyai moreanai arang mangacapa.

Moreanai is a shortened form of *morianheca* arrow. *Arang* the equivalent of the Sinhalese *aran* having taken. The literal translation of this sentence would be "Having taken bow and arrow come."

This wood is wet, I cannot make fire.

Me dande diapodga mandevela gina ucana hode.

Diapodga mandevela "water being absorbed" or "being surrounded by water" (Sk. *mand* or *maṇḍ*).

Ucana from Sanskrit *ush* to burn: *Me* and *dande* are Sinhalese.

He climbed a tree to find a bees' nest.

Kanda arini patagacana rūke pīnī negigē.

Patagacana is to break and not to find; *pīnī negigē* is the equivalent of the Sinhalese *poena noengē*, literally he jumped and ascended.

But the branch was rotten and he fell.

Eke dira bacela patagacan palage.

Eke, Sinhalese it; there is no word for branch; *dira* having been rotten; *bacela* Sinhalese *pahala* down; *palage* he fell (Sanskrit *pat* to fall) or he jumped (Sanskrit *plū* to jump).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

There are no bananas in my chena, but much Indian corn. 192

Mai hempodga pucenuwa keurlana tenak tenak tibinya kahelpodga hedoi.

Mai Sinhalese *mahi* here; *hempodga* is the Sinhalese *hēna*, i.e. chena; *pucenuwa* having been burnt; *keurlana* Indian corn (?); *tenak tenak* little little, some.

Literally translated the sentence runs "Here the chena having been burnt (i.e. prepared in the usual manner) there is some Indian corn, there are no bananas."

He killed the sambar and dried its flesh over the fire.

Kankuma patagucala ginaucala pucakadala kavilanye.

Patagucala being killed; *ginaucala* having made a fire (Sinhalese *gini avussala*); *pucakadala* having burnt; *kavilanye* he eats.

Literally "The sambar being killed, having made a fire (and) having burnt (its flesh) he eats."

When a man is dead we go away from that cave.

Mini botadammana pata mang venakette mangucana one.

Pata is the Sinhalese *viṭa* when; *mang* is the Sinhalese *mam* I; *venakette* is from the Sinhalese *venaataka*, to another quarter; *one* is the Sinhalese *ōnāe*, ought, must.

Literally "When a man is dead I must go to another quarter."

The dog scents a deer.

Kuka pakaragandekate mangucanya.

Pakaragandekate to smell good.

Literally this would be translated somewhat as follows: "The dog moves after a good smell."

Which is the road to Dambani?

Dambanete mangacena mompodgak kohede.

Mompodgak a road is derived from *mom* Sinhalese *maṇ* road and *podgak*.

Although we are unable to offer any opinion as to the precise age of the Vedda dialect there is no doubt that it is at least of respectable antiquity. Geiger (*op. cit.* p. 89), while admitting that the material at his disposal is insufficient to allow him to give "a full picture of the dialect," considers "beyond dispute" that it contains "an archaic element" and he cites the verb p. *gacchati* which in the Vedda dialect exists in the form *gacana*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 whereas only the gerund *gus* occurs in Sinhalese[1]. Nevill writes of the Vedda dialect as being "largely identical with the old Sinhalese now called Elu."

This carries its formation back some hundreds of years; and whether Nevill's statement is literally correct or not the archaic forms and incomprehensible expressions preserved in the invocations given in Chapter X show that the Vedda dialect arose at least some centuries ago[2].

Our Vedda vocabularies contain a few of the non-Aryan words of unknown origin which are noted by Geiger as occurring in Sinhalese such as *kola* leaf, *kasa* coconut (in composition to form *kasapengediya*) and *rilava* monkey. They contain a far larger number of Aryan words which Mr Gunasekara considers are not Sinhalese, or contain a non-Sinhalese element.

Such words are: *agedya* mouse deer, *basekarea* monkey, *bopatte* breast, *bota* man, *botadamanya* to kill, to die, *botakabala* elephant, *deula* lightning, *donda* monkey, *enavacenava* to strike, *enonukalapa* to ask, *gabiaci* iron, *gulekepa* to fall, *hadira* bat, *kaeriya* bear, *katamanye* to speak, *kike* a small lizard, *labacanava* to strike, *langcenawa* to make, *lemba* axis deer, *mambuda* tortoise, *mangacenawa* to come or to go, *mola* elephant, *okma* buffalo, *pakaragande ganye* and *puchama ganya* to smell, *pakerevila* bad, *pisiawi* dance, *pitagaca* crocodile, *rukka* squirrel, *sakolava* sun, *sambala* axe, *sil powa neli* rain, *taekkiya* axe, *toli* honey comb, *yamake* areca cutter[3].

[1] Mr Parker writes: "I do not feel sure that *gacana* is derived from the Pāli word *gacchati*, to go. There is a general absence of Pāli derivatives in the Vaedda dialect. When used to express 'to go' or 'to come,' the word is always *mangacana*, in which *man* is of course 'road,' the Sinhalese *maḷga*; this word would be unnecessary if *gacana* means 'to go.' It seems not unlikely that the word is *gasana*, 'to strike,' which in Sinhalese has several meanings when combined with other words, as in *ahdagasanawā*, 'to call,' and *kapu-gahanawā*, 'to pluck off feathers.'"

[2] Mr Parker writes: "I think that the earlier forms of Vaedda words are of a later type than those of the inscriptions of the first five or six centuries A.D., and partly for this reason I used the expression 'some centuries after Christ,' quoted by you on page 443, without attempting to fix any date."

[3] Reference to the vocabulary at the end of the book will show that a number of these words are closely allied to Sinhalese words, while some appear to be corruptions of the latter. We are indebted to Dr Barnett for pointing out that *deula* is derived from the Sinhalese *vidulija* (Prakrit *vijjuliyā*) while it seems reasonable to derive "man" *bota* from the Sinhalese *pudā* which has itself been adopted from Tamil.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mr Gunasekara's opinion as to the origin and relationship of these words will be found in the vocabulary at the end of the volume, where we also give his explanation of the many periphrases we collected[1]. 192

We may refer here to the use of the affix *-poja* which the Veddas join to many nouns, thus "blood" is called *lepoja* and the sun *irapoja*. Inquiries made from Veddas and peasant Sinhalese failed to suggest any origin for this affix, which can scarcely be connected with the Sinhalese words *poḍḍa* and *poda* "little," "little thing" as was suggested by some of our Sinhalese informants. We therefore fall back upon a suggestion made to us by Mr Gunasekara that *poja* is a corruption of Sanskrit *pudgala* (P. *puggala*) "individual," "body," "matter," "personal identity." If this explanation is correct then *lēpoja* is the equivalent of "the individual or thing (called) *le* blood," *irapoja* of "the individual or thing (called) *ira* sun," *hulampoja* of "the individual or thing (called) *hulan* wind." The use of this word may have been found convenient when a foreign word was adopted by the Veddas, to make it clear that the borrowed word referred to a concrete object. Later, when the new word had become universally intelligible and was firmly established in the Vedda dialect, *poja* must have been gradually dropped from a great number of nouns, and this doubtless is probably the reason why at present *poja* is affixed only to a minority of words, and while commonly used by some Veddas is scarcely heard in other communities. This view is supported by Mr Gunasekara's remark that *pudgala* has been used by the Sinhalese in the sense of "person" (individual), though he considers that its use as an affix to a considerable number of nouns is a purely Vedda feature. 193

Mr Parker suggests that there may be more than one origin for *-poja* as used by the Veddas, "thus, *lēpoja* might be *lēpoda*, drop of blood. There is also a Sinhalese word *pajā* (Skt. *prajā*)

[1] It is extremely probable that some of the words in this list may be derived from Tamil, the following being suggestions for which we are indebted to Mr Parker: *ahuā* buffalo, T. *ukhan* a bull, ox or cow; *mālā* elephant, T. *mālai* a hornless beast; *hariyā* bear, T. *hari* black and *ehā* one; *tell* honey comb, cf. T. *tolli* hole, perforation, tube; *sahalawa* sun, cf. T. *sakkaram* a circle, disk, wheel (Sk. *cakra*); *ānduā* monkey, cf. T. *toppu* slave; *rukhā*, Sin. *rukh* tree and *ehā* one, i.e. "the tree one."

193 creature, one meaning of the Sanskrit word being 'designating,' 'indicating.'"

The occurrence of a large number of the non-Sinhalese Aryan
•192 words in the Vedda vocabulary seems to us of considerable
197 importance. Many of these words are derived or borrowed from the Hindi and Marathi languages or from Sanskrit words which according to Mr Gunasekara "are seldom or never used in the Sinhalese language."

This implies that these languages must at one time have materially contributed to the formation of Sinhalese, and if it could be determined at what period they had passed into the vulgar tongue in Ceylon, this would give us the earliest date at which the Veddas could have adopted Sinhalese.

At present this seems impossible, but valuable suggestions
197 concerning the period or periods at which the northern influence was exerted may perhaps be gathered from the age of the Sinhalese folk-tales of Northern origin collected by Mr Parker from districts in the interior of the Island "where story-books in Sinhalese, Tamil, or Arabic do not appear to have penetrated, and English is unknown by the villagers." This quotation as well as those which follow are taken from the introduction (pp. 37 and 38) to Mr Parker's recent volume *Village Folk Tales of Ceylon*. Mr Parker, after referring to stories due to immigrants from South India, writes as follows concerning those which he considers were brought in by "settlers from the Ganges valley, or near it.

"With regard to the latter, it is not probable that they consisted only of the early immigrants of pre-Christian times. King Niśśanka-Malla, who reigned from 1198 to 1207 A.D., has recorded in his inscriptions that he was a native of Sinhapura, then apparently the capital of the Kālinga kingdom, which extended far down the east coast of India, southward from the lower part of the Ganges valley; and he and his chief Queen Subhadrā, a Kālinga Princess, must have brought into Ceylon many of their fellow-countrymen. The Queens of two other earlier Kings of Ceylon were also Princesses from Kālinga.

"In the Galpota inscription at Polannaruwa (Prof. E. Müller's *Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon*, No. 148), he stated that "invited

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

by the King [Parākrama-Bāhu I], who was his senior kinsman, to come and reign over his hereditary kingdom of Lakdiva [Ceylon]. Vīra Niśśaṇka-Malla landed with a great retinue in Laṇkā" [Ceylon]. Further on in the same inscription he stated that "he sent to the country of Kālinga, and caused many Princesses of the Soma and Sūrya races to be brought hither. 197

"A connexion with the Kālinga kingdom seems to have been maintained from early times. In his inscriptions the same king claimed that the sovereignty of Ceylon belonged by right to the Kālinga dynasty. He described himself in his Dambulla inscription (*Ancient Inscriptions*, No. 143) as "the liege lord of Lakdiva by right of birth, deriving descent from the race of King Wijaya," the first king of Ceylon, who, according to the Sinhalese historical works, was also born at a town called Sinhapura, which is stated to have been founded by his father. In the Galpota inscription we read of "Princes of the Kālinga race to whom the island of Laṇkā has been peculiarly appropriate since the reign of Wijaya."

As we have already stated in Chapter I the story of Wijaya indicates that there was frequent communication between Ceylon and Indian ports; we may now refer to the Mahawansa, in which, as Mr Parker remarks, "there is a definite and credible statement that vessels sailed direct from it [the port of Tāmalitta] to Ceylon in the reign of Asoka in the third century B.C.[1]"

The respectable, if not the extreme antiquity of the Vedda vocabulary is supported by the existence of a few words retaining their common meaning in Vedda and the *kaelebasa* language. Although Mr Parker does not explain the origin of the words in the *kaelebasa* list published in *Ancient Ceylon*, he has given the derivation of a considerable number of words occurring in the *kaelebasa* of Northern Ceylon in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. II, pp. 15—21), in which he discusses the origin and age of the language. Accepting his conclusions "that many of these forms are very ancient;—that they are, in fact, probably survivals from an ancient dialect which was once spoken throughout a 192 197

[1] *Village Folk-Tales of Ceylon*, p. 42. The voyage from Tamalitta to Ceylon is mentioned in the *Mahawansa* on page 46. Another voyage from the same port, when the Bo-tree cutting was conveyed to Ceylon, is described on pp. 74, 75. Tamalitta is thought to have occupied the site of the modern Tamluk at the mouth of the Hoogly.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192
197

great part of the island," the occurrence of such names in Vedda and *kaelebaas* as *mandu* (or *munda*) for the monitor lizard (Sin. *goyu*), and of *maruku* (from *maruka* a destroyer, a hawk, and *kuwa* great) for the Brahminy kite (Sin. *ukussa*), shows that the Vedda dialect was formed at least as long ago as that period when the Sinhalese were driven out of the Northern Province by the Tamils[1].

A single Vedda word *sappi* or *cappi* bird closely resembles the Sakai word *ciap*, *cap* or *cep*; in spite of the relationship recognised by some as existing between the Veddas and Sakai we hold this similarity to be of no significance, both words probably being onomatopoeic[2].

[1] Referring especially to the Wanniya "a race of hunters" who reside in small villages of badly built houses in the northern part of the North Central Province, extending from Padawiya to Tantrimalai, and who use a number of *kaelebaas* words, Mr Parker writes (*op. cit.* p. 18): "Like the hunters of the North-Western and North-Central Provinces, the Wanniyas make use of the remnants of a special dialect when engaged on their forest expeditions, under the belief that its employment tends to preserve them from wild animals, and to render them successful in their search for honey and meat. This dialect is known as the 'kaelebaas,' jungle language, and the Wanniyas themselves speak only a very few words of it. Other fragments are to be met with among Sinhalese throughout all Northern Ceylon. That these words originally formed part of one language is to be inferred from the fact that not more than a few of the forms which present the most ancient appearance can be specially selected as peculiar to a certain district. In one village, or a group of villages, a few are known; in another, some of the same words and a few others; while some of the words which are used at Padawiya are not only well-known in the North-Western Province, but are even used upon similar occasions in Southern and Eastern Ceylon. Some of them are also among the threshing-floor vocabulary, and a smaller number are employed by Waeddas." Again on page 20 we read: "So far as this language is concerned, it may be concluded that the Wanniyas are, as they state, Sinhalese. Taking into consideration the facts that they are found only on or near the northern borders of the Kandian Kingdom, that they (or at any rate such of them as I have met) speak Tamil, and that some of them have Tamil names, and also remembering the particulars which I have given regarding their religion, it may further be inferred that, as their name would seem to indicate, they form a remnant of the ancient Sinhalese inhabitants of what is now the Northern Province. Throughout the whole of this district, extending, in fact, within a few miles of Elephant's Pass, there are abundant proofs that it was once peopled largely by Sinhalese; yet it is doubtful if any other distinct descendants of the former occupants can now be found. The rest of the Sinhalese population may perhaps have almost completely died out, for the inhabitants of the Sinhalese villages in the southern parts of the Province are, with very few exceptions, comparatively recent settlers who have migrated during this century from the North-Central districts."

[2] Mr Gunasekara while not denying that *sappi* may be onomatopoeic suggests that it may have arisen as a corruption of the Sanskrit word *pakshi* bird. Mr Parker considers that this word is derived from the Tamil *kaappi* (pronounced *kaappi*) a fly-eater or bee-eater, from *sappu* to chew.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

VEDDA VOCABULARY.

192

ABBREVIATIONS.

B.	Bandaraduwa.	O. S.	Old Sinhalese.
Bl.	Bulugahaladena.	P.	Pali.
D.	Dambani.	Port.	Portuguese.
Fl.	Kaelebasa language.	R.	Rerenkadi.
G.	Godatalawa.	S.	Sinhalese.
H.	Hindi.	Sk.	Sanskrit.
Hind.	Hindustani.	T.	Tamil.
K.	Kovil Vanamai.	Tel.	Telugu.
L.	Lindegala.	Tf.	Threshing floor language.
M.	Marathi.	Tk.	Tamankaduwa.
Mal.	Malay.	U.	Unuwatura Bubula.
N.	Nilgala.	W.	Sitala Wanniya.
O.	Wannaku of Uniche.	Y.	Yaka.

GRAMMATICAL ABBREVIATIONS.

adj.	adjective.	masc.	masculine.
cf.	compare.	pl.	plural.
coll.	colloquial.	p. p. a.	past participle adjective.
f.	feminine.	p. p.	present participle.
gen.	genitive.	pres.	present tense.
imp.	imperative.	sing.	singular.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

VEDDA VOCABULARY

●192 1. **Areca-nut**, *gaigudi* B. K. Bl. L. T.; *gayipodi* R.; *kahatagudi* B. K. (S. *puwak*).

Gaigudi from *gai*, stone, S. *gal*, and *guḍi*, fruit, nut.

Gayipodi from *gayi*, stone, and *podi*, that which is small (T. *poḍi*).

Kahatagudi perhaps from S. *kahata*, astringent; cf. Sk. *kashāya* (H. and M. *khaṭṭa*), acid, and *guḍi*, *v. supra*.

2. **Areca-nut cutter**, *yamake* Bl. from Sk. *yamaka*, a pair, an areca-nut cutter being composed of two limbs (S. *gire*). [At Bulugahaladena *yamake* was used for betel pouch instead of the ordinary Sinhalese words *bulat paiya*.]

3. **Arm**, *adane*, *aidanda* D. Bl.; *atula* O. (S. *ata*, *atdaṇḍa*).

Adane. If this is the correct word, it is connected with S. *adina* (older form *adana*), pulling, carrying, i.e. that by which carrying etc. is done; if incorrect it should be *adanda*.

Aidanda from *ad*, *at*, hand, and *danda*, staff, arm, hand (S. *atdaṇḍa*).

Atula from *at*, hand, and *tula*, Sk. *tala*, forearm. Cf. M. *taṭa*, stem, stalk and S. *atula*, palm.

4. **Arrow**, *aude* T.; *danda* D.; *morian heca* Bl.; *morian ketiya* B. K.; *morian mate* K. (S. *iya*).

Aude from S. *āwude* (Sk. *āyudha*, P. *āyudha* or *āwudha*), weapon. [*Aude* is the term applied by all Veddas except the village Veddas of Bintenne to short-handled ceremonial arrows such as are shown in Fig. 8 (page 138).]

Danda from S. Sk. and P. *daṇḍa*, stick, rod.

Morian heca from *morian* S. *maraṇa*, killing (Sk. √*mṛi* P. and S. *mara*), and *heca*, knife, from Sk. √*kṛit*, to cut, cf. T. *katti*.

Morian ketiya, *v. morian heca* supra.

Morian mate, *mate* is from S. *moṭala*, arrow.

5. **Ashes**, *alu poja* D. from S. *alu*, ashes, and *poja* from Sk. and P. *punja*, mass, heap (S. *alu*).

6. **Ask** (*v.*), *enonuhalapa* Bl. from *enonu* M. *unēpanā*, want, *h*, c (indef. article) and *alapa*, to question, to speak to (M. Sk. and P. √*ālap*). (S. *illanawā*, *asanawa*.)

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

7. **Axe**, *asirihatuwa* W.; *galrakiya* K. D. Bl. L. T.; *porodatula* O.; *porokatiya* B.; *porowa* W.; *sambala* B.; *tarian keea* K.; *tekkiya* R. (S. *porowa*).

Asirihatuwa, lit. "a cutting instrument with a sharp side or edge," from *asiri* (Sk. *atri*), sharp side or edge, and *hatuwa* (Sk. *kṛit*, M. *kaṭa*, to cut), cutter.

Galrakya is given by some writers as *galraekke* and derived from *gal*, stone, *raekka*, rubbed or sharpened, cf. H. *ragar*, rubbing. It appears to be connected with H. *kulhāri*, axe.

Porodatula from *poruda* (Sk. *paraśwadha*), hatchet, battle-axe, and *tula* (Sk. *dala*, S. *tola*), piece, blade.

Porokatiya from S. *poro*, axe, and *katiya*, a short thing, i.e. the axe itself, cf. M. *kōtā*, *kuṭakā*, T. *kuṭṭai*, that which is short.

Sambala, cf. M. *tabala*, axe.

Tarian keea from *tari*, tree (Sk. and P. *taru*), *an*, destroying (Sk. and P. *adana*), and *keea* (*v. supra*, No. 4).

Tekkiya, from Sk. *taṅka*, axe.

8. **Bad**, *napari*, B. T.; *pakerevila* D. (S. *naṭuru*).

Napari from Sk. *na*, not, and *puru*, heaven, i.e. hell, cf. *naraka*, hell, colloquially used in the sense of "bad" in place of *naṭuru* which is confined to books.

Pakerevila perhaps from *pakara* (Sk. *priyakara*), pleasant, and *vili* (Sk. *vina*), without.

9. **Banana**, *kehelgedgi* D. Bl.; *ratgudi* O. (S. *kehelgedi*).

Ratgudi, lit. red-fruit, from S. *ratu*, red, and *gediya*, fruit.

10. **Bat**, *kadira* N. from Sk. *kṛitti patra*, one who has a hide (*kṛitti*) for its wings (*patra*), cf. Sk. *ajinapatrā*, bat (S. *vavula*).

11. **Be**, exist (v.), *indine* O.; *laba tibenya* Bl. (S. *innawā*, *tibenawā*).

Indine from S. *indinawā*, to sit, to be.

Laba tibenya from *laba*, having gained (existence), and *tibenya*, (it) is.

12. **Beads**, *galmice* Bl.; *galwadana* B.; *velepeteata* W. (S. *pabalu*).

Galmice, lit. throat-gems, from *gal*, throat, neck (S. Sk. and P. *gala*), and *mice*, gems, beads (S. *mini*, P. *mani*, H. *maṅkā*), or perhaps stone-gems, from S. *gal*, stone.

Galwadana, lit. string of stones, from S. *gal* and *wadana*, string.

Velepeteata from *vele*, S. *vaela*, creeper, slender cord (M. *vēla*,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

●192 Sk. *valli*), *pote* (S. *poṭe*, *poṭi*), of a single string, and *ata*, S. *aṭa*, bone, seed, bead.

13. **Bear** (*Melursus ursinus*), *hatura* W.; *heria*, N. G. U. D. B. L. R. T.; *heri handa* K.; *malapulakuna* O.; *malkala* L. (S. *malakā*).

Hatera, lit. enemy (S. *hatru*, Sk. *hatru*).

Keri handa, lit. black-bodied one, *keri*, T. *kari* (Sk. *kṛishṇa*), black; *handa*, who has a body (S. *handa*, P. *khandha*, Sk. *skandha*).

Malapulakuna, lit. one who throws up dust; probably referring to the habit of breaking up antheaps. *Mala*, dirt, dust (S. Sk. and P. *mala*); *pula*, throwing (Sk. *prutha*, to throw, cast); *kuna*, one who.

Walhala, lit. wild dog; *wal* S. jungle, wild (Sk. and P. *vana*); *halā* is either a form of *vala* (S. *valahā*) or a derivative from H. *bhālū* (Sk. *bhāluka*), from which S. *hallā*, dog, is probably also derived. Cf. Sk. *bhashaka*, barker, dog. Nevill notes that *halā* and *vala* are also used for bear.

14. **Beard**, *lombuche* Bl. perhaps from S. *lom* (Sk. and P. *loma*), body hair, and *buca* (Sk. and P. *puccha*), tail (S. *ruvula*).

15. **Beautiful**, *ruva* B. (S. *ruva*).

16. **Become possessed** (*v.*), *awuvnawa* L.; *murtavena* O.; *yakacnne* B. (S. *yakāwashenawā*).

Awuvnawa from *awuv*, demoniacal possession (Sk. *āvēśa*), and S. *wenawā*, to become.

Murtavena from Sk. *mūrchā*, fainting, swooning.

Yakacnne from *yaka*, spirit, and *cane* (S. *washenawā*), to be seized or covered.

17. **Bee**, (i) *bambara* (*Apis indica*), *handa pali* Bl.; *handa arini* Bl. (S. *bambarā*).

Kanda pali; *handa* from S. *gaṇḍa*, scent, perfume, and *pali* (Sk. and P. *ali*), black bee. Possibly *pali* is a compound of *pa*, to drink, and *ali*, i.e. the bee that drinks perfumes. Cf. Sk. *gandhana*, a large black species of bee.

Kanda arini; *handa*, cf. *supra*, *arini*, who takes (S. *hara*, Sk. *hṛi*, to take, to carry). [Mr Gunasekara points out that this expression may also mean "one who lives in the hollow (S. *araṇa*) of a trunk (S. *haṇḍa*)." If this explanation be correct *handa*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

arini cannot refer to *bambara*, for these never build their comb in holes, and when they build in trees their comb is always hung under a branch.]

(ii) stingless bee (*Trigona sp.*), *poti* Bl., perhaps akin to S. *poeṭawā* or Sk. *pōta*, a young one (S. *pilawā*).

A bee's nest is called *mehi keligama*, "bee village" or "bee house," the nest of the *bambara* is sometimes called *maha mehi keligama*.

18. Belly, *bada* K. (S. *baḍa*).

19. Betel, *nilikola* W.; *pangirikola*, *pengirikola*, W. K. O. U. D. Bl. L. R. T. (S. *bulat*).

Nilikola, lit. "dark green" or "dark-coloured leaves," from S. *kola*, leaves, and *nil*, this word being commonly used in Sinhalese for all dark (not black) colours including the darker tints of blue (cf. Chap. XVI, p. 400).

Pangirikola from *pangiri* (S. *paeñgiri*), acid, having zest, and *kola*. Fl. and Tl. *pengirikola*.

20. Big, *apade kote* K.; *kudaminete* W.; *malia* D.; *mamakeke* Bl.; *metarati* B. (S. *mahā*, *loku*).

Apade kote from *apade*, vast, huge (M. *aphāṭe*), and *kota*, heap, mass (S. *goḍa*).

Kudaminete from *kuda* (Sk. *khaṇḍa*), a multitude, or Sk. *gaṇḍa*, mass (S. *goḍa*), and *minete*, measuring or measurement (S. *minita*).

Malia from *ma*, big (S. *mā*, *maha*), and *alia*, elephant (S. *aliyā*). Cf. S. *maha ali* (adj.), very large.

Mamakeke from *mama*, very big, and *akeke*, one.

Metarati, a contraction of *mevitaraeti*, from S. *me*, this, *vitar*, size, and *aeti*, will be.

21. Bird, *cappi* D. Bl.; *kurula* T.; *sakeleo* O.; *sappi*, *sappia*, *sappeo*, N. W. G. K. L. R. (S. *kurullā*).

(i) Hawk, *capi* D.; *mäil* G.; *velina* N. W. O. (S. *ukussā*).

Mäil; Mr Parker suggests that this word may perhaps be derived from T. *mayilei*, grey or ash colour.

Velina, lit. "the crooked-nosed one" from S. *weli*, crooked, and *na*, nose; cf. Sk. *vakranāsikā*, owl, from *vakra*, crooked.

(ii) Owl, *bakumuna*, *bakuna* G.; *kakutuang kaneka* O.; *velina* N. (S. *bakamunā*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

Bahumuna, lit. "one having a large face," from S. *baha*, large, *mūnā*, having a face.

Kakutwang kaneba, lit. "he who eats lizards," from P. *kakaṇṭaka*, lizard, *ng* being the ending of the accusative plural.

Velina, cf. Hawk, *supra*.

22. **Bite** (*v.*), *dothecamando kerenya* **D.** from *dot*, teeth (S. *dat*), *keca* (S. *kastiya*), knife or blade, *mando*, with middle, and *kerenya*, to do; the expression would literally mean "to make (it) come between the teeth" (S. *wikanawā*, *kapanawā*).

23. **Black**, *kahipoja* **D.** (S. *kalu*), *v.* p. 391.

24. **Blacksmith**, *talabacanaca* **Bl.**, lit. one who hammers and welds, from *tala*, having hammered, or who beats (S. *taḷa*), and *bacana*, which may be connected with Sk. and P. *pacha*, to cook, melt (S. *āchāriyā*).

25. **Blood**, *lepoja* **D. Bl.** from S. *le*, blood, and *poja*, *v.* p. 391 (S. *lē*, older form *leke*).

26. **Body**, *angapoja* **K.**; *enge* **Bl.**; *kanda* **Tk.** (S. *aeṅga*, *kanda*, Sk. *śarīraya*).

Angapoja from S. *aenga* and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

Enge from *aenga*.

27. **Bone**, *aca* **O.**; *atepoja* **K. D.** (S. *aeṭa*).

28. **Bow**, *donda* **R.**; *dunne* **B. K.**; *ikele* **W.**; *malaliya* **D. Bl. L.**; *mandaliya* **Tk.** (S. *dunna*).

Donda from Sk. and P. *kōdaṇḍa*, bow, or from S. *daṇḍa*; cf. No. 4.

Dunne from S. *dunna*.

Malaliya from S. *mala*, a bow, and *liya*, a stick, rod.

29. **Bowstring**, *dundia* **B.**; *puriya* **Tk.** (S. *dunudiya*).

Dundia from S. *dunna*, bow, and *diya*, string. Sk. *jya*, bowstring.

Puriya, lit. that by which a bow is drawn from, S. *purana*, to draw a bow (Sk. √*pur*).

30. **Break**, (*v.*) *patagaena* **Bl.** *Puṭa* (Sk. *sphuṭ*, P. *phuṭa*, break) means lit. to cause a sound; *gaenawā* (S. *gassanawā*), to cause to strike (S. *hadanawā*).

31. **Breast**, *bopatte*, *bopota*, **B. K.**; *lagua* **Bl.**; *tanepoja* **D.**; *tanyi* **O.** (S. *lastpatta*, *laya*, *tanī*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

Bopatte from *bo* (M. *pōṭa*), heart, and *patte* (M. *pattia*), surface, exterior part.

Lageca from S. *la*, breast, and *gica*, which appears to be corrupted from S. *paette*, side.

Tanepoja, *tanye*, applied at Bulugahaladena to the female breast, is derived from S. *tanī* and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

32. **Bring** (*v.*), *anokalagena mangacena* **D.**; *enawarin* **B.**; *humbeta mangacenawa* **Bl.**; *uccgena* **K.** (S. *geneṇawā*).

Anokalagena mangacena, lit. to come, having taken things, from (S.) *anokala*, things, *gena*, having taken, and *mangacena*, to come.

Enawarin, lit. "come having taken." *Ena* from *gena*, *v. supra*, and *warin* from S. *waren*, come.

Humbeta mangacenawa from *humbeta*, to this place, here (S. *mobata*), and *mangacenawa*, to come.

Ucagena from *uca*, S. *ussā*, having lifted, and *gena*, to bring.

33. **Buffalo**, *amberawasa* **L.**; *madaya* **U.**; *manya* **G. L.**; *miwa* **N. O.**; *okma* **N.**; *tanikura* **T.**; *wadena* **Bl.**; *walmanya* **K.** (S. *mīmā*).

Amberawasa, lit. horn-bearing calf or bull, from *am*, S. *aṇ*, horn (Sk. *śringa*, P. *singa*), *bera*, S. *bara*, bearing (Sk. and P. *bhara*), and *wasa*, S. *vassā* (Sk. *vatsa*, P. *vaccha*), calf, bull. *Wasa* may also be derived from H. *bhaisā*, buffalo. Fl. *ambarawā*, buffalo.

Madaya is the low-country Sinhalese for a young lusty bull, Sk. *madagama*, buffalo.

Manya appears to be a corruption of *madaya*.

Miwa, Sk. *mahisha*, P. *mahisa*.

Okma, Sk. *ukshaw*, ox, bull.

Walmanya; *wal*, wild, and *manya*, a corruption of *madaya*, *v. supra*.

34. **Build** (*v.*), *mandokerenawā* **Bl.**, lit. to make a hut, from *mando*, hut, small shed (S. *maṇḍu*), and *karaṇawā*, to do, to make (S. *hadanawā*, *tavanawā*).

35. **Burn** (*v.*), *pucakadal* **D.** from S. *pucā*, *pulussa*, burning, and *dal*, flame, blaze (S. *davanawā*, *puccanawā*).

36. **Bury** (*v.*), *bimpoja patagacala* **D.**; *metedaman* **L.**; *paiga damapumu* **B.** (S. *waḷalanawā*).

Bimpoja patagacala is derived from *bimpodga*, earth, ground, and *patagacala*, digging.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Metadaman, cf. M. *mātī dīnī*, to bury a corpse. This word may be explained as *mate*, earth (S. *mati*), and *daman*, to put (S. *damanawā*), i.e. to put earth over a corpse. In Sinhalese *mati-damanawā* is not used in the sense of to bury.

Puiga damapumu from *puiga*, dead body (H. and Sk. *prita*), and *damapumu*, throwing away.

37. **Butterfly**, *samaicapi* D. from S. *samanalayā*, and *cappi*, bird (S. *samanalayā*).

38. **Buy** (v.), *hingalaging enahala gunewa* Bl.; *ridiporu enahalala maicheta* D. (S. *milīta*, or *sallivalata*, *gannawā*).

Hingalaging enahala gunewa, lit. "to take *enahala* from the Sinhalese." *Hingalaging* is derived from *sinhalayāgun*, *hingala* being commonly substituted for *sinhala* by the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedirata, and *gunewa* (S. *gannawa*) means "to take."

Enahala is probably connected with the M. word *itahita*, valuables, trifles, small articles.

[This expression was generally stated to mean both "to buy" and "to sell" and this is doubtless correct, for so far as the Veddas were concerned both operations were but aspects of bartering with Sinhalese traders.]

Ridiporu enahalala maicheta. Mr Parker considers this expression means "having given silver coins for my thing"; *maicheta* appears to be compounded of *magē* (often pronounced *mayi*) and *ekata*, "for my one."

39. **Cave**, *galge* B.; *galhabala* B. (S. *galgē*, *galguhāwa*).

Galhabala from S. *gal*, stone, and *habala* (M. *khabadada*), cave, den.

40. **Centipede**, *ratya* N., lit. the red one (S. *rat*, Sk. *rakta*, P. *ratta*, red). In S. too, *rattayā* is used to signify centipede (S. *pattayā*).

41. **Charcoal**, *dalapaja* D. (S. *aṅguru*, *dalī*) from S. *dalī*, burnt, black, charcoal, and *paja*, v. p. 391.

42. **Child**, *hineto* D.; *kakula* Bl.; *ladwuwa* K.; *peti* Tk. (S. *lamayā*, *putī*).

Hineto from S. *hin*, little, and *eto*, one who is (S. *atti*, Sk. *asti*, is to be).

Kakula from S. *kaskula*, flower bud.

Ladwuwa from S. *la*, tender (Sk. *bāla*), and *duruwa* (S. *daruvā*), child.

Peti, cf. S. *putī*, child, and Sk. *pōta*, the young of any animal.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

1920

43. Chin, *hata* W.; *tale* O. (S. *nihapa*).
Hata, v. No. 133.
Tale, cf. Sk. and P. *talu*, palate.

44. Claw, *kurapoja* D.; *sapige hakul* K. (S. *niya*, *niyapatta*).
Kurapoja from S. *kura*, hoof, foot, and *poja*, v. p. 391.
Sapige hakul from S. *hakul*, feet, and *sapige*, of a bird (v. p. 394).

45. Cloth, *konam* Bl. L.; *konam poja* R.; *pilala* W.; *watre* O. (S. *pili*, *redda*, *vata*).
Konam, T. *kōvayam*, Sk. *kaupina*, a strip of cloth worn over the pudenda.
Konam poja, v. *supra* and p. 391.
Pilala, cf. Sk. and P. *pata*, *pati*, cloth.
Watre, cf. Sk. *vastra*, P. *vatha*, cloth.

46. Cloud, *wala* K., cf. Sk. and P. *valāhaka*, cloud (S. *walāwa*, *walāhaka*).

47. Coconut, *kasapengediya* Tk.; *gaigedi* W. U.; *kirigedi*, *kirigedji*, *kirigedja* O. D. Bl.; *wangedia* L. (S. *pol*).
Kasapengediya from *kasa* (Sk. *kauliha*), incised, *pen*, water (S. *pani*, Sk. and P. *pāniya*), and *gediya*, fruit. This word is also used by the Kandyan Sinhalese. Cf. Sk. *kauliḥāphala*, coconut tree.
Kirigedi from S. *kiri*, milk, milky juice, and *gedi* (S. *gediya*), fruit.
Wangedia, lit. fruit with water, from *wan* (Sk. P. and S. *vana*), water, and *gediya*, fruit, cf. Sk. *jalaphala* (*jala*, water, and *phala*, fruit), coconut.

48. Coconut-milk, *rangkiri dalua* W., lit. "golden milk juice," *rang* (S. *rang*), golden, being used by Veddas as "excellent"; *dalua* probably means white juice from S. *dala* (P. and Sk. *dhavala*), white, and *uda* (Sk. *udaka*), water, these words are combined to give *daloda*, whence *dalua*.

49. Cold, *angwadamal* D. from *anga* (Sk. and P.), body, *anda*, cold, and *mal* a corruption of S. *hal*, time, or S. *mahal*, rainy season (S. *sisil*).

50. Come (*v.*), *anohala ganyayi* D.; *kumbate mangaenawa* D.; *mahata mangacapa* T.; *mitagaenawa* W. L. (S. *enawā*).
Anohala ganyayi from *anohala*, things, and *ganyayi*, take. "Taking things" indicates activity and so movement towards

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

someone or something, hence perhaps the idea of coming. Or *genyayi* may be connected with *genyayi*, approach, move, and *anehale* with M. *ikadi*, this side, here.

Humbate *mangurumma* from *humbate*, here, and *mangurumma*, to move (v. f. n. p. 390).

Mitigurumma from *mitu*, here, and *gurumma* (*mangurumma*).

51. Cook (v.), *talavelala pucahadanya* Bl. (S. *pisanawā*, *uyanawā*) from *talave*, in the pan (M. *thali*, Sk. *sthala*), *lala*, having put (Sk. *ri*, to put), *puca*, to cook (Sk. and P. *pacu*), and *hadanya*, to seethe (M. *uhada*, *hadhe*).

52. Crocodile, *mahahada* O.; *pitaguca*, *pitaguza*, *pitgutiya* N. D. Bl. (S. *kimbuli*).

Mahahada, lit. he who has a large head, *maha* S., large, and *hada* (M. *hāda*), head.

Pitaguca, *pitgutiya*, lit. he who goes on his belly, from *pita*, belly (H. *pita*), and *guca*, that which goes.

53. Cry out (v.), *andatalapa* B.; *kergucma* Bl. (S. *kāgasanā*).

Andatalapa from S. *aṅda*, cry, and *talapa* (S. *talanawa*), to beat, strike, speak. This seems to be the imperative form.

Kergucma from *kār* (S. *kā*), to cry, yell, and *gucma* (S. *gasana*), strike, make.

54. Cry, weep (v.), *hitpoja ocadamala* D. (S. *aṅdanawā*).

Hitpoja, heart, *oca*, raise (S. *uccā*, *ocawā*, Sk. and P. *uccu*, high), and *damala*, putting down. [This expression seems to refer to the motion of the thorax when sobbing.]

55. Cut with axe (v.), *gulrakiying labacmawā* Bl., from *gulrakiying*, with the axe (v. No. 7), and *labacmawā* from Sk. *rabhasa*, violence, or from Sk. *lu*, to cut (causative form *lāvayati*) (S. *porawen kapanawā*).

56. Dance (v), *otadamanya* Bl.; *pisiawi* W. (S. *nafanawā*).

Otadamanya, "to move in a circle," from *ota*, S. *vafa* (Sk. *vṛitta*, P. *vaṭṭa*), round, and *damanya*, to jump (Sk. *jhampa*, jumping).

Pisiawi, cf. Sk. *prasphand*, to tremble, to quiver.

57. Deer, (i) Axis deer (*Cervus axis*), *ambera* L.; *depatam magala* W.; *gumbera podage* W.; *haberya*, *haberu* O. D. Bl. L.; *hauru* N. U.; *walhapurumage* T. (S. *muwā*).

Ambera from Sk. *hambara*, deer. This word is distinct from *ambera* in No. 33 *supra*, cf. Sk. *ambartaka*, a young animal.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

Dipatum magula, lit. two-antlered deer, from *di*, two, *patum*, antler, and *magala*, deer. (Sk. *mṛiga*, P. *miga*, deer, beast. Also P. *magī*, deer.)

Kaura probably from Sk. *gaura*, a species of deer.

(ii) Sambar (*Rusa unicolor*), *gamara* N.; *gumara magala* W. L.; *gumara hala* W.; *hulica* G.; *hankuna*, *hankusi* O. D. Bl. L. T.; *heriguna* U.; *walpengira* N. (S. *gōnā*).

Gamara may be from Sk. *gaura*, a kind of deer, or from Sk. *gavaya*, a kind of ox.

Magalā, *v.* axis deer, *supra*.

Gomera hala from *gomera*, *gumara*, dusky white, and *hala* (Sk. P. *hala*), one who makes a jingling noise.

Hulica from Sk. *sulocana*, deer.

Kankuṇā may mean one whose ears (S. *kan*) are dirty (S. *kuṇu*), or it may be connected with Sk. *karṇa-urṇa*, a kind of deer (from *karṇa*, ear, and *urṇa*, wool, i.e. one having wool in its ears). *Karṇa-ūrṇa* or its combined form *karṇorṇa* is not known to have been used in Sinhalese, and even in Sanskrit it is not a common word and is not given in Professor Wilson's Sanskrit dictionary, though *karṇa* and *urṇa* have both been used in Ceylon. ["Dirty ears" was the meaning attached to *kankuṇa* by the peasant Sinhalese with whom we discussed the origin of the word, the Veddas did not appear to have considered the matter. The two well-developed black patches on the concha of the sambar's ear make this name particularly appropriate.]

Kerigūṇa from *keri*, black, and *gunā*, buck, bull.

Walpengira from S. *wal*, wild, and *pengirā*, a young sturdy animal.

(iii) Mouse deer (*Tragulus meminna*), *agadja* N.; *dusu* N. (S. *mimimā*).

Agadja, lit. one who sports about, from Sk. *ākrīḍa*, sporting.

Dusu, perhaps originally *pusu*, from Sk. *pṛiṣhata*, small deer.

58. Destroy (*v.*), *patagaula mando hevula damanya* D., from *patagaula*, having broken, *mando hevula*, having made small or defective (S. *maḍda*, small, defective), and *damanya*, to throw away (Sk. √*dhuna*).

59. Die (*v.*), *hetadamana*, *mishetadamanawa* D. Bl.; *hetagia* T.; *gia* L.; *wagu* K. (S. *mātrejamā*).

Hetadamana from S. *heta*, body, and *damanawa*, to become calm.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

● 192

Mishetudamanawa from *mia*, to die (Sk. √*mṛi*), and *hetudamanawa*, v. *supra*.

Betagia from *betu* (v. *supra*), and *gia*, dead, cf. Sk. *gata*, departed, dead (√*gam*, to go); *gia* is probably a contraction of S. *maḷagiya*, "dead and gone." In S. *giya* is never used in the sense of dead.

Nuapu from *nawa*, to go; *nuapu*, departed (from this world).

60. Dig (v.), *himpoja pataguwa* D. from *himpoja*, earth, ground, and *pataguwa*, to break (S. *hāraṇawā*).

61. Dig a grave (v.), *polowa pataguwa* Bl. from *polowa* (*polowa*), earth, and *pataguwa*, v. No. 30 (S. *waḷak hāraṇawā*).

62. Digging stick, *danda* D. (S. *daṇḍa*).

63. Dog, *balakukha* N. T.; *balumonya* Bl.; *kuha*, *kukha* N. W. K. D. Bl. T. (S. *balla*, *kukkā*).

Balakukha, lit. wild dog, from S. *wal*, wild, and *kukha*, dog.

Balumonya from *balu*, dog, and *monya* (Sk. and P. √*man*, to sound), barker.*

64. Door, *perugumata rukulana ruhalai* Bl. from *perugumata*, to the house, *rukulana*, which is fixed or attached, and *ruhalai* S., support, related to Sk. √*rakṣha*, P. *rakha*, to protect, to guard (S. *dora*).

65. Drink (v.), *diapoja hewilana* D. from *diapoja*, water, and *hewilana* from *hevi*, to eat, and *la* (used as an auxiliary), put (S. *bonawā*).

66. Drip (v.), *capi manguwanawa* D. from *capi*, drop (M. *tapa*, *tapaka*), and *manguwanawa*, v. No. 50 (S. *bindā weṭenawā*).

67. Dwell (v.), *randadaman* D. from *randa*, staying, and *daman* (in), house, condition (Sk. *dhāman*) (S. *raddanawā*, *nawatinawā*).

68. Ear, *kanrukula* D. Bl.; *rukulu* K. (S. *kaṇa*).

Kanrukula, lit. that which helps hearing, from *kan* (S. *kaṇa*), ear, and *rukula*, v. No. 73.

69. Earth, *hipa* K. (S. *hima*).

70. Eat (v.), *anaganapan* B.; *enalapu* K.; *kavilanya* Bl.; *kavilidamana* T.; *kewilan* D.

Anaganapan from S. *ana*, food (Sk. and P. *anna*), and *ganapan*, to take (probably imperative).

Enalapu from *ena*, food, and *lapu*, to eat (Sk. √*glas*, to eat, devour); *pu* in S. is an ending.

Kavilanya, from *kavi*, to eat, and S. *la*, to put, used as an auxiliary.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Kavillidamana from *kavilli*, eatables, and *damana*, to put.

Kewilan, *v.* *kavilanya*.

192

71. **Egg**, *bide* **N.**; *capi bitera* **D.**; *kakula randala indinepotai* **Bl.**; *sapi biju* **W.** (S. *bijuwa*, *bijaya*).

Bide, cf. Sk. and P. *bija*.

Capi bitera from *cappi*, bird, and *bitera*, egg (S. *bittara*, corn, grain).

Kakula randala indinepotai from *kakula*, child, young, *randala indine*, staying, and *potai*, covering, receptacle (Sk. *puṭa*). *Potai* may also be from S. *potta*, shell, but it can hardly be from S. *paeṭi* (Sk. *pōta*), young one, owing to *kakula* at the beginning of the expression.

Sapi biju, lit. bird's egg.

72. **Elephant**, *botakabala* **N. W.**; *botakanda* **K. U. D. Bl. R. T.**; *gomeru uhale* **L.**; *mola* **N. G.**; *relle* **O.** (S. *aetā*, *aliyā*).

Botakabala, lit. the big-bodied one having strength, from S. *bota*, big (Sk. *brahat*), *ka*, body (S. *ka* or *kā*, Sk. and P. *kāya*), and *bala*, S., Sk. and P., strength.

Botakanda, lit. the big-bodied one, from S. *bota*, big, *kanda*, body (P. *khandha*, *skandha*).

Gomeru uhale, lit. the dusky white tall one, from S. *gōmara*, dusky white, and *uhala* (S. *uhallā*), tall one.

Mola, lit. the huge one, from S. *bola*, thickness, solidity (M. and H. *mōlā*, big).

Relle, lit. he who has wrinkles, from S. *raella*, wrinkle.

73. **Eye**, *acaldeka* **O.**; *airukula* **Bl.**; *aiyarukula* **D.**; *aslonjia* **W.**; *etal* **K.** (S. *aesa*, *æhae*).

Acaldeka from *acal*, eye-ball, and S. *deka*, two.

Airukula, *aiyarukula* from *ai*, *aiya*, S. *æhae*, eye, and *rukula*, the meaning of which is obscure, for here it can scarcely represent the S. "support," "stay." Perhaps it refers to an attribute shared by the eye and tongue, *v.* No. 175.

Aslonjia from *as*, S. *æs*, eye, and *lonjia* (Sk. and P. *lōcana*), sight, eye.

Etal, cf. Sk. *akshigōḷa*, P. *acchigōḷa*, eye-ball.

74. **Face**, *hoca* **K.**; *hota* **W.** from S. *hoesa*, snout, mouth.

75. **Fall** (*v.*), *gulekepa* **W.**; *patagaca vetigo* **Bl.**; *vetige* **B.** (S. *vaeṭenawā*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Gulukepa from *guli* (Sk. and P. √*gal*), to fall, and *kepa*, let go (Sk. *kship*, P. *khepa*).

Patugaca vetige from *pata* (S. *pāta*), down (Sk. *pata*, falling), *gaca*, going (P. *gacchati*, goes), and *vetige* (S. *vetenawā*), fall.

76. Far off, *mamehacap mangacnawā* Bl.; *mamehaca* D.; *ohe* B.; *otemite* K. (S. *āta*).

Mamehacap mangacnawā, lit. to go a great distance, from *mamah*, big, great, *acap*, distance (Sk. and H. *aspashta*), and *mangacnawā*, to go.

Mamehaca from *mama*, very greatly (S. *mahama*), and *haca* (Sk. *krishta*), drawn away, indicating distance; *aca* may also be corrupted from S. *āta*.

Ohe from *oba* is an old Sinhalese word used also as a pronoun (*he*, *you*) to show respect.

Otemite, cf. Sk. *atyanta*, much, very much, or from *ota*, S. *āta*, distant, and *mite* (S. *miti*), measurement.

77. Fear (v.), *angoca damanya* D.; *boweri harenawā* K. (S. *bayavenawā*).

Angoca damanya, lit. to afflict the body with trembling, from *ango*, body, *ca*, trembling (Sk. and P. *ca*), and *damanya*, to afflict (Sk. √*dama*).

Boweri harenawā from *bo*, heart, *weri*, strength (Sk. *wirya*, P. *wiriya*, S. *wera*), and *harenawa*, to leave, to lose (S. and P. *hara*, to take away).

78. Feather, *capihole* D. Bl. from *cappi*, bird, and *hola*, leaf (S. *pihāṭṭa*).

79. Finger, *angilipoja* D. from *angili* (S. *aṅgili*), finger (Sk. and P. *aṅguli*), and *poja*, *v.* p. 391 (S. *aṅgilla*).

80. Fire, *gine* K.; *gini poja* D. Bl.; *ratumala* W. (S. *gini*).

Gine poja from S. *gini*, and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

Ratumala from S. *ratu*, red, and *mala* (Sk. *mālā*), group, cluster.

81. Fish, *diamaca*, *dia maja*, *dia maci* W. D. Bl.; *hinmaco* B.; *kudumaca*, *kudumasa* G. K. T. (S. *mas*, *mālu*).

Diamaca, lit. water-flesh, from S. *dia*, water, and *maca* (S. *mas*), flesh.

Hinmaco from S. *hin*, dead, killed, small, and *maco* (S. *mas*), flesh.

Kudumaca from S. *kuḍā*, small, and *maca*, flesh. *Kudu* is the ancient form of S. *kuḍā*. [Mr Parker points out that *kudumasa* in Sinhalese means "small fishes."]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

82. **Flesh**, *malu* **K.** (S. *mālu*).

83. **Flower**, *malpoja* **D.** from *mal*, flower, and *poja*, *v.* p. 391 (S. *mala*). 192

84. **Fly**, *nileya* **K.**, cf. Sk. *nilī*, a species of blue fly (S. *mæssā*).

85. **Foot**, *kura* **W.**; *paiapatula* **Bl.** (S. *paya*, *aḍiya*).
Kura, S. hoof.
Paiapatula from *paia*, S. *paya*, foot, and *patula*, surface of the foot.

86. **Ghost**, *newana* **K.**, lit. one who vanishes from sight, S. *nuvana*, cf. Sk. *nirvāṇa*, vanishing from sight, disappearance (S. *avatāraya*).

87. **Give**, *anokalanawa* **Bl.**; *enokalanya* **D.**; *den* **K.** (S. *denawā*).
Anokalanawa from *anokal* (S. *ōnākala*), when necessary, and *anawā* (*hanawa*, Sk. √*hā*), to abandon, give up.
Enokalanya from *enokal*, things, and *lanya*, put.
Den from S. *dev*, give (imp.).

88. **Go** (*v.*), *mangacenawa* **D.**; *mitagacapan* **B.**; *naman* **L.**; *numa* **W. B. K. O.**; *yanda mangacan* **T.** (S. *yanawā*).
Mangacenawa, *v.* No. 50.
Mitagacapan from *mita* (S. *mehāṭa*), this side, and *gacapan*, go; this appears to be the imperative.
Numa appears to be connected with Sk. *nigam*, to go to, or may be a corruption of S. *yama*, go (imp.).
Yanda mangacan from *yanda* (S. *yaṇṭa*), to go, and *mangacan*, to move.

89. **Good**, *honda* **D.** (S. *hoñda*).

90. **Gun**, *puceneke* **Bl.**, *puceneke*, lit. one that burns, from S. *pucene*, that which burns, and *eka*, one (S. *tuvakkuwa*).

91. **Hair**, *iaka* **D.**; *icaka* **K.**; *issehaya poja* **D.**; *lombuca* **Bl.**; *rombio* **T.** (S. hair of the head, *isakē*, of the body, *lom*).
Iaka from S. *iya*, head, and *kē*, hair of the head.
Icaka, probably a corruption of *iyaka*.
Issehaya poja. *Issehaya* from S. *isa*, head, and *haya* (*Kaya ?*), S. *keyya*, *keke*, Sk. *kēśa*, P. *kēsa*.

92. **Hand**, *athandia* **W.**; *athira* **O.** (S. *ata*).
Athandia from S. *at*, *ata*, hand, and *tandia*, *taṇḍa*, *daṇḍa*, *v.* No. 4.
Athira from *at* and *kiru*, S. *kara*, neck. Cf. S. *athara*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Rombio, cf. Sk. *lōma*, hair of body.

● 192 *Lombuca*, lit. hair tail, or flowing like a tail, from S. *lom*, hair, and *buca* (Sk. and P. *puccha*), tail.

93. **Head**, *iahaba*, *iahabala*, *eahabala* W. D. Bl.; *iggedea* K. (S. *hisa*, *isa*).

Iahabala from *ia*, S. *isa*, head, and *habala*, skull, cover (Sk. and P. *kapāla*).

Iggedea from *gedea*, a thing like a fruit, a knot, and *igge*, from S. *isa*.

94. **Hear** (*v.*), *kampoja mandewena* D.; *kanrukulete bitalanya* Bl. (S. *aesenawā*, *ahenawā*).

Kampoja mandewena from *kampoja*, ear, *mande* (Sk. *madhya*, P. *majjha*), in the middle, and *wena* (Sk. and P. *wan*), to sound.

Kanrukulete bitalanya from *kanrukulete*, to hear, and *bitalanya*, to pervade; cf. Sk. and P. √*vicar*, pass through.

95. **Hill**, *galheca* D.; *goda* K.; *hela* W. O.; *heme* T.; *kandapoja* Bl. (S. *kanda*).

Galheca from S. *gal*, stone, and *heca*, rock (M. *kāṇsā*, *khaḍaka*, rock).

Goda from S. *goḍa* (M. *gaḍḍa*, *gaṭa*), a heap, lump.

Hela, cf. P. *sila*, Sk. *śaila*, hill, rock.

Heme, cf. Sk. and P. *hima*, the Himalaya mountains.

Kandapoja from S. *kanda*, group, body, and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

96. **Hiss** (*v.*), *horaiah kienawā* B. from Sk. *sitwakāra*, hissing sound, and *kienawa*, S. *kiyanawā*, to say (S. *sūgānawā*, *sū kiyanawa*).

97. **Honey**, *kanda arini patagacapuwā* Bl.; *kirimirinanga* O.; *massimiria* B.; *penye* K.; *ural* W. (S. *mīpaṇi*).

Kanda arini patagacapuwā, lit. what is deposited by the bees. *Kanda arini* bees (*v.* No. 17), *patagacapuwā*, that which is deposited.

Kirimirinanga from *kiri* (Sk. *kshudra*), bee; S. *miri*, sweet, *n*, expletive, and S. *anga*, part, thing.

Massimiria from *massi* (S. *maesi*, M. *māsi*), bee; *māśi* and *miria*, *v. supra*.

Penyi from T. *pani*, honey.

Ural, lit. that which is sucked up, cf. T. *writal*, act of sucking up, or perhaps from Sk. and M. *kshaudra*, honey, which may be corrupted to *kuduru*, *uduru*, *urudu*, *urulu*, *ural*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

98. **Honeycomb**, *ilele* W.; *teli* O. (S. *mīwaḍe*).
Ilele, cf. T. *īrāl*, honeycomb.
Teli, cf. M. *pōli*, honeycomb.

99. **Hot**, *rademangala* D.; *utema*, *utena* K. (S. *uṣu*).
Rade from S. *raḍa*, sun's rays (Sk. *rakta*, P. *ratta*); *nan*, S. *niyan*, hot, perspiring (Sk. and P. *nidāgha*); *gala* (*kala*), time (Sk. and P. *kāla*).
Utema, cf. M. *ūṣa*, M. and P. *uṣha*, Sk. *ushṇa*.

100. **House**, *porugama* Bl.; *porupele* D. (S. *ge*).
Porugama from *poru*, village (S., Sk. and P. *puru*, town, city), and S. *gama*, house, home, forming part of a village, or *gama* may be a corruption of Sk. *dhāma*, house; cf. S. *gamgoḍa*, village, lit. a collection of houses, and *minimalagam*, house of a deceased person.
Porupele from *poru*, *v. supru*, and *pele* (S. *pela*), hut.

101. **Infant**, *lahekula* D. from *la*, tender, and *hekula*, *v.* No. 42 (S. *biliṇḍā*).

102. **Iron**, *gabiaci* Bl. from *gabi*, black (?), and *aci*, metal (Sk. *ayas*), or perhaps from *gabi*, in the middle, inside (Sk. *garbha*, P. *gabba*), and *aci*, fire (S. *asi*, Sk. *arcis*), *i.e.* lit. "that which has fire inside it" (S. *yakaḍa*).

103. **Jackal**, *hiwalla* N.; *kunubala* O.; *velle* N.; *walkukka* N. (S. *hivalā*, *sivalā*, *nariyā*).
Hiwalla, cf. Sk. *ṛigāla*, P. *sigāla*, H. *siyāl*.
Kunubala from *kunu*, crying out (Sk. √*kuṣ*), and S. *ballā*, dog.
Velle, probably a corruption of *walballa*, wild dog.
Walkukka from S. *wal*, wild, and *kukka*, dog.

104. **Jungle**, *beda*, *bede*, W. K.; *kele* O.; *kelepeja* Bl. (S. *kaḍa*, *kaḷē*).
Beda is probably connected with Sk. and P. *baddha*, entangled.
Kele, cf. T. *kāḍu*, Sk. *kanana*, jungle.

105. **Kill** (*v.*), *botadamanya* Bl.; *miyepela damanawa* B. (S. *marapanā*).
Botadamanya from *bota*, body, and *damanya*, to restrain (cf. Sk. √*dam*, to restrain).
Miyepala damanawa from *miyepela*, having caused to die, having killed (cf. S. *miya*, to die, from Sk. √*mṛi*), and *damanawa*.

106. **Knife**, *pihakate* O. from *piha*, knife, and *kate* (T. *katti*), cutter (S. *pihiye*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 107. **Know** (v.), *hitalanya* D. from S. *hita*, mind, and *lanya*, to receive, to put; cf. Sk. and P. √*hā* (S. *dannawā*).

108. **Leaf**, *helapaja* Bl. from S. *hela*, leaf, and *paja*, v. p. 391.

109. **Leg**, *kuripatala* O.; *paidanda* Bl. (S. *kabula*, *kakula*).

Kuripatala from *kuri*, *kura*, foot, and *patala*, leg, derived from *pa*, foot, and T. *tala*, stem, stalk.

Paidanda from *paia* (S. *paya*), foot, and S., Sk. and P. *daṇḍa*, staff.

110. **Leopard**, *diwia*, *diya* W. R.; *kerihetia* T.; *hetia* G.; *mita* N. W.; *polacca* N.; *polica*, *politta*, W. K. D. Bl. L.; *walkuparubala* L. (S. *diviyā*, *hetiyā*).

Diya, cf. P. *dipi*, Sk. *dvipi*.

Mita, probably a corruption of H. *cita*.

Polacca, cf. T. *puli*, tiger, leopard. This word may also be derived from T. *pulli*, spots.

Walkuparubala, lit. spotted jungle dog, from *wal*, jungle, wild, *kaparu* (S., Sk. and P. *kabaru*), variegated, piebald, and *bala*, dog.

111. **Lime** (CaO), *galmada* L.; *humu* K.; *karampaja* B. R.; *patabenda* O.; *patabendā pupapu hapane* W.; *takipucapu alu* Bl. T.; *takipuja* D. (S. *hupu*).

Galmada perhaps from S. *gal*, stone, and *mada*, kernel (Sk. *madhya*).

Humu, cf. Sk. *cūrṇa*, P. *cuppa*.

Karampaja, cf. T. *kāram*, Sk. *kshāra*, ashes; for *paja*, v. p. 391.

Patabenda pupapu hapane, lit. "that which is prepared for chewing by burning shells and slaking them," from *pata* (Sk. *vaṭa*), shell, *benda* (S. *baeda*), having roasted (burnt), *pupapu*, slaked (Sk. √*pushpa*, P. *puppha*, to expand), and *hapane*, what is chewed (*sapanawā* or *hapanawā*, to chew, H. *cabānā*, M. *cāvanī*).

Takipucapu alu from *taki*, the shells of *wantikho* (*Cyclophorus involvulus*), *pucapu* (S. *pucapu*), burnt, and S. *alu*, ashes. *Pucapu* is the colloquial form of *pilistu*.

112. **Live, be alive** (v.), *hondawage*, *randabacela* D. (S. *innawā*, *pavatuwa-innawā*).

Hondawage from *honda*, good, well, and *wage*, to live (M. *wagaṇ*).

Randabacela from *randa*, having stayed, and *bacela*, living, cf. S. and P. *vasa*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

113. **Lizard**, (i) Monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*), *bimbadu* W.; *ganeka, ganava* W.; *goya* G.; *munda, mundi*, U. Bl. L. R. T.; *munge* D. (S. *goyā, talagoyā*). 92

Bimbadu, lit. one who goes rubbing its belly on the ground, from S. *bim*, ground, earth, and *badu* (S. *bada*), belly.

Ganeka or *ganava*, lit. one who rubs (its belly on the ground), from S. *gāna ekā*, one who rubs.

Munda may be connected with Sk. and P. *muṇḍa*, shaved, bald, the body of the monitor lizard not being covered with hair or feathers like that of most other animals known to the Veddas.

ii) Small Lizard, *kotaka* W.; *kuna* O.; *kike* N. (S. *kūnā*).

Kotaka from Sk. *kṛikavaku*, lizard.

114. **Louse**, *iakabala kavelanika* D.; *ikinne* Bl.; *olu gediya kaneka* O. (S. *ukuṇā*).

Iakabala kavelanika, lit. one who eats (or bites) the head, from S. *iakabalu*, head, and *kavelanika*, one who eats.

Olu gediya kaneka, lit. one who eats the head, from S. *olugeḍiya*, head, *kana*, eating, and *ekā*, one.

115. **Make, do** (*v.*), *langacenawa* B. Cf. M. *ragadanī*, to do (generally) in a hurried, tumultuous, reckless style (S. *karaṇawā*).

116. **Man**, *bota* T.; *mina* K. D.; *minigeja* Bl. (S. *miṇihā*).

Bota. M. *bhōṇḍā*, adult male, P. *buḍḍha*, Sk. *vṛiddha*, old man. Some Veddas use the form *buḍā* (f. *buḍī*).

Minigeja, lit. human person, from *mini*, human (Sk. *manushya*), and *geja*, connected with M. *gadi*, person, e.g. *brahmanagadi*, a brahman.

117. **Milk**, *hekulati kevulanika* D., lit. (that) which is fed to the child, *v.* No. 42 (S. *kiri*).

118. **Monkey**, (i) *wandura* (*Semnopithecus sp.*), *basaloka* K.; *botakuna* W.; *butwandura* K.; *kandenataneca* O.; *keriwandura* U. D. Bl. L. T.; *kolanda mina* K.; *kokka* N.; *manya* G.; *munakuna* N.; *ude kelina* W. L. (S. *wandurā*).

Basaloka, lit. big reviling one, from *base*, reviling, and *loka*, big one (S. *lokka*).

Botakuna from S. *boṭa*, body, and *kuṇā*, who is black.

Butwandura from *but* (*S. boṭa*), big, and *wandura*.

Kandenataneca, lit. one who dances (among the) tree trunks from S. *kaṇḍa*, trunk of a tree, *naṭana*, dancing, and *ees* (*ekā*), one.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Kariwandura from *keri*, black, and *wandura*.

Kolanda mina, lit. jumping man, from *kolanda* (M. *kulañcha*), to jump, and *mina*, *minihā*, man [or as Mr Parker suggests from *kolan*, leaves, and *damanna*, he who throws down].

Kokku appears to be an onomatopoeic word in imitation of the animal's cry.

Manya, probably a corruption of S. *madaya* (*v.* No. 33).

Munakuna, lit. one whose face is black, from S. *mūṇa*, face, and *kina* (S. *kiṇu*), black.

Ude kelina, lit. he who sports on high (trees), from S. *uḍa*, high (on trees), and *kelina* (S. *keḷinnā*, he who sports).

119. **Moon**, *delungrajal* B.; *handa* K.; *handageya* B.; *handapoja* D. Bl. (S. *haṅda*).

Delungrajal from √*devula*, sky (S. *devlō*, Sk. *divyalōka*); *ungra*, powerful, intense (Sk. *ugra*); *jal*, flame, light, torch (Sk. *jvāla*, P. *jāla*).

Handageya from S. *handa*, moon, and *geya* (Sk. *graha*), planet.

120. **Mosquito**, *ramece kaveledana me poja* D. (S. *madurusā*), lit. the small black fly that bites at night, from *rame*, black, *ce* (S. *se*), shade, night, at night, *kaveledana*, who is engaged in biting, *me*, fly (S. *machi*), and *poja* from *podi*, small.

121. **Mouse**, *miya* N. from S. *miyā*.

122. **Mouth**, *katakabale* W.; *katarukula* K. D. Bl. (S. *kaṭa*, *muva*).

Katakabale, here *kabala* seems to take the sense of cover, lid, which the Sk. *kapāla* has.

Katarukula, lit. that which helps to make a sound, cf. S. *kaṭa*, mouth, Sk. and P. *kaṇṭha*, throat, from √*kana*, to sound, *rukula*, *v.* No. 73.

123. **Near**, *mettamai*, *metatenmai*, B. Bl.; *mettena* D. (S. *laṅga*).

Metatenmai, lit. this very place, from *meta*, this (S. *mē*), and *tenmai*, this very place (S. *tænamai*).

Mettena from *mete* (S. *mēta*), near, and *tena* (S. *tæna*), place.

124. **Nest**, *capirandana gampoja* Bl.; *gote* N.; *sapigote* W. (S. *kūḍuwa*).

Capirandana gampoja from *cappi*, bird, *randana*, S. staying, remaining, *gam*, house, and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

Sapigote from *sappi*, bird, and *gote* (S. *goṭuwa*), nest. In Sinhalese *goṭuwa* is generally applied to an ants'-nest built of leaves. [Mr Parker tells us that *gōṭē* meaning "bird's nest" is used by Kandyans.]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

125. **New**, *etetenemehe* D., lit. one (thing) of this moment itself, cf. Sk. *idānintāna*, present, of the present moment, *eka*, S. one (S. *alut*). R2

126. **Night**, *ramaavena* D. from *rame* (Sk. *rāma*), obscure, dark-coloured, black, and *aavena* (S. *sevaṇa*), shade (S. *raā*, *rātri*).

127. **No, none**, *kodoi* B. O. Bl.; *ne* W. (S. *nā*).

Kodoi may be connected with M. *khotaī*, want of reality, non-existent, no, or perhaps it is corrupted from S. *koyida*, *koyinda*, where? where have I? indicating absence of the thing desired.

Ne, cf. Sk. and M. *na*.

128. **Nose**, *nahedande*, *naidanḍa* D. Bl.; *nayekabala* K. (S. *nāsaya*, *nāhe*).

Naidanḍa from *nai*, S. *nāhe*, nose (Sk. and P. *nāsā*), and S., Sk. and P. *daṇḍa*, staff, trunk, cf. Sk. *nāsā daṇḍa*, bone of the nose, bridge of the nose.

Nayekabala from *nāhe*, nose, and *kabala*, *v.* No. 130.

129. **Open** (*v.*), *patagaccna* D., *v.* No. 30 (S. *ariṇawā*).

130. **Pangolin** (*Manis pentadactyla*), *bagusa* W.; *eya* N.; *kabelelewa* N. (S. *kaballāwā*).

Kabelele from S. *kabala*, shell, and *āyā*, pangolin.

131. **Path**, *manga* K.; cf. Sk. *mārga* (S. *maga*, *maṅga*).

132. **Peel** (*v.*), *patagaccnawa* Bl. from *pata*, S. and Sk. *paṭṭā*, rind, and *gaccnawa*, to strip (Sk. √*ghrish*, rub) (S. *paṭṭagahanawā*).

133. **Pig**, *dola* K. N. U. L. R. T.; *hocedike* O. D. Bl.; *hosadika* W.; *hota baria*, *kotua* G. (S. *uru*).

Dola, lit. long-lipped (or snouted) one, from S. *tolā*, *tollā*, long-lipped. The form *dollā* also occurs; *dala*, in Sk. *vāgadala* (*vāk*, *vāc*, and *dala*, lip) is probably connected with *dolā* and S. *tola*, lip. Cf. Sk. *dala*, blade of a weapon, which becomes *tala* in Sinhalese.

Hosadika, lit. long-snouted one, from *hosa* (S. *hossa*), snout (Sk. *ōshṭha*, lip) and *dikā* (S. *digā*), long.

Hota baria, lit. one having a heavy or hanging snout, from *hoṭa*, snout (P. *oṭṭha*, Sk. *ōshṭha*), and *baria*, heavy, hanging (S. *baru*); *baria* may also mean one who bears, cf. Sk. √*bhiri*, to bear.

Kotua from S. *koṭā*, a hog.

134. **Plant** (*v.*), *bimpojage mando kerenya* D. from *bimpojage*, of the earth, *mando*, middle, and *kerenya*, to do (S. *indanawā*).

1. Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

135. **Porcupine** (*Hystrix leucurus*), *itewa* G.; *katuboiha* T.; *katuhaw* D. (S. *ittēwā*).

Itewa from S. *it*, *id*, spines, and *ēwā*, *āyā*, pangolin.

Katuboiha, lit. one (bearing) many thorns, from S. *kaṭu*, thorns, *bo*, many, *iha* (*ehā*), one.

Katuhaw, lit. (he who has) thorn-blades, from S. *kaṭu* and *haw*, he who has blades. Cf. Sk. *karitakāgāra*, porcupine.

136. **Pot**, *pucula kavelaneha* D.; *talana* Bl. (S. *kale*, *maṭṭi kale*, *maṭivalaṭṭa*).

Pucula kavelaneha from *pucula*, burnt, and *kavelaneha*, (a thing) from which (one) eats, i.e. a burnt earthen pot.

Talana is connected with S. and T. *tāli*, Sk. *sthāli*.

137. **Rain**, *diadamanya* D.; *sil powa neli* K. (S. *wassa*).

Diadamanya from S. *dia*, water, and *damanya*, that which casts or throws away, cf. Sk. √*dhina*.

Sil powa neli from *sil*, sky, *powa* (Sk. *pata*), falling, and *neli* (Sk. *nīra*), water.

138. **Rice**, *depotulam*, *depotulu* W. O. D. Bl. L. R.; *hudu hamba* W.; *multeng* L. (S. *hal*, *vī*).

Depotulam from *de* (Sk. √*jīv*), to subsist on, and *potulam* (Sk. *vartula*), round, i.e. corn.

Hudu hamba from *hudu*, white or cooked (Sk. *sūda*, to cook), and *hamba* (S. *sambā*, T. *sampā*), a kind of rice.

Multeng from S. *muṭuten*, food prepared for the gods or kings.

139. **Rilawa** (*Macacus*, *sp.*), *baskarea* N.; *botakuna* N. G.; *kandapanina* L.; *keri rilawa* D. Bl.; *maduwa* T.; *rosarosa*, *rosi* N. W. O.; *udekelina* L.; *viruwa* U. (S. *rilawā*).

Baskarea from *base*, railing at, reviling, and *karea*, bear, or from *kārayā*, one who does.

Botakuna, *v. supra*, 'monkey.'

Kandapanina, lit. he who jumps on trees, from *kanda*, on trees, and *panina*, he who jumps.

Keri rilawa from *keri*, black, and *rilawā*.

Maduwa, probably a corruption of S. *madaya* (*v.* No. 33).

Rosarosa from Sk. *rōsha*, anger; the word is repeated to indicate frequency of action, hence this expression may mean one who is frequently irritated.

Viruwa, lit. he who displays (his teeth), from S. *viruwanawā*, to show, display.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

140. **River**, *diagama* Bl.; *diapoja mangacan* D.; *ganga* O.; *eya* W. (S. *gaṅga*, *eya*). 192

Diagama, lit. "where water goes," from S. *dia*, water, and *gama*, going.

Diapoja mangacan, lit. where water goes or flows, *v. supra* and No. 50.

Ganga, cf. Sk. and P. *gaṅgā*, river.

141. **Roof**, *pōrugamata dandalala* Bl. from *porugamata*, of a house, *danda*, S. *daṇḍu*, wooden (Sk. and P. *daṇḍa*), and *lala* from Sk. and P. *paṭala*, roof; *lala* may also be S. *lalā*, having put (S. *piyassa*).

142. **Salt**, *karampoja* Bl.; *muduru bora* B. (S. *luṇu*).

Karampoja, cf. M. *khāra*, Sk. *kshāra*, salt, T. *kāram*, caustic, *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

Muduru bora from *muduru*, sea (Sk. *samudra*, S. *samudura*), and *bora*, dregs, sediment.

143. **Salt water**, *lunadia* K. (S. *luṇu diya*).

144. **Sand**, *pahi* K., cf. Sk. and P. *pāṇsu*, dust, S. *pas*, earth (S. *vali*).

145. **Sea**, *mude* K. (S. *mūda*).

146. **See** (*v.*), *aiyarukulata mandevenya* D.; *atela bacala tibenya* Bl. (S. *peyenawā*).

Aiyarukulata mandevenya from *aiyarukulata*, of the eye, *mande*, middle, and *venya* (Sk. *ven*), to recognise, to see.

Atela bacala tibenya, lit. "near about (S. *asala pasala*) there are (things)"; this phrase states the experience of seeing and may perhaps be connected with M. *aila paila*, here and beyond and *tibenya* from S. *tibenna*, there are.

147. **Shadow**, *hevanpoja* D.; *hila* T.; *sevenella* K. (S. *hewaṇa*, *sevaṇella*).

Hevanpoja from S. *hewana*, shade, and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

148. **Shoot with a bow** (*v.*), *gacma* D.; *nilealupi* B.; *wadamanalla* B. (S. *gassanawā*, *tat hewanawa*, *widinawā*).

Gacma, lit. to cause to strike against, to cause to spring.

Nilealupi from *nilea* (Sk. *nālika*), arrow, and *lupi* (Sk. √*lup*), to cut off, destroy, injure.

Wadamanalla, cf. M. *udavane*, to shoot, and *da* (or *lu*), to cut, destroy, or this word may be connected with S. *widamana*, shooting.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

149. Sing (*v.*), *gihiṇan* B.; *etadamanya hatadaman* Bl. (S. *gihiyanawā*).

Gihiṇan from S. *gi*, song, and *hiṇan* (imperative), to say.

Otadamanya hatadaman, lit: "to (make) sound(s) (with) the mouth while dancing," from *etadamanya*, to dance (*v.* No. 56), *hata*, throat, mouth, and *daman* (Sk. √*dhma*), to blow, to sound.

150. Sit (*v.*), *enehanawa* W.; *indeṇa* K.; *randa damanya* D.; *randa indinya* Bl.; *veterene* O. (S. *innawā*, *indinawā*).

Enehanawa, cf. S. *ana*, squat, Sk. and M. *asana*, sitting, and *hanawa*, S. *hānawā*, to lower.

Indeṇa from S. *indaṇiya*, sit (imp.).

Randa damanya from *randa*, S. *randālā*, having stopped, and *damanya*, to be calm.

Randa indinya from *randa* (*v. supra*), and *indinya*, S. *iṭṭinawā*, to sit, or to be.

Veterene, cf. S. *vatirila*, having stretched.

151. Skin, *hampoja* K. D.; *hampota* W. (S. *hama*).

Hampoja from S. *hama*, skin (Sk. *carma*, P. *camma*), and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

Hampota may be a corruption of the above, or *pota* may be derived from S. *poṭa*, rind.

152. Sky, *aci* K.; *ahaw* Bl. (S. *ahasa*, *āhahi*).

153. Sleep (*v.*), *Oterandala hete damanawa* D.; *veteraganawa*, *veterawa*, *veterende*, *veterene* W. K. L. T.; *veterila hetadamanya* Bl. (S. *nidanawā*).

Oterandala hete damanawa from *ota* (M. *khāṭa*), sleeping cot, *randala*, having remained, *hata*, body, and *damanawa*, to pacify (Sk. √*dam*, to be calm).

Veteraganawa from S. *vatiraganawā*, to stretch oneself, cf. Sk. *vistri*, to spread, to stretch.

Veterila hetadamanya from *veterila*, S. *vatirilā*, having stretched, *hata*, and *damanya*, *v. supra*.

154. Smell (*v*), *paharagande ganye*, *puwana ganye* Bl. (S. *suwanda gahanawa*, *duganda gahanawa*).

Paharagande ganye from *pahara*, Sk. *priyahara*, P. *piyahara*, pleasant, or from Sk. *prahara*, P. *pahara*, a bunch of flowers; *gande*, S. *gandā*, Sk. and P. *gandha*, smell, and *ganye*, S. *gahanawā*, to emit. In Sinhalese *gandā* is used colloquially of a bad smell,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192

the Sk. *pushpa*, flower, being used of a good smell. In the classics *gaṇḍa* is used of any smell. Perhaps *pakara* may be connected with Sk. *pushkara*, the blue lotus (S. *pokuru*, H. *pokhara*, P. *pokhkara*).

Pucama ganye from *pucama*, S. *pusma*, Sk. and P. *pūti*, stench, and *ma*, expletive or intensitive, *ganye*, *v. supra*.

155. Smoke, *duma* Tk.; *dun* K.; *ginipojagin mandevela mangacena* D. (S. *duma*).

Ginipojagin mandevela mangacena; *ginipojagin*, from fire, *mandevela*, slowly (Sk. *manda*, slow, *vēlā*, time), *mangacena*, that which goes. The expression literally means "that which goes from fire slowly," or, "that which goes from fire when wet,' the latter meaning being supported by the sentence collected at Bulugahaladena and given on p. 388.

156. Snake, *polinga* D. (S. *poloṅga*).

157. Speak (*v.*), *katadamana* D.; *katamanye* Bl. (S. *katākaraṇawā*).

Katadamana from *kata*, throat, mouth, and *damana*, sound (Sk. √*dhwan*, *dhmā*, Sk. and P. *maṇ*, to sound).

Katamanye, *v. supra*.

158. Spider, *mekini* Bl. (S. *makuḷuwā*).

The form *makuṇā* is also used in Sinhalese.

159. Spit (*v.*), *kelapoja anokelanawa* D. from S. *kela*, spittle, *poja* (*v.* p. 391), *anoke*, away (S. *ahaka*), and *lanawa*, to put (S. *keḷa gahanawā*).

160. Squirrel (*Sciurus macrurus*), *dandulena* N.; *panina* L.; *peruma* D.; *rukka*, *rukia* R. T. (S. *daṇḍulēnā*, *lēnā*).

Dandulena from S. *dandu*, stem, stalk, erect, and *lēnā*, squirrel, probably referring to the long tail of this squirrel.

Panina, lit. the jumper (S. *paninnā*).

Peruma, lit. the animal (which lodges) among the leaves of trees, cf. Sk. *parṇamṛiga*, squirrel, from *parṇa*, leap, and *mṛiga*, animal.

Rukka, cf. Sk. *vṛikshalāyikā*, from *vṛiksha* (S. *ruk*), trees, and *lāyikā*, who sleeps, i.e. who sleeps in trees.

161. Stand (*v.*), *anahitala indinya*, *hitala indinya* D. Bl.; *indepe* B.; *penenàngipu* K. (S. *sitinawā*).

Anahitala indinya from *ana* (Sk. and P. *āni*), the part of the leg immediately above the knee, *hitala*, being erect (Sk. √*sthā*, P. *ṭhā*, to stand, to remain), and *indinya*, *v.* No. 150.

Penenangipu, cf. S. *panananga*, to rise up.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

162. **Star**, *ginipojawal* Bl.; *turapoja* D.; *tarka* K. (S. *taru*, Sk. *tarakā*).

Ginipojawal from S. *gini*, fire, and *pojawal*, heaps; *wal* being the pl. suffix (T. *hal*), is probably a contraction of H. *sakal*, all.

Turapoja from S. *taru*, star, and *poja*, *v.* p. 391.

163. **Stone**, *gale* K. (S. *gala*).

164. **Strike** (*v.*), *labacanawa*, *enavacnawa* Bl. (S. *gahanawā*).

Labacanawa is probably from Sk. *rabhasa*, violence, and lit. means "to do violence."

Enavacnawa from *ena* (Sk. *han*), to strike, and *vacnawa*, to throw over, or drive away.

165. **String a bow** (*v.*), *patawela mando herenawa* Bl. (S. *dunuwelu*, or *dunudiya*, *damanawā*).

Patawela mando herenawā; Mr Parker considers that this phrase means "to loop the bark cord (on the bow)." *Patawela* may be from S. *paṭṭē*, bark, and *wala*, cord; *manda karanawā* is to loop or noose, *manda* being a noose.

166. **Sun**, *irapoja* D. Bl.; *sakolawa* B.; *suriya* K. (S. *ira*).

Irapoja from S. *ira* (Sk. *sūrya*), and *poja* perhaps from Sk. and P. *punja*, mass, heap (cf. p. 391).

Sakolawa is connected with Sk. *sahasrakirana*, sun.

Suriya (Sk. *sūrya*, P. *suriya*) is not used in colloquial Sinhalese.

167. **Sweat**, *dadidapi* W. from S. *dadi*, sweat, and *dapa* (Sk. *darpa*), heat (S. *dāḍiya*, *ḍāḍiya*).

168. **Take away** (*v.*), *enanuma* B. K.; *ena mangacana* D.; *ene mangacnawa* Bl. (S. *aragena yanawā*).

Enanuma from *ena*, S. *gena*, having taken, and *numa*, which appears to be connected with Sk. *nigam*, to go to, or may be a corruption of S. *yama*, go (imp.).

Ena mangacana from *ena* (*supra*), and *mangacana*, go.

Ene mangacnawa from *ene* (S. *eyin*), from that place, thence, and *mangacnawa*.

169. **Tears**, *dia* Bl., lit. (S.) water (S. *kaṅdulu*).

170. **Teeth**, *daiporuwa* Bl.; *dathethai* D. (S. *daṭ*).

Daiporuwa, lit. "tooth board," or row of teeth, from *dai*, teeth, and *poruwa*, board, plank (H. *paṭrā*, or *pirhā*, plank, M. *phara*, row, line).

Dathethai from S. *data*, tooth, and *hethai* (M. *huṭuhā*), piece.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

171. **Thick**, *parabata* K., cf. S. *parvata*, adj., large, huge, and Sk. *parvata*, *pārāpata*, mountain, which may be used to indicate thickness (S. *gana*).

172. **Thunder and lightning**, *akunu* O.; *diadamana* Bl.; *dīula* W.; *devula andanawa* K.; *devula gorawanawa* R.; *katadamanan* Bl. (S. *gerawima viduliya*).

Akunu, cf. P. *akkhaṇā*, Sk. *akshaṇa*.

Diadamana, lit. light thrower, from *dia* (Sk. *dvita*), light, rays of light, and *damana*, that which throws; cf. S. *dama*, to put, to throw, probably from Sk. √*dhma*, to throw, to cast.

Dīula is a corruption of M. *sōjvāla*, lightning.

Devula andanawa from *devula*, heaven, and S. *andanawa*, making a sound.

Devula gorawanawa from *devula* and S. *gorawanawā*, rumble, growl.

Katadamanan from *kata* (Sk. *kānti*), lustre, and *damanan*, which appears to be either a mistake or another form of *damana*.

173. **Tinder**, *huduhamba* W.; *pulum* K. (S. *giniṗulun*).

Huduhamba from *hudu*, S. *sudu*, white, and *hamba* (Sk. *samidha*), fuel. [For another and more probable derivation cf. p. 386.]

Pulum, cf. S. *puḷum*, cotton.

174. **Tobacco**, *vasakola* K.; *vesakola* O. D. Bl. R.; *vesakola* K. W. L. T. (S. *dumkola*), perhaps from S. *visa*, poison, and *kola*, leaf.

175. **Tongue**, *divapoja* D.; *divarukula* Bl.; *radiya* O.; *tale* T. (S. *diva*).

Divapoja, from S. *diva*, tongue, and *poja*: *v.* p. 391.

Divarukula, lit. that which helps licking or tasting, from S. *diva*, tongue, and *rukula*, *v.* No. 73.

Radiya from S. *raha*, taste, flavour, and *diya*, S. *diva*, tongue.

Tale from S. *tala* (Sk. *dala*), blade.

176. **Track** (*v.*), *oteken mangacalawe* Bl., lit. "gone this way," or "gone from there"; *oteken*, from there, cf. S. *otanini*, from that place, *man*, way, path (S. *may*, Sk. *mārga*), *gacalawe*, gone, cf. P. *gacchati*, goes.

177. **Tree**, *ga*, *gapoja*, *gaipoja* K. D. Bl., from S. *gaha* and *poja*, *v.* p. 391 (S. *gasa*, *gaha*).

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

178. Ugly, *napari* B., v. No. 8 (S. *avalakshapa*).

179. Understand (v.), *hitalala tibenya* Bl. from S. *hita*, in the mind, *lala*, having put, and *tibenya*, there is, or *hitalala* may be corrupted from H. *cittalā*, mind (S. *hetigenawā*, *tiroyawā*).

180. Water, *dia* K. O. T.; *diaraca* D.; *diarukula* Bl. (S. *vatura*, *diya*).

Diaraca from *dia*, water, and *raca* (Sk. *rasa*), fluid.

Diarukula, lit. support of life, from *dia*, S. *divi*, life, and *rukula*, v. No. 73.

181. Waterhole, *madawala* W., lit. mudpit, from S. *maḍa*, mud, and *waḷa*, pit (S. *vaturawaḷa*).

182. Water tortoise, *kabala pite kuda* N.; *mambuda* N. (S. *ibbā*, *kashēwā*).

Kabala pite kuda[1], lit. "white on the back of the shell" from S. *kabala*, shell, *piṭi*, on the back, and *kuda* (S. *suda*), white.

Mambuda from *mam* (Sk. *wāmana*), pigmy, and *buda*, body.

183. Wax, *iti* K. (S. *iṭi*).

184. Wind, *dandapatagacma* D.; *hulampaja* Bl.; *silman* K.; *silmudurunaga* W. O. (S. *kuḷaṅgu*).

Dandapatagacma from Sk., P. and S. *daṇḍa*, staff, stem of a tree, and *patagacma*.

Hulampaja from S. *kuḷan* and *paja*, v. p. 391.

Silman, lit. that which causes to shake, from S. *solawa* (Sk. and P. *sala*), to shake, the gerund of which is *solman*.

Silmudurunaga from *sil*, tree (S. *sala*, Sk. and P. *sāla*), *mudurunaga* (Sk. *samuddharaṇa*), eradicating, and Sk. *ga*, that which moves.

185. Yam, *alapaja* D.; *bokki* K.; *katwalla* T. (S. *ala*).

Alapaja from S. *ala* (Sk. and P. *āḷu*), and *paja*, v. p. 391.

Bokki, cf. Sk. *bukki*, heart, which may have been applied to yams on account of their shape.

Katwalla from S. *kaṭu*, thorny, and *alla*, S. *ala*, yam (Sk. and P. *āḷu*).

[1] Mr Parker points out that the animal referred to is the pale, edible freshwater turtle called by the Sinhalese *kiri ibba*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

APPENDIX.

THE DERIVATION OF THE *KÆLĒ-BĀSE* NAMES OF SOME ANIMALS[1]

BY

A. M. GUNASEKARA.

1. **Ant-eater.** (i) *Pottā*, f. *potti*, lit. "who has a shell," from S. *potta*, "shell." The shell of the ant-eater is called in S. *āpotu* (nom. sing. *āpotta*), *ā* is the basal form (generally taken by the first part of a compound word) of *āyā*. 192

(ii) *Ēyā*, literally "who ploughs or digs." This word is formed from S. *ēyā*, derived from S. √*sā*.

(iii) *Talhola-peṭṭiyā* from S. *talhola*, "palmyra leaves," and *peṭṭiyā*, "who is or has a box" (S. *peṭṭiya*, "box"), *i.e.* the ant-eater is or has "a box made of palmyra leaves." I assume that *peṭṭiyā* should be *peṭṭiyā*.

2. **Bear.** (i) *Uyangowwā*, lit. a keeper or protector of pleasure gardens, from S. *uyan*, "parks," "pleasure gardens," "gardens," and *gowwā*, "keeper," "who guards or protects."

(ii) *Taḍiyā*, lit. "the fat one," from Tamil *taḍi*, "flesh." In Sinhalese *taḍiyā* is a fat man or animal.

(iii) *Kaluwā*, lit. "the black one," from S. *kalu*, "black"; *ā* is the personal nom. sing. ending, and *kalua* becomes *kaluwā* by euphony. *Kaluwā* is often used by the Sinhalese as a pet name for a male child who has a particularly dark complexion.

(iv) *Kalu-wælihini*, lit. black she-bear, from *kalu* and *wælihini*, "she-bear."

(v) *Gamayā*, lit. "the village headman," from S. *gama*, "village"; *gamayā* also means "villager." *Gamarāla* is the more common form for the headman of a village.

[1] The *kelē-bāse* names of the animals in this appendix are taken from Mr Parker's work *Ancient Ceylon*.

[P. 451]

3. **Buffalo.** (i) *Ambarunā*, lit. horn-bearer, from S. *aṃ*, "horns," and *harunā*, "who is laden" or "who bears" (from Sk. √*bhṛi*, to bear, to support); "*ṃ*" is changed into "*m*" before "*b*" which requires before it a nasal of the class to which it belongs.

(ii) *Gamayā*, a Sinhalese word meaning "bull," "ox," "one of the ox kind," corresponding with the Sk. *gauva*, *gō*, cf. Sk. *gavaḷa*, "wild buffalo."

(iii) *Pilliṭunā* is a Sinhalese word meaning "who snorts or makes a hissing sound with the nostrils" (as when the animal is charging), from S. √*pilla*, "to blow."

4. **Civet cat.** (i) *Appala-haṭayā* appears to mean "one who moves skilfully among branches," from S. *appala* (*aṭpala*), "on branches," and *haṭayā* (*haṭayā*, *haṭayā*), "soldier," "one skilful in action."

(ii) *Hāṭuḍhiliyā* is probably a variant of *hāṭuḍhayā* (s. *infra*); *Hāṭuḍhiliyā* literally means "he whose ears are red," from S. *hā*, "ears," and *ḍuḍhiliyā*, "one like a king-cocoanut," *i.e.* "one who is red."

(iii) *Hāṭuḍhayā* from *hā*, "ears," and *ḍuḍhayā*, "copper-coloured one," *i.e.* "one whose ears are copper-coloured."

5. **Cobra.** *Bōyi-aṭṭayā*, lit. "the animal with a hood," from *bōyi*, "hood" (expanded), and *aṭṭayā*, "animal"; *bōyi* is a corrupt form of S. *boya* (Sk. *bhōga*), "(expanded) hood," "coil," "snake," and *aṭṭayā* is a corrupt form of the Sk. *aṭṭayā* (with S. nom. sing. ending) used by illiterate Sinhalese, "being," "animal."

6. **Crocodile.** *Gamayā*, s. No. 2 (v), *supra*.

7. **Deer, Axis.** (i) *Ambarunā*, s. No. 3 (i), *supra*.

(ii) *Pit-palalli*, this expression may mean "who is a yellow bag," from *pit* (Sk. *pīta*), "yellow," and *palalli* (threshing-floor dialect), "bag." Perhaps *palalli* is a corruption of S. *polli*, "young animal," while *pit* may be a mistake for, or a corruption of, S. *tik*, "spots." The spotted deer is called *tik-mauṭā* in Sinhalese, in which language *pit* also means "bile," "bilious."

8. **Deer, Mouse.** (i) *Kokā*, lit. "who makes the cry of kok"; in Sinhalese the cry of the peacock is called *kokā* (Sk. *kōkā*).

(ii) *Yakaṭayā*; lit. "who is like iron," "who is stern," from S. *yakaṭa*, "iron." [Mr Parker suggests that this expression is satirical and refers to the fragile appearance of the animal.]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

(iii) *Baṭgaraya* is a Sinhalese word meaning "who vexes," "who deceives," "fast runner"; the Sk. *jaṭgaṭāra*, "runner," is identical with the Sinhalese word. 1120

9. **Deer, Sambar.** (i) *Ambarawa*, v. 3 (i), *supra*.

(ii) *Karakolaya*, lit. "who is a raw talipot leaf." *Karakola*, the "leaf of the talipot palm."

(iii) *Polla*, S. "young animal" (of deer, etc.), the S. *polla*, "club," "staff," can hardly be connected with this.

10. **Dog.** (i) *Ādura*, a S. word meaning "teacher," "messenger," "expeller of devils," the corresponding words in Sk. and P. are *ādarya* and *ādariya* respectively.

(ii) *Baddinna*, lit. "binder," "who binds or ties," in which sense only the word is used in S. If taken as a contraction of *anu-baddinna* (S.), it may mean "follower"; if taken as a contraction of *hulu-baddinna*, it may mean "who chases or pursues."

(iii) *Hatarahāgaya* from S. *hatara*, "four," and *hāgaya*, "who has parts" (probably referring to legs).

(iv) *Hatara-hāgu-atta* from S. *hatara*, *hāgu*, "parts," and *atta*, "who has."

11. **Elephant.** (i) *Uhalla*, lit. "the tall one." This is another form of *usalla* which, though the original form, is less used in Sinhalese.

(ii) *Usalla* (v. *supra*).

(iii) *Usangalla* from S. *us*, "tall," and *angalla*, "who has limbs." *Anga* (S., Sk. and P.) in *angalla* means "limbs" and the *ll* seem to have been added to conform with the preceding words.

(iv) *Gajjara* from *gajja*, "trumpeting (of elephants)," and *ra*, "who gives." Though *gaja* is a Sk. word also used in S. for "elephant," *gajjara* is not connected with it, but comes from the root *garj*, "to roar or growl"; from this root is formed the Sk. word *garja*, "trumpeting of elephants," of which the Pali form is *gajja*. The Sk. *garja* itself may be corrupted into *gajja* by the illiterate.

12. **Leopard.** (i) *Diviya*. This is the common S. word which corresponds with Sk. *dvipin* and P. *dipi*.

(ii) *Sivapāma* from S. *siva*, "four," and *pāma*, "who has feet," *i.e.* "the four-footed one."

(iii) *Badi-mutta* from S. *badi*, "forest," "jungle," and *mutta* (S. *mutta*), "grandfather," *i.e.* lit. "grandfather of the forest."

Mutt appears to be a mistake for *mitta*, the form *hadili-mutti* occurs in the threshing-floor dialect.

(iv) *Rasapyt*, lit. "inhabitant of the forest," from S. *rasapyt*, "who dwells in the forest."

13. **Monitor lizard** (*Varanus* sp.). (i) *Karulla*, lit. "who is like a skein or bundle" or "who has stripes or lines," from S. *karulla*, "skein," "bundle," "line," "stripe."

(ii) *Kapurala* from S. *kapu*, "priest of a temple," and *rala*, "chief," "lord" (generally used as honorific); *kapurala* is more respectful than *kapuwa*, which is also used. The word may also mean "barber," in which sense it perhaps refers to the bare skin of the monitor lizard.

(iii) *Mandi* from the Sk. *manda*, "slow," "dull," "lazy," which is also used in Sinhalese.

14. **Monkey** (*Semnopithecus* sp.). (i) *Gas-gwa* from S. *gas*, "tree," and *gwa*, "bull." *Gagwa* is probably a corruption of *gagiya*, *gwagiya* is an old S. word for monkey.

(ii) *Gas-giya* from S. *gas*, "tree," and *giya*, "sambar."

15. **Monkey** (*Theropithecus* sp.). (i) *Kaddan-panimat*, from S. *kaddan*, "trunks" (of trees), and *panimat*, "who jumps."

(ii) *Pataganaya-aha* from S. *pataganaya*, "who is stripped of his cloth" (S. *pata*), and *aha*, "one."

16. **Pig.** (i) *Hapa-karaya*, s. No. 133 of the Vedda list.

(ii) *Tadiya*, s. No. 9 (ii), *supra*.

(iii) *Tilhaliya* from S. *tel*, "oil," "fat," and *haliya*, "who is a pot" (S. *hala*), *i.e.* "who is (like) a pot of fat."

17. **Porcupine.** (i) *Intaya*, a Sinhalese word, though the form *ittaya* is more commonly used.

(ii) *Kapuwa*, lit. "the spiny one," from S. *kapu*, "bones," *i.e.* "spines."

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 As may be supposed, the vocabulary of such a barbarous race is very limited. It only contains such phrases as are required to describe the most striking objects of nature, and those which enter into the daily life of the people themselves. So rude and primitive is their dialect that the most ordinary objects and actions of life are described by quaint periphrasis. As, for example, to walk is "to beat (the ground) with hammers"; a child is "a bud"; the grains of rice are "round things"; an elephant is not inappropriately termed "a beast like a mountain"; while the fallow deer of the island (*Axis maculata*) are, with the strictest accuracy, called "spotted animals"; and wild boars, "long-snouted ones."*

They use none of the honorifics so profusely common in Singhalese, the pronoun "*to*," "thou" being alone used, whether they are addressing each other, or those whose position would entitle them to outward respect. They can neither read nor write, nor
212 can I trace the faintest vestige of their ever having possessed any literature, in the lowest sense in which that word can be used.† They count with difficulty on their fingers, and so little notion
202 205 have they of time, that it is difficult to make them understand that they are to keep an engagement at a more remote period than the next day.

I have compared the scant and unsatisfactory collection of
197 words, which I have been able to make, with almost all the vocabularies of the aboriginal tribes of India, published in the *Asiatic Society's Journal*, and though in some of them I have found isolated instances of striking resemblance, these are probably merely accidental. The subject is one which requires further investigation: and a careful examination of the dialect, by any one competent to perform the task, would be interesting, although I question if it would elicit more than we at present know of the origin of the Veddahs.

I append to this paper, as a specimen of their patois, a list of some of their words, distinguishing between those which probably

* It is very curious that the Veddah term for the Ceylon elk, the Samba deer of India (*Rusa Aristotelis*), is "gawra," *vide* Tennent's remarks in his *Natural History of Ceylon*, p. 49, on the tradition of the former existence in Ceylon of the "Bos gaurus" of Hindustan. I have myself heard the "gaur" described by old Kandyans, who have seen it in the mountain forests, as an animal with, as it were, the body of a buffalo and the legs of an elk. And there are many places still bearing the name "gaura," as, for example, besides gaura ellea, mentioned by Tennent, gaura kelle—the forest of the gaur—gaura kanda; and there is a kind of grass called gaura manala. It is curious that the elk should be called gaura by the Veddahs, and by no one else.

† About ten years ago, the Government established a school for the Veddahs of Bintenne, but it proved a failure.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 That the bulk of the aborigines amalgamated with their conquerors, and became one people with them, there is ample proof; but the race of Kuweni probably held aloof from all. She, betraying and betrayed, met her doom on the scene of her treachery.* Her children and immediate kinsfolk, outcasts both from the conquering and conquered races, fled to the forests. A life of isolation was to them not a matter of choice but of necessity. In their seclusion they naturally retained, with the superstition of their mother's people, some remnant of their father's faith, with which they must have been in some degree familiar. They preserved the high-sounding names of India, and, with the pride of rank, adhered to the custom of the marriage of a brother with his younger sister, which was not only the practice of their father's family, but a mark of their royal blood.

Such is the story of the Veddahs. And if my theory be correct it adds a curious chapter to the history of Ceylon.

SPECIMEN OF VEDDAH DIALECT.

(*Vowels to be pronounced as in Italian.*)

192
197

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
The sun	Irra podja	Ira	"Podja", probably a corruption of podiya (Singhalese), a small thing.
The moon	Pāna podja	Handa	Pāna (Singh.), a lamp. Handa pāna (Singh.) moonlight.
The stars	Tarŭoka gaija	Tarakāwa	"Gaija", probably a corruption of sediya (Singh.), anything round. It can hardly be the Sanscrit word gaija, as it would be inappropriate as regards lights apparently so much smaller than the sun and moon.

vii, p. 371,—"Even the children of Wijaya by his first wife, Kuweni, united themselves with their maternal connections, on the repudiation of their mother, and retained the attributes of the Yakkhos." He refers, as his authority, to the seventh chapter of the *Mahawanso;* but this proves the exact contrary. It is there distinctly stated that, so far from doing so, they were compelled to flee with their uncle to avoid their mother's fate, and that Wijaya himself came to their refuge, assigning to them a place of security from their incensed "maternal connections" in "the Sumanta mountain," probably Saffragam, far removed from the scene of their mother's brief triumph and death (the present district of Putlam).

* One copy of the *Mahawanso* describes the scene of her death as near Tamenawillo, *i. e.*, Tamenanewera, near Putlam. Her spirit is still supposed to haunt a well in the neighbourhood, whence she issues forth, invisible, and pelts with great stones rash treasure-hunters who invade her solitude in search of the treasure they believe is buried near.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Clouds	Gal pèriya	Walakula	"Gal" is a stone in Singhalese. In Tamil "kâl peria" would signify large stone or rock.
Thunder	Dewôla andapi	Hena	"Dewôla" (Singh.), a spirit, a demon, a god; "andapi" (Singh.), has cried out.
Lightning	Ginna wetunu	Widuliya	"Gini wetunu" (Singh.), fallen fire.
The sky	Pombina	Ahasa	
The earth	Bimi	Bima	
Water	Diya	Diya	This is also used for rain, for which the Batticalao Veddahs use "wscha" corruption of "wssa" (Singh.), rain.
Heat	Ginna	Grisma	"Gini" (Singh.), fire.
Cold	Ehna	Sitala	I find in "Notes on the Languages of Various Tribes in the Valley of Assam" by Mr. Robinson, inspector of schools in Assam, published in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journals, the word "yen" for cold, in the Khamti, Lace, and Siamese; and "aiyang" in the Khari Naga languages.
Man	Minna	Miniha	
Woman	Mehli	Gani	"Mæhæli" (Singh.), an old woman.
Child	Petji Kekula Bilinda Witera	Lamaya	"Petji", corruption of "poncha" (Sing.), a child; "kakula" (Singh.), a bud; "bilinda" (Sihgh.), young—a child; and "witera", a bud; are applied only to the child-spirits—Bilindoo-yakkoo; has been explained before.
Boy	Ammi	Kollâ	In the "Notes" before referred to, I find "amie" in the Miri, Abor, and Khari-naga languages, for man.
Girl	Petti	Keli	"Petti" for "penchi" (Singh.), girl.
Father	Appa	Appa	My father, "appa latto"; my mother, "amma latto"; "latto", particle of possession.
Mother	Amma	Amma	
Husband	Hoora	Swamaya	"Hoora" is the Singh. term for that male cousin who is the proper match for a Singhalese girl, viz. her father's sister's, or mother's brother's son. It is traditional that some Veddahs used this term "cousin" when addressing or speaking of the Kandyan kings.
Wife	Nehna	Stri	"Nœna" is the Singhalese term for the corresponding female cousin.
Head	Iya, eecha	Issa	
Eye	Eyeyi, echel	Ehbé	
Nose	Naya	Nahé	
Hair	Eecha kola	Issa kaya	"Echa" for "issa", the head; "kola" (Singh.), leaves.
Body	Bopati	Enga	"Pett" (Singh.), the side of the body; "bo" (Singh.), great. "Pet" is stomach in the Punjabi language.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

●192
197

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Legs	Dannisba-doowiga	Kakoola	"Danahis (Singh.), the knee.
Foot	Patoola	Paya or padiya	
Rice	Watu kuru	Hâl	"Watu kuru (Singh), a round thing.
Paddy	Dépotoo-lang	Wee	"Dahayâ potu" (Singh.), chaff; "lang", having, *i.e.* rice in the husk—paddy.
Honey	Metchan	Meepani	"Mêsse" (Singh.), a bee.
A house	Rukkoola	Gé	"Rukula" (Singh.), a hollow tree.
A tree	Guy	Gaha	
A bow	Doongah	Doona	"Doona" (Singh.), a bow; "gaha" (Singh.), a tree.
Arrow	Morianket-tia	Iya	
River	Diyagama	Ganga	"Diyagama" (Singh.), a water course.
Dog	Kuko Kotowa Balo	Bala	"Kukka" (Singh.), puppies.
Buffalo	Walman-aya	Mee ma, or mee harak	"Wal" (Singh.), wild. I find in Mr. Hodgson's Vocabularies of the Aborigines of the N.E. of Bengal, that "menjek" or "menjeg", is the word for buffalo in the Miri dialect. The Batticalao Veddahs say "mee-botah".
Ceylon elk (*rusa Aristotelis*)	Gawra	Gôna	The Batticalao Veddahs call an elk "gôna-botah".
Deer (*axis maculata*)	Kaberra botah	Meowa	"Kaberra" (Singh.), spotted, "botah" (Singh.), an animal. The Batticalao Veddahs say "meowa-botah".
Pig	Hôta-bar-ria Okma	Oorâ	"Hôta" (Singh.), a snout; "barria", heavy or hanging. Okma is only used by them in charms.
Chetah (Ceylon leopard), *felis pardus*	Poletcha	Diwiya, or kotiyah	The Arasas (or "mountain kings" as they call themselves and are called), a hill tribe in Tuine valley, in South India, call a tiger "poochee". In charms, I find "diwi pulliya", spotted chetah, used; but they always speak of a chetah as "poletcha". The Batticalao Veddahs say "mitâ botah"—"mitâ", low (in stature).
Bear	Kerri-botah Kerria Arachi Barachi	Walahâ	"Arachi" and "barachi" only occur in charms, and it is an evident corruption of the Pali expression "achcha tarachcha"—"achcha" a bear, "tarachcha" a road bear, one which infests roads (tara, a road).*

* I am indebted to Mr. De Zoysa for this interpretation. He adds, "In the Pali Nighandu, 'achcha' is said to mean bear, and 'tarachcha' a bear that bends his neck". According to some, 'tarachcha' is the hyena. Probably the Singhalese writers confused the bear with the hyena, and considered the latter a species of bear.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 ●
197
[412]

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Elephant	Botah kandah Môlah	Alya, or œta (tusks)	"Kandah" (Singh.), a hill or mountain. "Môlah" (Singh.), the thick heavy black pounder used as a pestle in pounding rice—an allusion, probably, to his trunk. The Batticalao Veddahs say "mt-botah" and "cotah bebéla".
Monkey	Patagahapooeka	Wandura, or rilawa	
Porcupine	Nittawe	Ittawe	
Pengolin (*manis pentadactyla*)	Gal gawra	Kaballiya	
Iguana	Moondé	Talagoya	Called by the Veddahs of Batticalao "góya", "goy-botah", and "hellá".
Lizard	Cat-tombá	Hoona	
Snake	Polongoo	Sarpaya	"Polongo", a very venomous snake. The Batticalao Veddahs call a snake "sarra-botah".
Snail	Tombá	Golu bellá	
A bird	Sappee Chappee Sattriaye	Kurulla	In the Assamese and Bengali dialects, birds are called "charal" and "chiriya".
A crow	Kalu eka	Kaká	"Kalu" (Singh.), black, "eka", one.
To walk	Mangwettinawa, mittiganawa	Æwadinawa	"Maga" (Singh.), a road; "wettanawa" (do.), to fall; "mittiya" (do.), a hammer; "gahanawa" (do.), to strike.
To jump	Bota damanawa	Paninawa	"Bota" (Singh.), the neck; "damanawa" (do.), to place.
To shoot (with bow & arrow)	Pennagatcha	Widinawa	
To rain	Diya pompanawa	Wahinawa	
To drink	Diya kanawa	Bónawa	"Diya-kanawa", to eat water—not an uncommon expression among the Kandyans.
To eat	Kapat ennawa	Kanawa	
To speak	Katan kiyanawa, & banawanawa	Kiyanawa and katakaranawa	
To call	Kilápeh	Andagahanawa	
To see	Reviga	Dakenawa	
To die	Miyoona Miya pérélig6	Mærenawa	"Miyoona" (Singh.), dead; "miya" (do.), dead; "miya perelliya", dead and gone.
To sleep	Nidenawa	Nidagannawa	
I am hot	Baddagana		
I am cold	Bopati sitaganawa		

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
192 Here	Mobba	Móhi	
197 There	Obba	E'hi	
Far off	Nekat rata	Dura	
Be quick!	To bang	Wigahata	"To", the pronoun thou; in the Bhotia dialect "bangjyap" is, be quick!
Before	Itchätä	Issaraha	
Behind	Patchätä	Pasó	
Exclamation of approbation	Ketä!		
Exclamation of disapprobation	Iss!		

SPECIMENS OF VEDDAH NAMES.

MEN.

551 Lôkendra. "Sovereign of the World", from Lôka (Sanscrit), "the world", and Indra; unknown among Singhalese or Tamils of Ceylon, but in use in Bengal.

171 Kanda. The Singhalese call Skanda, the Indian Mars, to whom the famed temple at Katragam is dedicated, "Kanda Kumaryia"; but the word is unknown as a name.

Weyla. One of the names of Skanda.

Suppa is a corruption of Subhramanya, one of the names of Skanda. Both these are Tamil names in use; and I think I have heard Weyla as a Kandyan name, but it is very uncommon.

Skanda is a favourite of the Veddahs (of India), though unknown to the Veddahs here; and "Valli", one of his consorts (a Veddah female name in use among the Veddahs in Ceylon), was said to have been born of a deer in a forest in Arcot, and found by a Veddah chief Kumâra (Kumâro was Kuweni's uncle, and Kumä is a Veddah name still in use), and brought up by him.

Kanda, it is true, means, in Singhalese, simply a mountain; but it is more probable that, as a Veddah name, it is a corruption of Skanda, a name descended to them, though they are ignorant of its signification.

Nila. A name in common use in Bengal; also used by Tamils (Hindús); but entirely unknown as a name among the Singhalese. Nila, a personage mentioned in the Puranas.

Benda. Binda, in common use in Bengal, but unknown in Ceylon, either among Singhalese or Tamils. There is a common appellation, a title rather than a name, Banda, in Ceylon; but Banda does not occur among the Veddahs. Binduwa also is a low-cast name among the Singhalese.

Dówa Denna. Unknown as a name in Ceylon. Equivalent to the Hindú "Deva Dattah", given by the deity—which is its signification in Singhalese.

Milälana. Unknown by Singhalese or Tamils in Ceylon.

Koonchi. From "kuncha" (Sanscrit), to go crookedly—a cripple. In use, with the affix Tamby, among the Tamils, but not in use among the Singhalese.

Kangeria. "Kangana" (Sans.), one of the names of Kandarpa, God of Love. Neither used by Singhalese nor Tamil as a name.

Kowa. No such name among Singhalese or Tamils.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mr Gunasekara's opinion as to the origin and relationship of these words will be found in the vocabulary at the end of the volume, where we also give his explanation of the many periphrases we collected[1]. 192

We may refer here to the use of the affix *-poja* which the Veddas join to many nouns, thus "blood" is called *lepoja* and the sun *irapoja*. Inquiries made from Veddas and peasant Sinhalese failed to suggest any origin for this affix, which can scarcely be connected with the Sinhalese words *poḍḍa* and *poda* "little," "little thing" as was suggested by some of our Sinhalese informants. We therefore fall back upon a suggestion made to us by Mr Gunasekara that *poja* is a corruption of Sanskrit *pudgala* (P. *puggala*) "individual," "body," "matter," "personal identity." If this explanation is correct then *lēpoja* is the equivalent of "the individual or thing (called) *le* blood," *irapoja* of "the individual or thing (called) *ira* sun," *hulampoja* of "the individual or thing (called) *hulan* wind." The use of this word may have been found convenient when a foreign word was adopted by the Veddas, to make it clear that the borrowed word referred to a concrete object. Later, when the new word had become universally intelligible and was firmly established in the Vedda dialect, *poja* must have been gradually dropped from a great number of nouns, and this doubtless is probably the reason why at present *poja* is affixed only to a minority of words, and while commonly used by some Veddas is scarcely heard in other communities. This view is supported by Mr Gunasekara's remark that *pudgala* has been used by the Sinhalese in the sense of "person" (individual), though he considers that its use as an affix to a considerable number of nouns is a purely Vedda feature. 193

Mr Parker suggests that there may be more than one origin for *-poja* as used by the Veddas, "thus, *lēpoja* might be *lēpoda*, drop of blood. There is also a Sinhalese word *poja* (Skt. *prajā*)

[1] It is extremely probable that some of the words in this list may be derived from Tamil, the following being suggestions for which we are indebted to Mr Parker: *ahad* buffalo, T. *akkam* a bull, ox or cow; *aṭṭā* elephant, T. *aṭṭi* a hornless beast; *kuriyā* bear, T. *kuri* black and *ahā* one; *tel* honey comb, cf. T. *teḷḷi* hole, perforation, tube; *ambalous* sun, cf. T. *ambaram* a circle, disk, wheel (Sk. *cakra*); *dunā* monkey, cf. T. *tuṇṇa* slave; *rukkā*, Sin. *rukā* tree and *ahā* one, i.e. "the tree one."

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

193 creature, one meaning of the Sanskrit word being 'designating,' 'indicating.'"

The occurrence of a large number of the non-Sinhalese Aryan 192 words in the Vedda vocabulary seems to us of considerable 197 importance. Many of these words are derived or borrowed from the Hindi and Marathi languages or from Sanskrit words which according to Mr Gunasekara "are seldom or never used in the Sinhalese language."

This implies that these languages must at one time have materially contributed to the formation of Sinhalese, and if it could be determined at what period they had passed into the vulgar tongue in Ceylon, this would give us the earliest date at which the Veddas could have adopted Sinhalese.

197 At present this seems impossible, but valuable suggestions concerning the period or periods at which the northern influence was exerted may perhaps be gathered from the age of the Sinhalese folk-tales of Northern origin collected by Mr Parker from districts in the interior of the Island "where story-books in Sinhalese, Tamil, or Arabic do not appear to have penetrated, and English is unknown by the villagers." This quotation as well as those which follow are taken from the introduction (pp. 37 and 38) to Mr Parker's recent volume *Village Folk Tales of Ceylon.* Mr Parker, after referring to stories due to immigrants from South India, writes as follows concerning those which he considers were brought in by "settlers from the Ganges valley, or near it.

"With regard to the latter, it is not probable that they consisted only of the early immigrants of pre-Christian times. King Niśśanka-Malla, who reigned from 1198 to 1207 A.D., has recorded in his inscriptions that he was a native of Sinhapura, then apparently the capital of the Kālinga kingdom, which extended far down the east coast of India, southward from the lower part of the Ganges valley; and he and his chief Queen Subhadrā, a Kālinga Princess, must have brought into Ceylon many of their fellow-countrymen. The Queens of two other earlier Kings of Ceylon were also Princesses from Kālinga.

"In the Galpota inscription at Polannaruwa (Prof. E. Müller's *Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon*, No. 148), he stated that "invited

614 they belonged, which suggested to us that perhaps they belonged to Uru *waraga* or one of the other clans which are considered of inferior status. Although the Arachi of Belligala did not know their *waraga* and believed that they had really forgotten them themselves, our opinion was confirmed by information obtained later from the Arachi of Alutnuwara who said that they were of the Uru and Namadewa *waraga*, while a Vedda of Horabora-wewa told us that his mother came from Dambani and she was a Namadewa woman.

576 As the Arachi of Belligala assured us the Bulugahaladena
609 Veddas lived in a condition precisely similar to those of Dambani, we did not visit their village but arranged for two of them to visit us at Belligala; they greeted us in the same way as the Dambani folk, with loud and guttural voices, accentuating all the "cha," and shook hands. They brought some honey and yams. They said they could not bring *bambara* honey (for it was too early in the year) so they had brought honey from the stingless bee. After a little while they gradually dropped their [194] guttural tones, especially when they were speaking to the villagers and not to us, their voices, naturally deep, assumed a sing-song tone not unlike that of Nila of Sitala Wanniya. We consider that the gruffness of these Veddas is almost entirely affectation. They have been expected to be sullen and morose and never to laugh. For thirty years the Arachi of Belligala has acted as "show-man" to the Veddas of his district, and he always speaks to them in their "language" in similar or even fiercer tones, and he has shown them so many white men that he has quite lost count of their number. He has thus helped to keep up the fiction of "wildness," for these Veddas are not wild since they are not shy but come up, shake hands, ask for presents, and offer to dance.

178 We believe that they keep up few, if any, of the old Vedda customs; they cultivate chenas and keep cattle, their bows and arrows are probably more for show than use, for the Arachi told us that some of them possess guns while others go to the Sinhalese and borrow them. Deschamps says that Veddas never
157 laugh nor have they ever been seen to smile. Of course this is not true of the Veddas of Nilgala, nor do we think it is true of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nila exchanged the *amanula* for the *wila*, and coming to Mari again, raised the *wila* above her head and lowered it to the ground, letting the bast strips brush her face and body and then sweep the ground. This was done in order to wipe away the pain of labour. Then he leapt back to the centre of the cleared space and danced in and out between the three posts, hitting them with the *wila*. This was probably a sign of pleasure, for the driving away of *yaku* by striking their resting place would probably only take place at the end of the ceremony. He again approached Nari and fell back into the arms of his supporter, only remaining quiet for a few seconds until, trembling and gasping, he bent his head over the *usmukaliya* and buried his face in the bast. After doing this over each post he returned to the *usmukaliya* and said he must go, speaking in the usual husky and gasping *yaku* voice; then he fell exhausted into the arms of his supporter. All the Veddas now began to sing the invocation, and it was clear that the *yaku* had not departed from Nila for he soon began to quiver and gasp again, and sprang forward and danced between the three posts; then he began to search for something, lifting the strands of bast on the *usmukaliya*, and after an exaggerated pantomimic search he found the *wila*, turning this in his hands so that the bast swung at right angles, he waved it over each of the three posts; then turning to the *usmukaliya*, bent his head low over it and fell back exhausted. The *yaku* now left him and he recovered consciousness without any quivering or trembling, salaamed to the *usmukaliya* and sat down to rest. All the properties were immediately piled together under a tree. It may be noted that although Vela began to dance with Nila, he did not become possessed and so took no part in the latter portion of the dance.

After a short rest Nila went to the pile and holding a few strands of bast in one hand (Plate XLVI, fig. 2) repeated the following prayer to the Pata Yaku for his daughter's safety a number of times:—

Ané! mayé daruwata kisi antarawak wenda epé mé wara.
Gada yanta denda bana.

Ané! (May) any harm not happen to my child this time.
(You) must permit (her) to land (i.e. to escape from her sea of troubles).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

Sinhalese, as a foreign language which the Veddas long ago adopted in the place of their own. 197

The obvious phonetic changes from the Sinhalese which we noted in the Vedda dialect were the substitution for the sibilant "s" of the palatal "ch" which though generally retained might be thrown out, thus "head" Sin. *isa* becomes in the Vedda dialect *ya* or sometimes *icha*, and *gas* the Sinhalese word for "tree" becomes *gai* or *gayi* in Vedda. There may be other phonetic changes which an expert linguist would detect, but certainly the substitution of "ch" for "s" is the change which gives its characteristic harsh quality to the Vedda dialect. 194

A number of authors have published short lists of Vedda words, that given by the Sarasins being of most importance, for although it consists of only 22 words care is taken to indicate the equivalent in use in each of the Vedda groups visited by the authors. More complete vocabularies have been collected by Bailey and Nevill, and vocabularies have also been published by two native scholars. One of these, who wrote under the *nom-de-plume* A. J. W., Batticaloa, has published his material in a somewhat inaccessible periodical, the *Ceylon Literary Register* (Vol. v, 1891). His information, which includes a number of sentences and lullabies, has evidently been carefully collected and would probably be specially useful to Sinhalese and Sanskrit scholars. Its great defect is that no mention is made of the places where the information was obtained, or the conditions prevailing when it was collected. 114 [113]

Mr A. J. W. Marrambe's publication entitled *The Vedda Language* and apparently printed at Colombo in 1893 which contains some Vedda invocations is of less value, for while it suffers from the same defects it does not appear to have been prepared with the care which characterises the vocabulary in the *Literary Register*[1]. [113]

An important if indirect contribution to the study of the Vedda language has recently been made by Mr Parker, who, in *Ancient Ceylon*, gives in parallel columns Nevill's Vedda vocabulary and the equivalents of these words in the Kaelebasa

[1] The identity of initials suggests that the two accounts may be by one author.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

181 sophisticated Vedda knows what is expected of him he will act up to
152 the expectation right enough. Personally I have never yet met a Vedda who could not laugh. The truth is that the Vedda will laugh with the best of us when there is occasion; but he is a stranger to the conventional, hypocritical smile of civilisation, meant only to please and so uncertain an index of the heart. The Vedda's face, like a child's, is a mirror to his mind.

His natural expression is one of apathy and moroseness. Schooled to hardship and privation, he is neither greatly distraught by sorrow nor transported by joy He expresses his emotions with more moderation than we; he is the greater fatalist; and accepts with stoic equanimity the hard conditions of his life which have wrought into his expression a dour indifference, a decorous gravity.

There is something naturally fierce in his nature; and it does not do to anger him. The tradition is undoubtedly true that the Veddas, at one time, carried in their betel bags fragments of human liver which they chewed when roused, to give fire to their frenzy. And this is probably the origin of the Sinhalese threat, "I'll eat your liver!" There is a spot in the Eastern Province which commemorates to this
[173] day an early incident of colonisation: A Vedda had once way-laid and killed a European soldier, and going up to him could hear the ticking of his watch; examining this he said, "His life is still here," and dashed it to pieces on a rock.

When a Vedda returns from an expedition no one must speak to him until he has rested and it has pleased him to talk first. One who had accompanied us once on a hunt nearly killed a Sinhalese boy who innocently asked him what he had brought, the moment he arrived. Most sportsmen, Vedda or not, are impatient of cross-examination when fatigued—especially if unsuccessful.

771 The Veddas have no conception of a supreme being; nor have they any myth or theory bearing on cosmogony. The panorama of the heavens is beyond their questioning; but its supremacy is instinctively avowed: "*Mā Suriya Deyyo*" (by the Sun God) is an oath by which
195 the Vedda vouches his good faith.

776 Like animals, concerned only with their immediate needs, they take the world very much as they find it. But if the aloof heavens leave their imaginations untouched, not so their immediate environment. Here exist real powers more within the pale of their comprehension, influencing every act of their lives, overshadowing their credulous minds, and affording at least some data on which to found a faith. Is it surprising then that they people Nature with sentient beings, unseen, but very evident by their acts. And what spirits more comprehensible to the primitive mind, more inspiratory of faith and fear, than those of one's

---

Another strange thing about the Veddas, and one which may possibly be connected with their lack of humour, is the fact that every one of them is a George Washington, unable to tell a lie or to conceive of anyone else telling a lie.

They cannot even believe that any one would take the property of anyone else, and association with civilisation has failed to convince them that it is possible.

With all this—or, rather without all this—the Veddas are a peaceable, gentle, quiet people. They take wives without any marriage ceremony, and are faithful and constant to them, supporting them to death.

Aberdeen Paper, 1922

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).* 776

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred. 761 [763]

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakka*).† 769 771

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *andes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells. 776 796

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Ravalkals*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees*, *Peti-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*). 776

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad. 787

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakka* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakka* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakka* ancestral spirit. *Hetha* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanniya* is another word synonymous with *yakka* and *hetha*. [196]

†The Veddas, by Seligmann; page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakkan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *maruge*. The latter lived apart near Unichai, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirakadei*, "nothing," is said

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *kodai*, *tiru* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure 1) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *waruge* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *waruge* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Arachi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is evidence that a hundred years ago there were organised communities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century. 184 361

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the surrounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure 2) though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility. 621 [177] [142] [609]

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been [197] 622 156

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

105 on their chena. We waited here a little while and two Veddas
62 passed, one carrying a gun; we asked them to return to their chena and fetch some of the other villagers. Soon some twenty
[191] men and about as many women and children arrived bringing us presents of honey, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. Scarcely any of them presented the Vedda type, they were all distinctly larger and more heavily built. Except their knowledge of their *waruge* and recognition of the Nae Yaku all remains of Vedda customs seemed to have been lost.

Yakure. The inhabitants of Yakure, a village about six miles from Kalukalaeba, call themselves Veddas, though physically (Plate XVI, figure 1) they would pass as Tamils or mixed
[194] Tamils and Sinhalese, and show even less evidence of Vedda blood than do the Kalukalaeba people. Their village consists of about 40 mud houses and is compactly built; a great number of cattle was seen grazing outside the confines of the village. Like the Kalukalaeba folk they know their *waruge* and invoke the Nae Yaku, but they have a temple, a simple mud hut, and worship a number of Sinhalese gods. Some men (Plate XVI, figure 2) from a village called Ulpota near Gunner's Quoin were
[197] seen here who also appeared to have mixed blood; they knew the "Vedda language," that is to say we were able to get from them about the same number of words as we obtained at Dambani. When one of them was asked when this dialect was used he replied "only when we are sent for by the Government agent or any other white man." Among themselves they speak
[191] Sinhalese though they can also speak Tamil as it is largely the language of Tamankaduwa.

Rotawewa. There is a settlement of alleged Veddas at Rotawewa about six miles from Minerriya tank. Concerning these we were told that they cultivated rice, and were in no respect different from the neighbouring Sinhalese, while Mr Jayawardene writes: "There is only one village of Veddas in Sinhala Pattu of Tamankaduwa District, and that village is Rotawewa, about six miles from Minerriya. These Veddas lived on the chase and subsequently took to chena clearings, and when the place began to be frequented by the low-country Sinhalese and other traders, some of them were able to sell their meat to them and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

CHAPTER XV

LANGUAGE

•197 Mr Parker remarks of the Vedda language that it "is to a great extent the colloquial Sinhalese tongue, but it is slightly changed in form and accent. Yet closely as it resembles the latter, these differences and the manner in which it is pronounced render it quite an unknown language when it is spoken to one who has not a special acquaintance with it. Besides this, the Vaeddas use their own terms for the wild animals and some other things about which they often find it necessary to converse. Such words are usually a form of Sinhalese, or admit of Sinhalese or Tamil derivations; but a very few may possibly belong to, or be a modification of words in, their own original language, forming with perhaps a few forms of grammatical expression the only remains of it that have been preserved, with the exception of some doubtful terms found in Sinhalese[1]."

The view taken by Mr Parker concerning the Sinhalese language, though not quite generally accepted, is that held by Geiger, who considers Sinhalese "a pure Aryan dialect," although it contains some words for which he "can find no Aryan origin"; there are, however, "fewer non-Aryan loan words in Sinhalese than there are non-Germanic words in English[2]." In this and the following chapter Geiger's view will be assumed to be correct and we shall deal with the so-called Vedda language, which is but a dialect of

[1] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 113.

[2] The quotations from Geiger are taken from pp. 96, 97 and 98 of his *Literatur und Sprache der Singhalesen* published in 1900 in Bühler's *Grundriss der Indo-Arischen Philologie*.

[p. 360]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

Sinhalese, as a foreign language which the Veddas long ago adopted in the place of their own. 117

The obvious phonetic changes from the Sinhalese which we noted in the Vedda dialect were the substitution for the sibilant "s" of the palatal "ch" which though generally retained might be thrown out, thus "head" Sin. *isa* becomes in the Vedda dialect *ipa* or sometimes *icha*, and *gas* the Sinhalese word for "tree" becomes *gai* or *gayi* in Vedda. There may be other phonetic changes which an expert linguist would detect, but certainly the substitution of "ch" for "s" is the change which gives its characteristic harsh quality to the Vedda dialect. 114

A number of authors have published short lists of Vedda words, that given by the Sarasins being of most importance, for although it consists of only 22 words care is taken to indicate the equivalent in use in each of the Vedda groups visited by the authors. More complete vocabularies have been collected by Bailey and Nevill, and vocabularies have also been published by two native scholars. One of these, who wrote under the *nom-de-plume* A. J. W., Batticaloa, has published his material in a somewhat inaccessible periodical, the *Ceylon Literary Register* (Vol. v, 1891). His information, which includes a number of sentences and lullabies, has evidently been carefully collected and would probably be specially useful to Sinhalese and Sanskrit scholars. Its great defect is that no mention is made of the places where the information was obtained, or the conditions prevailing when it was collected. [113]

Mr A. J. W. Marrambe's publication entitled *The Vedda Language* and apparently printed at Colombo in 1893 which contains some Vedda invocations is of less value, for while it suffers from the same defects it does not appear to have been prepared with the care which characterises the vocabulary in the *Literary Register*[1]. [113]

An important if indirect contribution to the study of the Vedda language has recently been made by Mr Parker, who, in *Ancient Ceylon*, gives in parallel columns Nevill's Vedda vocabulary and the equivalents of these words in the Kaelebasa

[1] The identity of initials suggests that the two accounts may be by one author.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 At Sitala Wanniya we learnt for the first time that two classes of words could be distinguished in the Vedda dialect. Words of the first class are commonly employed by the Veddas among themselves or their use is compulsory when hunting or travelling in the jungle; the second class contains words which are used only in invoking the *yaku*.

The monitor lizard commonly called *wunda* becomes in the *yaka* language *bimbada ganeka*, "one whose belly touches the ground"; the pig *dola* is called *hosedika*; the spotted deer *gimberupodeya* is called *depatam magala*; the sambar *kankuna* becomes *guura magala*; and the wandura monkey *botakuna* is called *ude kelina*.

These were the only animals which were given *yaka* names at Sitala Wanniya, but betel leaves, usually known as *paengeri kola*, coconut milk *polikiri* and rice *depotulu* all used in offerings to the *yaku* are spoken of on these occasions as *nilikola*, literally "dark leaves," *ran kiri daluo* "golden bud milk" and *hudu hamba* from *sudu sambā*, lit. "white rice," respectively[1].

Probably all the wilder Veddas at one time used special words when addressing the *yaku*, for even at Rerenkadi among the sophisticated Veddas of the chena settlement we heard of the former existence of a *yaka* vocabulary, while at Lindegala the few words of the Vedda dialect that were still remembered were said to have been used especially in *yaku* ceremonies[2].

At Sitala Wanniya we obtained the expressions *yakak heremitiya*, literally "iron walking staff," for boy, and *hanukanna kilote*, "box for lime" or "lime eating box," for girl. We were not able to satisfy ourselves as to the significance of these metaphors, which were said to be used only in *yaku* ceremonies. According to one account the expression refers to the genitals of the sexes, another explanation states that a boy is a strong support to his relatives, while a girl is as precious as a supply of chewing materials.

198 The hypothesis that the Vedda language arose in part as
197 a secret language explains how it is that at the present day the

[1] *Sambā* is the name of a superior variety of rice.

[2] Nilgala, Bendiyagalge and Bandarawela were all visited before Sitala Wanniya where we discovered the existence of a *yaka* vocabulary, and no questions especially bearing on this matter were asked at these places.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Vedda dialect is best preserved among the Village Veddas of Bintenne. 198

The people of Dambani and Bulugahaladena whose condition we have described in Chapter II and whom we have specially in mind as typical Veddas of the Bintenne are precisely in that stage of development in which a secret language would be most useful. They do not lead, and apparently have not for a considerable number of generations led the wandering life which until recently characterised the Veddas living further to the east, nor on the other hand do they even now show any tendency to be absorbed by the peasant Sinhalese of the province in which they live. They in fact constitute small autonomous communities enjoying considerable prestige in the eyes of their neighbours both on account of their ancestry and their reputed fierceness. Not only is their dialect directly useful to them in their trading with the neighbouring Sinhalese, but as we soon discovered their use of what their neighbours consider a language different from their own greatly enhances their prestige. 197

They have thus had a motive for keeping up if not for enlarging their store of periphrases and metaphors which probably never existed among the wilder, less sophisticated Veddas, who only preserve the old names of certain animals or foods which are used in *yaku* ceremonies or which have become part of their jungle language.

From this point of view we may detect three stages in the evolution of the present Vedda dialect. In the first stage their original language is effaced by an archaic form of the Sinhalese; the formation from this of a large number of secret words constitutes the second stage, while the third stage is represented by the process of substitution of more or less modern and colloquial Sinhalese words for the majority of archaic words and forms, during which process many of the modern words underwent phonetic changes.

The following sentences taken down from men of Bulugahaladena show the characteristics of the Vedda dialect as it survives among the Village Veddas of Bintenne. The notes given after each sentence have been supplied by Mr Gunasekara, the sentences themselves are written down in the form in which 192

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

193 creature, one meaning of the Sanskrit word being 'designating,' 'indicating.'"

The occurrence of a large number of the non-Sinhalese Aryan 192 words in the Vedda vocabulary seems to us of considerable 197 importance. Many of these words are derived or borrowed from the Hindi and Marathi languages or from Sanskrit words which according to Mr Gunasekara "are seldom or never used in the Sinhalese language."

This implies that these languages must at one time have materially contributed to the formation of Sinhalese, and if it could be determined at what period they had passed into the vulgar tongue in Ceylon, this would give us the earliest date at which the Veddas could have adopted Sinhalese.

197 At present this seems impossible, but valuable suggestions concerning the period or periods at which the northern influence was exerted may perhaps be gathered from the age of the Sinhalese folk-tales of Northern origin collected by Mr Parker from districts in the interior of the Island "where story-books in Sinhalese, Tamil, or Arabic do not appear to have penetrated, and English is unknown by the villagers." This quotation as well as those which follow are taken from the introduction (pp. 37 and 38) to Mr Parker's recent volume *Village Folk Tales of Ceylon*. Mr Parker, after referring to stories due to immigrants from South India, writes as follows concerning those which he considers were brought in by "settlers from the Ganges valley, or near it.

"With regard to the latter, it is not probable that they consisted only of the early immigrants of pre-Christian times. King Nissanka-Malla, who reigned from 1198 to 1207 A.D., has recorded in his inscriptions that he was a native of Sinhapura, then apparently the capital of the Kālinga kingdom, which extended far down the east coast of India, southward from the lower part of the Ganges valley; and he and his chief Queen Subhadrā, a Kālinga Princess, must have brought into Ceylon many of their fellow-countrymen. The Queens of two other earlier Kings of Ceylon were also Princesses from Kālinga.

"In the Galpota inscription at Polannaruwa (Prof. E. Müller's *Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon*, No. 148), he stated that "invited

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

by the King [Parākrama-Bāhu I], who was his senior kinsman, to come and reign over his hereditary kingdom of Lakdiva [Ceylon], Vīra Niśśaṅka-Malla landed with a great retinue in Laṇkā" [Ceylon]. Further on in the same inscription he stated that "he sent to the country of Kālinga, and caused many Princesses of the Soma and Sūrya races to be brought hither. 197

"A connexion with the Kālinga kingdom seems to have been maintained from early times. In his inscriptions the same king claimed that the sovereignty of Ceylon belonged by right to the Kālinga dynasty. He described himself in his Dambulla inscription (*Ancient Inscriptions*, No. 143) as "the liege lord of Lakdiva by right of birth, deriving descent from the race of King Wijaya," the first king of Ceylon, who, according to the Sinhalese historical works, was also born at a town called Sinhapura, which is stated to have been founded by his father. In the Galpota inscription we read of "Princes of the Kālinga race to whom the island of Laṇkā has been peculiarly appropriate since the reign of Wijaya."

As we have already stated in Chapter I the story of Wijaya indicates that there was frequent communication between Ceylon and Indian ports; we may now refer to the Mahawansa, in which, as Mr Parker remarks, "there is a definite and credible statement that vessels sailed direct from it [the port of Tāmalitta] to Ceylon in the reign of Asoka in the third century B.C.[1]"

The respectable, if not the extreme antiquity of the Vedda vocabulary is supported by the existence of a few words retaining their common meaning in Vedda and the *kaelebaas* language. Although Mr Parker does not explain the origin of the words in the *kaelebaas* list published in *Ancient Ceylon*, he has given the derivation of a considerable number of words occurring in the *kaelebaas* of Northern Ceylon in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. II, pp. 15—21), in which he discusses the origin and age of the language. Accepting his conclusions "that many of these forms are very ancient;—that they are, in fact, probably survivals from an ancient dialect which was once spoken throughout a 192 197

[1] *Village Folk-Tales of Ceylon*, p. 41. The voyage from Tamalitta to Ceylon is mentioned in the *Mahawansa* on page 46. Another voyage from the same port, when the Bo-tree cutting was conveyed to Ceylon, is described on pp. 74, 75. Tamalitta is thought to have occupied the site of the modern Tamluk at the mouth of the Hooghly.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 great part of the island," the occurrence of such names in Vedda and *kaelebaas* as *mandu* (or *mandu*) for the monitor lizard (Sin. *gyo*), 1917 and of *maruhu* (from *maruha* a destroyer, a hawk, and *kuwa* great) for the Brahminy kite (Sin. *ukussa*), shows that the Vedda dialect was formed at least as long ago as that period when the Sinhalese were driven out of the Northern Province by the Tamils[1].

A single Vedda word *sappi* or *cappi* bird closely resembles the Sakai word *ciap*, *cap* or *cap*; in spite of the relationship recognised by some as existing between the Veddas and Sakai we hold this similarity to be of no significance, both words probably being onomatopoeic[2].

[1] Referring especially to the Wanniya "a race of hunters" who reside in small villages of badly built houses in the northern part of the North Central Province, extending from Padawiya to Tantrimalai, and who use a number of *kaelebaas* words, Mr Parker writes (*op. cit.* p. 18): "Like the hunters of the North-Western and North-Central Provinces, the Wanniyas make use of the remnants of a special dialect when engaged on their forest expeditions, under the belief that its employment tends to preserve them from wild animals, and to render them successful in their search for honey and meat. This dialect is known as the 'kaelebaas,' jungle language, and the Wanniyas themselves speak only a very few words of it. Other fragments are to be met with among Sinhalese throughout all Northern Ceylon. That these words originally formed part of one language is to be inferred from the fact that not more than a few of the forms which present the most ancient appearance can be specially selected as peculiar to a certain district. In one village, or a group of villages, a few are known; in another, some of the same words and a few others; while some of the words which are used at Padawiya are not only well-known in the North-Western Province, but are even used upon similar occasions in Southern and Eastern Ceylon. Some of them are also among the threshing-floor vocabulary, and a smaller number are employed by Wanddas." Again on page 20 we read: "So far as this language is concerned, it may be concluded that the Wanniyas are, as they state, Sinhalese. Taking into consideration the facts that they are found only on or near the northern borders of the Kandian Kingdom, that they (or at any rate such of them as I have met) speak Tamil, and that some of them have Tamil names, and also remembering the particulars which I have given regarding their religion, it may further be inferred that, as their name would seem to indicate, they form a remnant of the ancient Sinhalese inhabitants of what is now the Northern Province. Throughout the whole of this district, extending, in fact, within a few miles of Elephant's Pass, there are abundant proofs that it was once peopled largely by Sinhalese; yet it is doubtful if any other distinct descendants of the former occupants can now be found. The rest of the Sinhalese population may perhaps have almost completely died out, for the inhabitants of the Sinhalese villages in the southern parts of the Province are, with very few exceptions, comparatively recent settlers who have migrated during this century from the North-Central districts."

[2] Mr Gunasekara while not denying that *sappi* may be onomatopoeic suggests that it may have arisen as a corruption of the Sanskrit word *pakshi* bird. Mr Parker considers that this word is derived from the Tamil *kuppi* (pronounced *kuppi*) a fly-catcher or bee-eater, from *sappu* to chew.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Tennent says truly, that they have "no system of caste among themselves; but, singular to say, this degraded race is still regarded by the Singhalese as of most honourable extraction, and is recognised by them as belonging to one of the highest castes;"* and he relates a legend, in which he says this belief originates; a legend, however, at which, he tells us, the Veddahs themselves smile, and of which they profess their ignorance. 648 [564]

As I shall afterwards show, I do not think this legend, which is confessedly not a Veddah tradition, has anything to do with the consideration with which, so far as their caste goes, the Singhalese regard them. Were there no better reason, the fact that the legend is by no means universal among the Singhalese residing in their vicinity, would probably be sufficient reason to reject it.

But Tennent has not been correctly informed with regard to their own belief regarding their own origin. For strange as it appears, they claim to be of royal descent. Beyond this vague assertion they profess to know nothing. They do not attempt to trace their descent from any particular king. They know nothing of their history. This is their *one* tradition; and though the neighbouring Singhalese, on whom they affect to look down, smile at their claim to such an illustrious origin, they do "regard them as of most honourable extraction," and in reply to any inquiry respecting it, only repeat the Veddah version of their royal lineage. It is said, too, that in the time of the native government the Veddahs always spoke of the king as "hoora," or "cousin."† 173

The Veddahs have no particular name by which they distinguish themselves, which would aid us in speculating on their origin. They simply call themselves "Weddah," and are so called, while they speak of the ordinary natives of the country as "Singhalese." The term "Habara," or "wild, barbarous," is applied to Veddahs, in books, and also "Vannacharakiya," which means "a hunter." 101

As Knox has told us, they speak the Singhalese language; but they do so with an accent and intonation so strange, that it sounds like some foreign tongue. It seems, as it were, "broken Singhalese," such as a man would speak to whom the language was an acquired one, so much does their pronunciation differ from that of their Kandyan neighbours. Although the identity between the Veddah dialect and Singhalese is evident, when they are compared with each other, it would require a very quick and accurate ear, indeed, to detect the similarity between them when both are spoken. 191 127

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, c. iii.

† It is reported, too, that some Veddahs do not claim royal descent, but that only a portion of them do. The Bicoteen and Nilgala Veddahs certainly, say they, are "Raja-wansiya," of royal lineage.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 As may be supposed, the vocabulary of such a barbarous race is very limited. It only contains such phrases as are required to describe the most striking objects of nature, and those which enter into the daily life of the people themselves. So rude and primitive is their dialect that the most ordinary objects and actions of life are described by quaint periphrasis. As, for example, to walk is "to beat (the ground) with hammers"; a child is "a bud"; the grains of rice are "round things"; an elephant is not inappropriately termed "a beast like a mountain"; while the fallow deer of the island (*Axis maculata*) are, with the strictest accuracy, called "spotted animals"; and wild boars, "long-snouted ones."*

They use none of the honorifics so profusely common in Singhalese, the pronoun "*to*," "thou" being alone used, whether they are addressing each other, or those whose position would entitle them to outward respect. They can neither read nor write, nor 212 can I trace the faintest vestige of their ever having possessed any literature, in the lowest sense in which that word can be used.† 802 They count with difficulty on their fingers, and so little notion 805 have they of time, that it is difficult to make them understand that they are to keep an engagement at a more remote period than the next day.

I have compared the scant and unsatisfactory collection of 197 words, which I have been able to make, with almost all the vocabularies of the aboriginal tribes of India, published in the *Asiatic Society's Journal*, and though in some of them I have found isolated instances of striking resemblance, these are probably merely accidental. The subject is one which requires further investigation: and a careful examination of the dialect, by any one competent to perform the task, would be interesting, although I question if it would elicit more than we at present know of the origin of the Veddahs.

I append to this paper, as a specimen of their patois, a list of some of their words, distinguishing between those which probably

* It is very curious that the Veddah term for the Ceylon elk, the Samba deer of India (*Rusa Aristotelis*), is "gawra," *vide* Tennent's remarks in his *Natural History of Ceylon*, p. 49, on the tradition of the former existence in Ceylon of the "Bos gaurus" of Hindustan. I have myself heard the "gaur" described by old Kandyans, who have seen it in the mountain forests, as an animal with, as it were, the body of a buffalo and the legs of an elk. And there are many places still bearing the name "gaura," as, for example, besides gaura elka, mentioned by Tennent, gaura kelle—the forest of the gaur—gaura kanda; and there is a kind of grass called gaura mannia. It is curious that the elk should be called gaura by the Veddahs, and by no one else.

† About ten years ago, the Government established a school for the Veddahs of Bintenne, but it proved a failure.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

differ from the Singhalese, and those which, though Singhalese, are, in the sense here used, peculiar to the Veddahs. It has been suggested to me that some of the former are derived directly from the Sanskrit, but as I am incompetent to judge of the accuracy of these suggestions, I do not venture to give the conjectural derivations which I have received. 197

I have, myself, noted down, and caused to be noted down from dictation, several Veddah charms, which are not, I am informed, known to the Singhalese, though in some there is a certain resemblance to charms in use by the latter. Whether corrupted during the many ages in which they have been unintelligently repeated, or whether they are in a form of Singhalese now obsolete, or both, they are not easily translated. They are charms used in illness, and for protection against elephants, leopards, bears, and wild boars. 789 [755]

The Veddahs are at present chiefly known by names similar to those in use among the neighbouring Singhalese, and it is curious to observe how oddly they are jumbled together. In one family are to be found names which would only be appropriate to Kandyans of the highest caste, and names which could only be borne by the lowest. Some of their names, too, belong to Hindoos, and not to Singhalese. Some are not proper names at all; while, most strange of all, others, though utterly unknown in Ceylon, either to Tamils or Singhalese, are in common use in Bengal, and refer directly to Hindoo deities, or personages mentioned in the Puránas. 551 171

The names of the preceding generation appear to have differed in a very marked manner from the Singhalese names by which the Veddahs now are for the most part known; and those in the list appended to this paper are chiefly the names of the fathers and mothers of the present Veddahs. Most of these I was able, by the kindness of Colonel Vincent Eyre, C.B., R.A., to submit to the inspection of Professor Lees, of Bengal, and they are pronounced by him to have a decided Sanskrit affinity. [197]

It is a singular and significant fact, that not only are many of their names unknown in Ceylon, but their meaning is utterly unintelligible to the Veddahs themselves, among whom they were family designations which have descended to them from father to son for ages.

It is strange that so many have written of the Veddahs, and have been contented with information at once scanty and inaccurate. Davy believed that they had no names.* Tennent affirms that they have no charms—no "instinct of worship"—and doubts 114

* Davy, *Account of the Veddahs*, p. 115 of his work.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 That the bulk of the aborigines amalgamated with their conquerors, and became one people with them, there is ample proof; but the race of Kuweni probably held aloof from all. She, betraying and betrayed, met her doom on the scene of her treachery.* Her children and immediate kinsfolk, outcasts both from the conquering and conquered races, fled to the forests. A life of isolation was to them not a matter of choice but of necessity. In their seclusion they naturally retained, with the superstition of their mother's people, some remnant of their father's faith, with which they must have been in some degree familiar. They preserved the high-sounding names of India, and, with the pride of rank, adhered to the custom of the marriage of a brother with his younger sister, which was not only the practice of their father's family, but a mark of their royal blood.

Such is the story of the Veddahs. And if my theory be correct it adds a curious chapter to the history of Ceylon.

SPECIMEN OF VEDDAH DIALECT.

(*Vowels to be pronounced as in Italian.*)

192
197

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
The sun	Irra podja	Ira	"Podja", probably a corruption of podiya (Singhalese), a small thing.
The moon	Pāna podja	Handa	Pāna (Singh.), a lamp. Handa pāna (Singh.) moonlight.
The stars	Tarčoka gajja	Tarakāwa	"Gajja", probably a corruption of sediya (Singh.), anything round. It can hardly be the Sanscrit word gajja, as it would be inappropriate as regards lights apparently so much smaller than the sun and moon.

---

vii, p. 371,—"Even the children of Wijaya by his first wife, Kuweni, united themselves with their maternal connections, on the repudiation of their mother, and retained the attributes of the Yakkhos." He refers, as his authority, to the seventh chapter of the *Mahawanso;* but this proves the exact contrary. It is there distinctly stated that, so far from doing so, they were compelled to flee with their uncle to avoid their mother's fate, and that Wijaya himself came to their refuge, assigning to them a place of security from their incensed "maternal connections" in "the Sumanta mountain," probably Saffragam, far removed from the scene of their mother's brief triumph and death (the present district of Putlam).

* One copy of the *Mahawanso* describes the scene of her death as near Tamenawillo, *i. e.*, Tamenanewera, near Putlam. Her spirit is still supposed to haunt a well in the neighbourhood, whence she issues forth, invisible, and pelts with great stones rash treasure-hunters who invade her solitude in search of the treasure they believe is buried near.

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Clouds	Gal périya	Walakula	"Gal" is a stone in Singhalese. In Tamil "kâl peria" would signify large stone or rock.
Thunder	Dewtôla andapi	Hena	"Dewtôla" (Singh.), a spirit, a demon, a god; "andapi" (Singh.), has cried out.
Lightning	Ginna wetunu	Widuliya	"Gini wetunu" (Singh.), fallen fire.
The sky	Pombina	Ahasa	
The earth	Bimi	Bima	
Water	Diya	Diya	This is also used for rain, for which the Batticalao Veddahs use "wæcha" corruption of "wæsa" (Singh.), rain.
Heat	Ginna	Grisma	"Gini" (Singh.), fire.
Cold	Ehna	Sitala	I find in "Notes on the Languages of Various Tribes in the Valley of Assam" by Mr. Robinson, inspector of schools in Assam, published in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journals, the word "yen" for cold, in the Khamti, Laos, and Siamese; and "aiyang" in the Khari Naga languages.
Man	Minna	Miniha	
Woman	Mehli	Geni	"Mæhæli" (Singh.), an old woman.
Child	Petji Kekula Bilinda Witera	Lamaya	"Petji", corruption of "pencha" (Sing.), a child; "kakula" (Singh.), a bud; "bilindâ" (Sihgh.), young—a child; and "witera", a bud; are applied only to the child-spirits—Bilindoo-yakkoo; has been explained before.
Boy	Ammi	Kollâ	In the "Notes" before referred to, I find "amie" in the Miri, Abor, and Khari-naga languages, for man.
Girl	Petti	Keli	"Petti" for "penchi" (Singh.), girl.
Father	Appa	Appa	My father, "appa latto"; my mother, "amma latto"; "latto", particle of possession.
Mother	Amma	Amma	
Husband	Hoora	Swamaya	"Hoora" is the Singh. term for that male cousin who is the proper match for a Singhalese girl, viz. her father's sister's, or mother's brother's son. It is traditional that some Veddahs used this term "cousin" when addressing or speaking of the Kandyan kings.
Wife	Nehna	Stri	"Nena" is the Singhalese term for the corresponding female cousin.
Head	Iya, eccha	Issa	
Eye	Eyeyl, ecbal	Ekhâ	
Nose	Naya	Nahâ	
Hair	Eccha kula	Issa keya	"Echa" for "issa", the head; "kola" (Singh.), leaves.
Body	Bopati	Enga	"Pett" (Singh.), the side of the body; "bo" (Singh.), great. "Pet" is stomach in the Punjabi language.

192
197
[321]
192
197
601
192
197

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192
197

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Legs	Dannisha-doowiga	Kakoola	"Danahis (Singh.), the knee.
Foot	Patoola	Paya or padiya	
Rice	Watu kuru	Hal	"Watu kuru (Singh), a round thing.
Paddy	Dépotoo-lang	Wee	"Dahayá potu" (Singh.), chaff; "lang", having, *i.e.* rice in the husk—paddy.
Honey	Metchan	Meepæni	"Mêsa" (Singh.), a bee.
A house	Rukkoola	Gé	"Rukula" (Singh.), a hollow tree.
A tree	Guy	Gaha	
A bow	Doongah	Doona	"Doona" (Singh.), a bow; "gaha" (Singh.), a tree.
Arrow	Morianket-tia	Iya	
River	Diyagama	Ganga	"Diyagama" (Singh.), a water course.
Dog	Kuko Kotowa Balo	Bala	"Kukka" (Singh.), puppies.
Buffalo	Walman-nya	Mee ma, or mee haruk	"Wal" (Singh.), wild. I find in Mr. Hodgson's Vocabularies of the Aborigines of the N.E. of Bengal, that "menjek" or "menjeg", is the word for buffalo in the Miri dialect. The Batticalao Veddahs say "mee-botah".
Ceylon elk (*rusa Aristotelis*)	Gawra	Gôna	The Batticalao Veddahs call an elk "gôna-botah".
Deer (*axis maculata*)	Kaberra botah	Moowa	"Kaberra" (Singh.), spotted, "botah" (Singh.), an animal. The Batticalao Veddahs say "moowa-botah".
Pig	Hôta-barria Okma	Ooré	"Hôta" (Singh.), a snout; "barria", heavy or hanging. Okma is only used by them in charms.
Chetah (Ceylon leopard), *felis pardus*	Poletcha	Diwiya, or kotiyah	The Arasas (or "mountain kings" as they call themselves and are called), a hill tribe in Tuine valley, in South India, call a tiger "pooches". In charms, I find "diwi pulliya", spotted chetah, used; but they always speak of a chetah as "poletcha". The Batticalao Veddahs say "mitá botah"—"mitá", low (in stature).
Bear	Kerri-botah Kerria Arachi Barachi	Walahá	"Arachi" and "barachi" only occur in charms, and it is an evident corruption of the Pali expression "achcha tarachcha"—"achcha" a bear, "tarachcha" a road bear, one which infests roads (tara, a road).*

* I am indebted to Mr. De Zoysa for this interpretation. He adds, "In the Pali Nighandu, 'achcha' is said to mean bear, and 'tarachcha' a bear that bends his neck". According to some, 'tarachcha' is the hyena. Probably the Singhalese writers confused the bear with the hyena, and considered the latter a species of bear.

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192
197
[412]

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Elephant	Botah kandah Môlah	Alya, or eta (tusks)	"Kandah" (Singh.), a hill or mountain. "Môlah" (Singh.), the thick heavy black pounder used as a pestle in pounding rice—an allusion, probably, to his trunk. The Batticalao Veddahs say "et-botah" and "cotah beebéla".
Monkey	Patagahapoocka	Wandura, or rilawa	
Porcupine	Nittawe	Ittawe	
Pangolin (*manis pentadactyla*)	Gal gawra	Kaballiya	
Iguana	Moondé	Talagoya	Called by the Veddahs of Batticalao "goya", "goy-botah", and "hellá".
Lizard	Cat-tombá	Hoona	
Snake	Polongoe	Sarpaya	"Polongo", a very venomous snake. The Batticalao Veddahs call a snake "sarra-botah".
Snail	Tombé	Golu bellá	
A bird	Sappee Chappee Sittriaye	Kurulla	In the Assamese and Bengali dialects, birds are called "charal" and "chiriya".
A crow	Kalu eka	Kaká	"Kalu" (Singh.), black, "eka", one.
To walk	Mangwettinawa, mittiganawa	Æwadinawa	"Maga" (Singh.), a road; "wettenawa" (do.), to fall; "mittiya" (do.), a hammer; "gahanawa" (do.), to strike.
To jump	Bota damanawa	Paninawa	"Bota" (Singh.), the neck; "damanawa" (do.), to place.
To shoot (with bow & arrow)	Pennagatcha	Widinawa	
To rain	Diya pompanawa	Wahinawa	
To drink	Diya kanawa	Bônawa	"Diya-kanawa", to eat water—not an uncommon expression among the Kandyans.
To eat	Kapat onnawa	Kanawa	
To speak	Katan kiyanawa, & hanawanawa	Kiyanawa and katakaranawa	
To call	Kilápeh	Andagahanawa	
To see	Reviga	Dakenawa	
To die	Miyoona Miya pér�é	Marenawa	"Miyoona" (Singh.), dead; "miya" (do.), dead; "miya pereliya", dead and gone.
To sleep	Nidenawa	Nidagannawa	
I am hot	Raddagana		
I am cold	Bepati sitaganawa		

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
192 Here	Mobba	Móhi	
197 There	Obba	E'hi	
Far off	Nekat rata	Dura	
Be quick!	To bang	Wigahata	"To", the pronoun thou; in the Bhotia dialect "bangiyap" is, be quick!
Before	ItchKiK	Issaraha	
Behind	PatchKiK	Pasé	
Exclamation of approbation	Eeth!		
Exclamation of disapprobation	Iss!		

SPECIMENS OF VEDDAH NAMES.

MEN.

551 171 Lôkendra. "Sovereign of the World", from Lôka (Sanscrit), "the world", and Indra; unknown among Singhalese or Tamils of Ceylon, but in use in Bengal.

Kanda. The Singhalese call Skanda, the Indian Mars, to whom the famed temple at Katragam is dedicated, "Kanda Kumaryia"; but the word is unknown as a name.

Weyla. One of the names of Skanda.

Suppa is a corruption of Subhramanya, one of the names of Skanda. Both these are Tamil names in use; and I think I have heard Weyla as a Kandyan name, but it is very uncommon.

Skanda is a favourite of the Veddahs (of India), though unknown to the Veddahs here; and "Valli", one of his consorts (a Veddah female name in use among the Veddahs in Ceylon), was said to have been born of a deer in a forest in Arcot, and found by a Veddah chief Kumâra (Kumâro was Kuweni's uncle, and Kumâ is a Veddah name still in use), and brought up by him.

Kanda, it is true, means, in Singhalese, simply a mountain; but it is more probable that, as a Veddah name, it is a corruption of Skanda, a name descended to them, though they are ignorant of its signification.

Nila. A name in common use in Bengal; also used by Tamils (Hindûs); but entirely unknown as a name among the Singhalese. Nila, a personage mentioned in the Puranas.

Bendu. Binda, in common use in Bengal, but unknown in Ceylon, either among Singhalese or Tamils. There is a common appellation, a title rather than a name, Banda, in Ceylon; but Banda does not occur among the Veddahs. Binduwa also is a low-cast name among the Singhalese.

Déwa Deana. Unknown as a name in Ceylon. Equivalent to the Hindû "Deva Dattah", given by the deity—which is its signification in Singhalese.

Milâlâna. Unknown by Singhalese or Tamils in Ceylon.

Koonchi. From "kuncha" (Sanscrit), to go crookedly—a cripple. In use, with the affix Tamby, among the Tamils, but not in use among the Singhalese.

Kangeria. "Kangana" (Sans.), one of the names of Kandarpa, God of Love. Neither used by Singhalese nor Tamil as a name.

Kowa. No such name among Singhalese or Tamils.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 796 guidance I touched the *flowers* in acknowledgment. After this the rice which had meanwhile been cooked in the cauldron in front of the shrine was offered to the goddess at the shrine, and the enclosure itself was removed.

The offering of the rice appeared to mark the conclusion of the first stage of the ceremony, for it was followed by a procession of those who were to take part in the subsequent dancing,—apparently accompanied by the image of the goddess,—out of the clearing and, as I was informed, down to the river about half a mile away for the sacred bath.

Time dragged by. The moonlight flooded the clearing, showing the ranks of the spectators sitting in their places with oriental patience and talking in undertones. At last the procession of dancers re-entered the clearing and advanced to the open space in front of the shrine. Here a ritual was gone through which seemed to be intended to induce in the dancers a state of "possession,"[7] and after the performance of this ritual the dances began.

First of all two principal dancers, wearing what were evidently ceremonial jackets of red cloth, took, each of them, in one hand one of the wooden swords previously mentioned and in the other [535] a bunch of leaves, and went in and out among the people with a queer shuffling step and a curious rhythmic brandishing of the swords and leaves. Once or twice the leader stopped, and laying his sword upon the head of some person in the crowd began to [787] prophesy.[8] One prophecy, as interpreted to me by the Chief Headman, concerned the outbreak of cholera, and was in the form

[7] The Seligmanns, on pp. 334-5 of *The Veddas*, discuss at some length the nature of "possession" in the Vedda ritual dances.

[8] My impression at the time was that in uttering these prophecies the leader of the dance used the Vedda language. Certainly the language used did not appear to me to be either Sinhalese or Tamil. It is true that the Seligmanns say, in the passage quoted in the text, that the "old Vedda language" as spoken by the coast Veddas was found to be Sinhalese; but (i) it seems at least possible that the Vedda language may remain to some extent in ritual use among them; and (ii) I am inclined to think that in the ceremony here described the invocation of Rahu Yaka, described by the Seligmanns on pp. 234-9 of *The Veddas*, was combined with the worship of Aramal and Hapuhpu, described by [114 197]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a prophecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *chewger*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wack! wack! wack!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announcement was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[9]

them on pp. 333-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were not count Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one of some interest; but so, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[9] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sinners practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

houses of lasting character, as neither their instincts nor habits recognitated such procedure. 361

At Kumuna alone we find a modification of these conditions, in that the greater part of the land where the village stood is above flood level, and possessed of constant fresh water all the year round, besides being at a spot where there was a prospect of trade.

It should be added that all the many anicuts on this river between Kumuna and Kebilitte bear silent testimony to the violence of the floods on the river, and to the once existence of a large population, that probably vanished as soon as these engineering works were destroyed—a population who could enjoy the benefit of the river's floodings by diverting the water into immense tanks, that now are but park-like pieces of jungle. 172

The present inhabitants of the region embraced within the boundaries recorded here are unquestionably of mixed origin, as it is easy to trace on the western limits the pure Sinhalese type of feature, these fading again to a more specific type through the Maha Wellirata, and again changing markedly on the north-east of that country, till it is practically replaced by Tamils in the Panawa Pattu. Thus, it would seem that the Vedda type lay between the Uvan Sinhalese on the west and the Tamil on the east, with the result that frequently one would hear men, while asserting that they were pure Sinhalese, conversing with each other in Tamil. This I found to be actually the case at Bowela, where the villagers insisted that they were of the Goigama caste. 101 162

I was completely baffled in my attempts to secure a vocabulary of Vedda words, though I offered liberal payment for a few lessons in that language. I was pointed out men who were able to speak Vedda, and it was arranged that we should meet, in secret, at a definite time, and at a fixed spot, but when the time came I was told the men had gone away to find stray cattle, or some other equally trumped-up story. 197 198

One night I camped close to some huts in the village of Wattagama, and after my lamp had been put out and I was supposed to be asleep, I heard an animated discussion in the nearest hut, but though I could hear every word, I did not

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wellrata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178 other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Selavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[563] name of Diasan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of warugs or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same warugs.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to throw some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
224 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

CHAPTER VI

VEDDAS OF BINGODA

1. BINGODA HOMES

Innumerable years had flown,
Since first the chisel in her hand
Necessity, the sculptor, took,
And in her spacious meaning planned
These forms, and that eternal look.

L. BINYON

[97] [101] CONCEDE me three points and I shall attempt to show that there exist in Ceylon to-day Veddas worthy of the name. Language, apparel and weapons are the concessions I ask.

Let us begin by confessing, that the Veddas we shall tell of have no pure language of their own, but merely a patois, in which Sinhalese words predominate and Vedda words are few; their clothing is not the traditional 291 leaf or threshed *riti* bark, but fragments of foul rag affording, if anything, less cover; the weapons they favour are guns (of a type almost as 411 dangerous to user as to quarry) and not bows and arrows which they employ only in sore necessity.

Vital issues, you will say, which should deprive this people of their name. But language, dress and arms may change without materially altering, for a time at least, ancient customs and primeval instincts.

101 The word Vedda originally meant hunter; and a people supreme in jungle-craft, always capable of gleaning from the unfriendly forests a sufficiency for their needs and utterly incompetent to husband even the primitive agriculture of the *chena*, has surely a claim to the name.

224 It must not be supposed that every Vedda possesses a gun; far from it; occasionally there may be a single weapon to a whole clan. The usual [411] thing is for the Sinhalese or Moors to lend their guns to these superb trackers, who never waste a shot and seldom return without their quarry, [420] a large share of which goes by agreement to the owner of the gun.

114 Of my first accidental meeting with these Veddas amid the hills of Galmede, I have already told. Barely four months had elapsed before I found myself renewing their acquaintance; this time with set purpose.

Arriving at the forest village of Mullegama, sacred to Buddhists, and abounding in lime groves and Moors, I was fortunate enough to run up against my friend Kaurala of Kottelinde, who, so difficult of acquisition before, now became our willing guide.

131 Bingoda, the home of our Veddas, is some three miles from Mullegama, and lies on the Dhungulla Oya, a tributary of the Magalavatan Aar which connects Bingoda with Galmede, ten miles away—all in the circuit of

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

782 siderable range of beliefs are all longer and more complicated, and often contain references to events which happened before the spiritual beings to whom they are addressed attained their full power as *yaku*.

For convenience the invocations are consecutively numbered and grouped according to their purpose, for we believe that this arrangement, though not ideal, is on the whole the most suitable[1]. In each group the invocations progress from simple to more complicated.

It will be noted that in many if not all of these invocations 782 animals and articles of food are not mentioned by their usual 192 name, but are called by some other name or described by 198 a periphrasis. A special vocabulary, largely but not entirely the same as that used in invoking the *yaku*, is used by the Veddas when hunting and indeed whenever travelling through the jungle. The relation of this jungle language to the other languages of the island will be discussed in Chapter XV, meanwhile it is only necessary to note that in one form or another it is spread over a great part of the island and that it is known by the name *haele basa* "jungle language." The object of the *haele basa* has been well explained by Mr Parker who has allowed me to take the following quotation from the proof-sheets of his work *Ancient Ceylon*. "Strange to say, the Kandian Sinhalese and the Wanniyas apparently imitate the Vaeddas while they are hunting in the forests,...and use another series of expressions...for many...animals, to the exclusion of the usual names for them. They have acquired a belief that unless

[1] An alternative arrangement would have been to group these invocations geographically; the following list will enable the reader to do this with ease.

List of Invocations and the localities from which each were collected.

Bandaraduwa. Nos. 7, 15, 26, 34.
Bulugahaladena. Nos. 9, 10.
Dambani. Nos. 2, 12, 13.
Godatalawa. Nos. 3, 5, 20, 24.
Henebedda. Nos. 14, 19, 21.
Kalukalaeba. No. 6.
Sitala Wanniya. Nos. 1, 11, 16, 18, 23, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36.
Uniche. Nos. 8, 17, 22, 28.
Unuwatura Bubula. Nos. 25, 37.
Wellampelle. No. 4.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

special dialect be employed while they are in the forest, they cannot expect to meet with any success in seeking honey, or hunting, or in avoiding dangerous animals. 782 192 198

"This dialect...consists of the employment of new words not only for animals but also for a few other nouns, and for verbs used to denote acts most commonly performed on such trips. In addition, all negative (that is, unlucky) modes of expression are totally debarred from use on such occasions, as well as the words meaning 'insufficient' and 'too much,' which are inauspicious as indicating dissatisfaction with the number or quantity to which they are applied."

Although in some instances the word used when addressing the *yaku* is not the precise word used by the same Veddas while hunting it is convenient, and we think reasonable, to regard the *yaku* language as a part of the *kaele basa*.

The only other linguistic feature of these invocations that requires comment is the abundant use of the adjective *ran* "golden." The significance of this in a particular and somewhat puzzling instance is discussed in a footnote to invocation No. XXI, so that it suffices here to record our belief that among the Veddas the expression is laudatory and is the equivalent of "excellent," "admirable." In invocations used while collecting honey the expression "jewelled" is used with almost equal freedom, e.g. "golden jewelled cord" in invocation No. XXVI, and is simply to be understood as a laudatory expression.

Invocations to the Nae Yaku.

782 539

Sitala Wanniya.

1. *Āyu bōwā. Āyu bōwā. Nae koṭṭaswā*[1], *nae sindāwā.*
Hudu kambā welafu ādagaha dunnā kaewā bunnā.
Kisi waradak sitanna epā, epit kanawā bonawā.

Salutation! Salutation! Part of (our) relatives!
Multitude of relatives! Having called (you) at the (right) time (we) gave (you) white sambā (rice); (you) ate, (you) drank. Do not think any wrong (of us); we also eat (and) drink.

[1] *Koṭṭaswā* for *koṭṭāsya*, a part, section.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192
198

Although Dr Barnett considers that many of the Vedda periphrases seem to point primarily to a low level of culture, and although we believe that we should do wrong to ignore the influence of some such process as that which we have sketched, we think it probable that many of the expressions in the Vedda language (so called) arose as the result of a deliberate effort to mystify.

At the time when the Veddas began to use Sinhalese as their habitual mode of communication they would find it convenient, if not absolutely necessary, to be able to discuss matters between themselves in the presence of Sinhalese, especially Sinhalese traders, without allowing the latter to understand what they were saying. This necessity would naturally lead them to invent periphrases and onomatopoeic words while it would encourage mispronunciation and the use of archaic forms.

Further evidence in favour of this view may be gathered from other Indian tribes and even from the Veddas themselves. Dr Rivers found that the Todas have a secret language which consists of a large number of expressions which they use in the presence of Badagas, Tamils and others, when they wish to be understood only by themselves. Many of the Badagas and Tamils with whom the Todas associate no doubt pick up some knowledge of their language, and even if this were not the case the Toda language is sufficiently like Tamil to enable a stranger to understand part of what is said. In consequence the Todas have adopted a secret code for use among themselves which they call *kalikatpimi*, literally 'stolen we tie,' while in distinction the ordinary language is called *itherkelv* or 'front fact'.[1]"

Thus "cook food in milk" which in the ordinary language is *pârs âdr* literally "milk cook" becomes in the secret language

who have acquired some knowledge of their tongue purposely use simplified and incomplete grammatical forms.

Mr Parker remarks that our statement concerning the vocabulary of the peasant Sinhalese is valid only so far as it applies to their ordinary conversation in which they use "a simple and limited" vocabulary, but that in working through his large collection of Folk-tales he found that "the vocabulary of the villagers was a very extensive one."

[1] *The Todas*, p. 616.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

mouk mâr pud mâdu tarsk idsks literally "four sides come three on up put," i.e. "put what comes from the four teats upon the three (stones which support the cooking pot)." Further the leg may be called *metepol* "walk thing," also used for foot-prints, or *pâmi âlar pî pol* "thing that goes into the earth," while many other things have secret names; thus butter is called *pelthpol* "white thing" and clarified butter *kârtpol* "melted thing."

All this seems to indicate that the so-called Vedda dialect arose, at least in part, as a deliberately invented secret language, and this view is supported by an anecdote told by Nevill which shows that even at the present time the formation of periphrases and the use of onomatopoeic words comes readily to the older Veddas, allowing them to communicate with their fellows in the presence of Sinhalese without using the ordinary words.

An old Vedda who died before 1886 was "fond of encouraging the others to learn a patois which strangers could not understand, and used to illustrate its use by a story of his being overtaken by a party of pilgrims to Katragam, who insisted on his accompanying them as guide some distance. A lad, partly a Vaedda, was with him. On the way they heard a deer give the peculiar bleating cry made when they are seized by a leopard. Seeing his companions did not understand it, he went on, and entering into conversation with the boy, sent him away, saying loudly and rapidly so as not to excite suspicion, Bûs ki bâs ki adina atak gena at baruwak gena pimbina atak gena, thopa ammât appât enda kiyâpa. This means, "Bûs was said, bâs was said, bringing the bow, axe and fire-stick, tell your mother and father to come." Here the bow is called the "pulling-bough," the axe is called the "bough heavy" or "heavy in the hand," and the fire-stick, the "blowing bough," in allusion to the blowing of the spark into a flame. *Bûs* imitates the snort of the leopard as it springs on the deer, and *bâs* the cry of the deer. The old man delighted to tell this tale, showing his own wit, and would then say "and because the boy knew huntsman's craft and how to speak aloud but secretly, he slipped away and called his parents. I went back as soon as I could, and we all had a grand feast, for the leopard had not time to eat much before the boy's parents were there[1]."

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 181.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 At Sitala Wanniya we learnt for the first time that two classes of words could be distinguished in the Vedda dialect. Words of the first class are commonly employed by the Veddas among themselves or their use is compulsory when hunting or travelling in the jungle; the second class contains words which are used only in invoking the *yaku*.

The monitor lizard commonly called *munda* becomes in the *yaka* language *bimbada ganeka*, "one whose belly touches the ground"; the pig *dola* is called *hosedika*; the spotted deer *gembergupodaya* is called *depatam magala*; the sambar *kankuna* becomes *gaura magala*; and the wandura monkey *botakuna* is called *ude kelina*.

These were the only animals which were given *yaka* names at Sitala Wanniya, but betel leaves, usually known as *paungiri kola*, coconut milk *polikiri* and rice *depotulu* all used in offerings to the *yaku* are spoken of on these occasions as *nilikola*, literally "dark leaves," *ran kiri daluo* "golden bud milk" and *hudu hamba* from *sudu sambā*, lit. "white rice," respectively[1].

Probably all the wilder Veddas at one time used special words when addressing the *yaku*, for even at Rerenkadi among the sophisticated Veddas of the chena settlement we heard of the former existence of a *yaka* vocabulary, while at Lindegala the few words of the Vedda dialect that were still remembered were said to have been used especially in *yaku* ceremonies[2].

At Sitala Wanniya we obtained the expressions *yakada heremitiya*, literally "iron walking staff," for boy, and *hanukanna kilote*, "box for lime" or "lime eating box," for girl. We were not able to satisfy ourselves as to the significance of these metaphors, which were said to be used only in *yaku* ceremonies. According to one account the expression refers to the genitals of the sexes, another explanation states that a boy is a strong support to his relatives, while a girl is as precious as a supply of chewing materials.

198 197 The hypothesis that the Vedda language arose in part as a secret language explains how it is that at the present day the

[1] *Sambā* is the name of a superior variety of rice.

[2] Nilgala, Bendiyagalge and Bandaraduwa were all visited before Sitala Wanniya where we discovered the existence of a *yaka* vocabulary, and no questions especially bearing on this matter were asked at these places.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Vedda dialect is best preserved among the Village Veddas of Bintenne. 198

The people of Dambani and Bulugahaladena whose condition we have described in Chapter II and whom we have specially in mind as typical Veddas of the Bintenne are precisely in that stage of development in which a secret language would be most useful. They do not lead, and apparently have not for a considerable number of generations led the wandering life which until recently characterised the Veddas living further to the east, nor on the other hand do they even now show any tendency to be absorbed by the peasant Sinhalese of the province in which they live. They in fact constitute small autonomous communities enjoying considerable prestige in the eyes of their neighbours both on account of their ancestry and their reputed fierceness. Not only is their dialect directly useful to them in their trading with the neighbouring Sinhalese, but as we soon discovered their use of what their neighbours consider a language different from their own greatly enhances their prestige. 197

They have thus had a motive for keeping up if not for enlarging their store of periphrases and metaphors which probably never existed among the wilder, less sophisticated Veddas, who only preserve the old names of certain animals or foods which are used in *yaku* ceremonies or which have become part of their jungle language.

From this point of view we may detect three stages in the evolution of the present Vedda dialect. In the first stage their original language is effaced by an archaic form of the Sinhalese; the formation from this of a large number of secret words constitutes the second stage, while the third stage is represented by the process of substitution of more or less modern and colloquial Sinhalese words for the majority of archaic words and forms, during which process many of the modern words underwent phonetic changes.

The following sentences taken down from men of Bulugahaladena show the characteristics of the Vedda dialect as it survives among the Village Veddas of Bintenne. The notes given after each sentence have been supplied by Mr Gunasekara, the sentences themselves are written down in the form in which 192

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

houses of lasting character, as neither their instincts nor habits necessitated such procedure. 361

At Kumuna alone we find a modification of these conditions, in that the greater part of the land where the village stood is above flood level, and possessed of constant fresh water all the year round, besides being at a spot where there was a prospect of trade.

It should be added that all the many anicuts on this river between Kumuna and Kebilitte bear silent testimony to the violence of the floods on the river, and to the once existence of a large population, that probably vanished as soon as these engineering works were destroyed—a population who could enjoy the benefit of the river's floodings by diverting the water into immense tanks, that now are but park-like pieces of jungle. 172

The present inhabitants of the region embraced within the boundaries recorded here are unquestionably of mixed origin, as it is easy to trace on the western limits the pure Sinhalese type of feature, these fading again to a more specific type through the Maha Wedirata, and again changing markedly on the north-east of that country, till it is practically replaced by Tamils in the Panawa Pattu. Thus, it would seem that the Vedda type lay between the Uvan Sinhalese on the west and the Tamil on the east, with the result that frequently one would hear men, while asserting that they were pure Sinhalese, conversing with each other in Tamil. This I found to be actually the case at Bowela, where the villagers insisted that they were of the Goigama caste. 101 162

I was completely baffled in my attempts to secure a vocabulary of Vedda words, though I offered liberal payment for a few lessons in that language. I was pointed out men who were able to speak Vedda, and it was arranged that we should meet, in secret, at a definite time, and at a fixed spot, but when the time came I was told the men had gone away to find stray cattle, or some other equally trumped-up story. 197 198

One night I camped close to some huts in the village of Wattegama, and after my lamp had been put out and I was supposed to be asleep, I heard an animated discussion in the nearest hut, but though I could hear every word, I did not

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177 178] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Selavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

151 Dr Rivers' experiments upon the Todas gave the same result and led him to conclude that the threshold is slightly higher on the right than on the left side. In coming to this conclusion he took into account a set of control experiments in which the left side was first stimulated; it will be noticed in the above table that the left side of the sternum was the first stimulated[1].

SMELL.

No attempt was made to determine the olfactory acuity of the Veddas, but our experiments with scents suggested to us that this was not specially well developed. Certainly the Henebedda Veddas suffered no inconvenience from the objectionable smell which arose round the Bendiyagalge rock-shelters after a few days' occupation, nor did they seek to [364] diminish this smell, which was due to the lack of the most elementary sanitary precaution.

The following scents were offered to a number of Veddas at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, Godatalawa, Sitala Wanniya and Unuwatura Bubula:- civet, camphor, jasmine, *peau d'Espagne*, tonquin, orris, assafoetida, peppermint, verbena, crategine, chloroform, Lin. terebinthinae aceticum (B.P.), chloral, and eau de Cologne. The men examined were Tuta of Henebedda (1), Kaira of Henebedda (2), Poromala Walaha (3), Kaira (bearded) of Henebedda (4), the Vidane of Bandaraduwa (5), Banda of Bandaraduwa (6), a number of men of Godatalawa (7), Kaira of Sitala Wanniya (8), Handuna and Nila of Sitala Wanniya (9), Naida and Appu of Unuwatura Bubula (10), Tambia (11), Banda (12).

151 In most cases their opinions were taken down separately, but at Unuwatura Bubula and Godatalawa the scents were passed 201 round and the general opinion of our informants recorded. The Veddas were always interested in examining the scents, but though they said a number of the odours were good they

[1] In his paper in the *British Journal of Psychology* Dr Rivers discusses at some length the possible fallacies of the method described.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

seldom showed any emotion of pleasure: on the other hand their demonstrations of dislike were unmistakable. When a scent appeared to them particularly distasteful they invariably held their noses and cleared their throats, but we do not remember seeing them spit. It will be noticed that there is a great variation of opinion, and even such a distinct odour as civet is considered by some very pleasant and by others extremely disagreeable. Again the same simile "squeezed orange skin" was used by different men referring to such unlike scents as civet and peppermint, and while in the first instance it was considered good, in the second it was thought unpleasant. The men of Godatalawa compared camphor to the flowers of the *na* tree (*Mesua ferrea*), calling it a good scent, while Kaira of Sitala Wanniya said assafoetida was a very bad scent like *na* flowers, and assured us that he disliked the scent of the *na* flower intensely. Except such well known flowers as this and that of the *mora* tree we were unable to identify any of the flowers mentioned as they were nearly all out of season.

Civet. Good, wild boar's fat (1), good, squeezed orange skin (3), not good (4), very bad, like faeces (5); good, like burning (6); good, like a flower smell (7); bad, like *halka* flower (8); like wax of tree *bambara* (9); good, like leopard fat (10); bad, like faeces (11); bad, like faeces (12).

Camphor. Good (1); good (3); bad, like squeezed orange (4); bad (5); good (6); very good, like smell of *na* flowers (7); good, like *koel* flower (8); good, like a kind of lime (9); good, like medicine (10); very bad (11); sour, bad (12).

Jasmine. Good smell, monkey fat (1); good, like smell of mangoes (3); like honey of *bulumal* (4); bad (5); very slight smell and not good (6); not good, like *kapumal* (? *Eriodendron anfractuosum*) (7); good, like *winbuto* flower (8); like young oranges, good (9); bad, like pig fat (10); not good (11); doubtful (12).

Pass d'espagne. Doubtful, like betel leaves (1); good (3); good, like *morumal* honey (4); doubtful, partly good (5); too strong (6); like coconut spirit (7); good, like *kiula* honey (8); good, like orange (9); bad, like bear's fat (10); good (12).

Tonquin. Good, like bear's fat (1); like the fat of the monitor

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 439 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 141 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 mm. (60¼ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 mm. (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 609 576 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

166 115 651 Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

[Lacuna; see p. xx. — Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

In concluding these remarks on property we may refer to the list given by Rutimeyer (*Globus* 1903) of Vedda objects of personal property in the Basle Museum, these are: 422

(i) Bow and ordinary arrows with iron heads of different sizes.
(ii) Elephant arrows (i.e. ceremonial arrows or *anda*).
(iii) Simple sharpened wood arrows.
(iv) Boy's bow with wooden arrows, being an exact facsimile of the iron tipped arrows.
(v) Axes.
(vi) Digging sticks.
(vii) Drill for producing fire.
(viii) Apron made of the bast of *Antiaris toxicaria* (*riti* bark).
(ix) Tortoise shell from the Danigala used as a dish.
(x) Disc of wax from wild bees (trading asset).
(xi) Ball of bast cord for bow strings.
(xii) Fire lighting appliances with hollowed areca nut for keeping tinder.
(xiii) Earthenware pot hanging in a bast net.
(xiv) Pouch made of squirrel skin.
(xv) Kilt made of leaves.

To this Rutimeyer would add a *riti* bark bag, the message stick referred to in the anonymous report of 1820, printed by Le Mesurier[1], and clay figures and marbles mentioned by Stevens, in order to have "a rather complete inventory of all utensils of the 'Nature Veddas.'" This list, however, omits dried deer skins and the skin and wooden honey-collecting utensils described in Chapter XI. Further, no mention is made of beads, which are certainly much appreciated by even the wilder Veddas (cf. Chapter XI).

[1] "The Veddas of Ceylon," by C. J. R. Le Mesurier, *Journal Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, Vol. IX, 1886. The statement referred to will be found on p. 347 and runs as follows:—"They are totally unacquainted with letters, but the different tribes hold a rude correspondence with each other with small pieces of wood cut into different shapes. Fugitives used to be furnished with passports of this kind, when they removed from one tribe to another, and the treatment they received depended on the recommendation which the talisman conveyed." [202] [211]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

202 177 With regard to the existence of message sticks mentioned in the last paragraph, very careful inquiries were made of Veddas, Sinhalese peasants and Sinhalese headmen, including Mr Bibile, Ratemahatmaya. There seemed no doubt that among the peasant Sinhalese messages were traditionally transmitted by the conveyance of certain objects. We are unable to say whether this system was ever well developed and applied to many of the emergencies of life, but it seemed to be the general impression among our informants that the practice was formerly more common than at present. We were able, however, to hear of two messages habitually sent in this way among the more backward jungle Sinhalese at the present day. The first of these was the transmission of a piece of creeper with one, two, or three knots tied in it. This was sent wrapped in a fragment of cloth and was a call to the recipient to come to the sender, the urgency of the latter's need being indicated by the number of knots. We consider the use of this message object thoroughly established as a Sinhalese custom, it was in use in the neighbourhood of Bibile until recently and is still used in remoter jungle districts.

A lock of hair usually cut from the head of the dead man [142] and twisted round a small stick and wrapped in a leaf or fragment of cloth was sent as a sign that a death had occurred. Our impression is that at the present day this is essentially a Sinhalese custom, for the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde told us that among the jungle Sinhalese when a man died away from his home, his people might be informed of his death in this way. We could not hear of this custom among the least sophisticated of the Veddas we met, though it was said to exist at Henebedda, where however, if it really occurred, it may have been due to Sinhalese influence. With regard to its existence among the Veddas apart from Sinhalese influence, it seemed to us that the importance of a lock of hair as evidence of land transfer (described on p. 114) renders it unlikely that hair would be sent as evidence of death. The care that the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde took when bringing me his "seisin" to photograph, of which a lock of hair was an important part, was very noticeable[1].

[1] On the other hand the custom may have been derived from the Vedda practice,

1.Seligmann & Seligmann S-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXI Vedda AXI

202

Plate XXIV

Massages scratched on a slip of bark laid on his leg

[facing p. 120]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

202
648

Turning now to the message sticks, certain conventional signs scratched on leaves or flat slips of wood were at times sent by Sinhalese chiefs to the Veddas as an intimation that they required them to bring venison and honey. These signs always took one form, representing a carrying stick (*pingo*), to each end of which a circular object representing a pot of honey was attached. By the side of the pot of honey there were generally drawn two short vertical lines, immediately beneath which were a number of rather longer horizontal lines. Each pair of horizontal lines represented a joint of venison and the vertical lines immediately above them the cord by which they would be suspended from the *pingo*. As far as we could determine no other form of written message ever passed between the Sinhalese and Veddas, but there is no doubt that although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas knew nothing of such messages the Danigala Veddas recognised their meaning and acted on them. Mr Bibile told us that on one occasion when he had sent this message scratched on an *ola* leaf to the headman of the Danigala Veddas he had received the honey and venison he had asked for in about a week. We were told that on receiving this message a Vedda might say

[539]

Dili, dili, ewewa; hac hufiti
Wiyo hawa ewewa; pacai mutiyo[1]
Kiyo hiyo ewewa; mac hufiti[2].

Long long (ones I) have sent; cut pingos
Round (ones I) have sent; honey pots
Short short (ones I) have sent; cut meat.

and apparent this modified to suit the convenience of the peasant Sinhalese who, as already mentioned, have much Vedda blood in them.

[1] *Mutiu* may be a verb, *mutiyo* is a pot.

[2] *Kiyo* appears to be derived from v. *kiyanawa*, to chop or cut; compare colloquial *kiyawi*, "I have drunk," from v. *kiyanawa* and other instances. We are indebted to Mr Parker for these notes as well as for the transliteration and translation of the message.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

In concluding these remarks on property we may refer to the list given by Rutimeyer (*Globus* 1903) of Vedda objects of personal property in the Basle Museum, these are: 422

(i) Bow and ordinary arrows with iron heads of different sizes.
(ii) Elephant arrows (i.e. ceremonial arrows or *aude*).
(iii) Simple sharpened wood arrows.
(iv) Boy's bow with wooden arrows, being an exact facsimile of the iron tipped arrows.
(v) Axes.
(vi) Digging sticks.
(vii) Drill for producing fire.
(viii) Apron made of the bast of *Antiaris toxicaria* (*riti* bark).
(ix) Tortoise shell from the Danigala used as a dish.
(x) Disc of wax from wild bees (trading asset).
(xi) Ball of bast cord for bow strings.
(xii) Fire lighting appliances with hollowed areca nut for keeping tinder.
(xiii) Earthenware pot hanging in a bast net.
(xiv) Pouch made of squirrel skin.
(xv) Kilt made of leaves.

To this Rutimeyer would add a *riti* bark bag, the message stick referred to in the anonymous report of 1820, printed by Le Mesurier[1], and clay figures and marbles mentioned by Stevens, in order to have "a rather complete inventory of all utensils of the 'Nature Veddas.'" This list, however, omits dried deer skins and the skin and wooden honey-collecting utensils described in Chapter XI. Further, no mention is made of beads, which are certainly much appreciated by even the wilder Veddas (cf. Chapter XI).

[1] "The Veddas of Ceylon," by C. J. R. Le Mesurier, *Journal Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, Vol. 12, 1886. The statement referred to will be found on p. 347 and runs as follows:—"They are totally unacquainted with letters, but the different tribes hold a rude correspondence with each other with small pieces of wood cut into different shapes. Fugitives used to be furnished with passports of this kind, when they removed from one tribe to another, and the treatment they received depended on the recommendation which the talismans conveyed." 202. 211

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 As may be supposed, the vocabulary of such a barbarous race is very limited. It only contains such phrases as are required to describe the most striking objects of nature, and those which enter into the daily life of the people themselves. So rude and primitive is their dialect that the most ordinary objects and actions of life are described by quaint periphrasis. As, for example, to walk is "to beat (the ground) with hammers"; a child is "a bud"; the grains of rice are "round things"; an elephant is not inappropriately termed "a beast like a mountain"; while the fallow deer of the island (*Axis maculata*) are, with the strictest accuracy, called "spotted animals"; and wild boars, "long-snouted ones."*

They use none of the honorifics so profusely common in Singhalese, the pronoun "*to*," "thou" being alone used, whether they are addressing each other, or those whose position would entitle them to outward respect. They can neither read nor write, nor
212 can I trace the faintest vestige of their ever having possessed any literature, in the lowest sense in which that word can be used.† They count with difficulty on their fingers, and so little notion
802-805 have they of time, that it is difficult to make them understand that they are to keep an engagement at a more remote period than the next day.

I have compared the scant and unsatisfactory collection of
197 words, which I have been able to make, with almost all the vocabularies of the aboriginal tribes of India, published in the *Asiatic Society's Journal*, and though in some of them I have found isolated instances of striking resemblance, these are probably merely accidental. The subject is one which requires further investigation: and a careful examination of the dialect, by any one competent to perform the task, would be interesting, although I question if it would elicit more than we at present know of the origin of the Veddahs.

I append to this paper, as a specimen of their patois, a list of some of their words, distinguishing between those which probably

* It is very curious that the Veddah term for the Ceylon elk, the Samba deer of India (*Rusa Aristotelis*), is "gawra," *vide* Tennent's remarks in his *Natural History of Ceylon*, p. 49, on the tradition of the former existence in Ceylon of the "Bos gaurus" of Hindustan. I have myself heard the "gaur" described by old Kandyans, who have seen it in the mountain forests, as an animal with, as it were, the body of a buffalo and the legs of an elk. And there are many places still bearing the name "gaura," as, for example, besides gaura ellea, mentioned by Tennent, gaura kelle—the forest of the gaur—gaura kanda; and there is a kind of grass called gaura mannia. It is curious that the elk should be called gaura by the Veddahs, and by no one else.

† About ten years ago, the Government established a school for the Veddahs of Bintenne, but it proved a failure.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason 161 to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this 221 time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led 621 a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakhan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

222 Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and 411 arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted 423 of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to 621 the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

614 The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *waruge*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states 197 that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil 128 tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirakodoi*, "nothing," is said

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER IV

FAMILY LIFE

THE family life of the wilder Veddas centres round the rock-shelters which are truly their homes, and even among those Veddas who practise chena cultivation, but have not formed permanent settlements, these rock-shelters play an important part, the movements of the community or family group from shelter to shelter being regulated according to season and available food supply. Our experience leads us to believe that the wilder Veddas so greatly prefer rock-shelters to huts that they seldom build the latter, preferring rather to face the inconvenience of travelling some distance daily in search of food, and even to camp for the night under some temporary shelter. Except in this particular Nevill's description of the movements of a Vedda family still holds good if it be remembered that he applies the term "Village Vaedda" to any Vedda who makes even the roughest chena. "The Forest Vaedda forms a home two or three times a year, as the season demands. Thus in the dry hot months when brooks and ponds dry up, the game collects in the low forests around the half dried river beds. He then takes his wife and children, aged parents or crippled relatives, and settles them in a hut close to a place where water can be got. From this he makes his hunting forays, and returns to it with his game. The rain sets in however, and the iguanas, deer, pigs, etc. are scattered over the country; the elk then seek rocky hills, and are followed by the Vaedda. The little household goods, the children, and family party, again are moved up to the high ground, avoiding the malaria that now hangs as a shroud over the forest-clad lowlands. Here, if possible, a cave is chosen for the home, and improved by a slight roof in front, if

342
221
[592]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

too exposed, and around this the food winner ranges.... Besides his high-ground residence, and his low-ground residence, if a tract of forest burst suddenly into flower that attracts vast swarms of bees, or into useful fruit, the family will make a little pic-nic party, and go there for a week or month, if it be too far from the home for daily visits. He cannot, however, be called 'nomadic,' any more than the European who has a town house, and country house, though the climate during the dry season calls for so trifling a shelter, that a permanent house is not required....

"The village Vaedda was originally, and indeed is still, distinguished as one who had added grain cultivation to hunting, honey collecting, and yam digging. When he moved into summer quarters, he set to work and felled a suitable lot of forest and burned it off, in the intervals of hunting. When the rain approached, he put up a hut that would keep his family dry, on this cleared space, and scattered grain seed over the charred surface. Leaving such food as they had stored for use then, in charge of his family, he would go off for days together to the high ground in search of elk, lodging as before in caves. When the weather cleared, and the grain ripened, they collected it, paid away small shares to other less provident clansmen, who had during the wet season sent the family little presents of flesh, while the father was away, and then away they went to another dry season division of their territory, where the mininnas and iguanas abounded. There is thus little difference between the forest and the village Vaedda, except that the latter makes his dry season home sufficiently substantial to keep out rain as well as dew, and that he leaves his family there, and does not take them to the high ground. He has never yet learned to make his clearing into a field or garden, or his six months' hut into a permanent home. We now come to the dwellings themselves. Where an overhanging rock can be found, it is of course sufficient. Otherwise any rock is chosen, and some sticks being laid sloping in front of it, it is roughly thatched with twigs, rushes, and large pieces of bark. A few elk hides, if not bought up by pedlars, will form a screen at one end. If it is only to exclude dew a very few branches or bits of bark suffice[1]."

[1] *Πρωτόκολλον*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 186.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of [342] these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee reihee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

804 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

[137]

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

†*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schleichera trijuga, Nephelium longana,* respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the [103] sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though [262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that [281] ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and [534] manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothuru-pathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

341 181 THE genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a *chena* than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas [184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 222 177 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his 142 outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature—and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have [826] it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a degree, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

166 in one instance there had been intermarriage with Sinhalese,
563 and we suspected this in other cases, though the majority appear to be reasonably pure-blooded.

361 These people make chenas[1] on which they live temporarily
231 in bark-covered huts; Plate X, figure 1, represents the chena settlement of the local group of the Namadewa *warugé*, some of the members of which are shown in Plate X, figure 2. They gather honey and hunt, several of them possess guns, and some
[222 of them rear cattle for the Sinhalese villagers. Indeed, for
224] Veddas their lot is singularly happy, since they live in the heart of the park country where game is still abundant. Bailey first induced some Veddas in the Nilgala district to make chenas about the middle of the last century, before which all the Veddas in this district were probably living their natural hunting, honey-gathering life.

361 It is not often that a community that has taken to the semi-
511 civilised life of chena cultivation is seen, in which its members are so healthy and well fed, for Veddas dislike settling down and do not generally do so until they find they can no longer subsist on the game in the country, when they either drift into Sinhalese settlements, or make extremely rough chenas for themselves, the produce of which is seldom sufficient to feed the community. Besides which, as is the case with the Sinhalese peasants themselves, the crop is often pledged to Moormen pedlars before it is reaped. The poor Veddas then subsist
[164] as best they can on yams, honey and berries, and usually fall a prey to fever. Several Veddas in this wretched condition were seen between Namal Oya and Bandaraduwa, while those at Godatalawa were scarcely better off.

In the Nilgala district the conditions are different. Chena making and cattle rearing had been introduced while game was still abundant, families are still able to leave the chena settlement and hunt and gather honey, living during such times in rock shelters within their own hunting boundary. However, the

[1] Bailey defines a chena as "a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again: it is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.* Vol. II, 1863, p. 282.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason
161 to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this
221 time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led
621 a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakhan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

222 Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and
411 arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda
423 chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to
621 the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

614 The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *waruge*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states
197 that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil
198 tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirakodoi*, "nothing," is said

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

775 Besides the important part in the Vedda cult of the dead played by the propitiation of the *Nae Yaku*, and of the *yaku* of certain other Veddas such as Kande Wanniya who as *yaku* have attained to special importance (approaching that of culture heroes in other forms of belief), there is a certain feeling of reverence for a host of unnamed *yaku*. Little attention is paid to these but, since it is stated that they too were once men, the suggestion may be hazarded that they represent the *yaku* of the forgotten dead. These *yaku*, although all around in the jungle, are in some instances thought of as vaguely attached to special localities, especially to glades in the forest, unusually large trees, and above all large rocks and rocky hilltops. The *yaku* of rocks and hilltops, indeed, tend to become named, taking the name of the hill they inhabit; even among the less civilised Veddas they are sometimes identified with the *yaku* of Vedda headmen who have lived on or near the hills. On the other hand among the more sophisticated Veddas these *yaku* tend to become less and less the spirits of dead Veddas, and finally, under Tamil influence, are thought of as dangerous spirits, immigrants from beyond the Ocean, each of whom with a female of his own species haunts the hilltops and sends disease. Somewhat akin to these *yaku* in their less dangerous forms are the *kiriamma* (literally milk mothers, i.e. grandmothers), the *yaku* of Vedda women, generally the wives of Vedda headmen or chiefs, many of whom are thought of as haunting the sides and tops of hills where there are rocks and springs. They are sometimes jealous of people gathering honey—indeed there is a [222] tendency to avoid rocky mountain tops on their account—but 769 may be placated by a charm, though occasionally a little honey is left for them with a muttered *kapau kiriammala*—Eat O [153] Kiriamma. Although they retain the fondness for children which they felt in their lifetime they not infrequently send sickness, at least among the more sophisticated Veddas.

A few *kiriamma* have become rather important *yaku*, notably an old woman of the Unapane clan now known as Unapane Kiriamma, but such *kiriamma* do not appear to be especially associated with rocky or hilly sites.

769 We are now in a position to discuss the possible evolution of
762

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

795 776 *Yaku*, while at nearly all the village Vedda communities Indigollae Yaka was said to bring the *Nae Yaku*. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all: perhaps Gale Yaka had become Lord of the Dead as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony; Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate ceremony. No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both to bring evil upon man and to help them to get game was, however, volunteered and, as already mentioned, some old, specially valuable beads were kept to be offered to him.

Gale Yaka was also invoked to give success when gathering honey; he appeared to be associated with a certain rock near Mahaella, and we were told that beads were worn during the ceremony.

[753] The Maha Kiriamma was said to be one of the most powerful of the *Maha Yakino*, a class of female spirits who were said to send sickness[1]. Unapane Yakini (Unapane Kiriamma) was another *yakini* of the same class who was thought to live at Omunigala. Here as among many other groups of Veddas the *Maha Yakino* were associated with hill tops, and it was the [782 222] custom for people collecting the honey of the rock bee to leave a piece of the comb *in situ*, saying, "Eat, O Kiriamma[2]."

755 When the *Maha Yakino* are invoked to cure sickness a basket is used in which are put a bead necklace and bangles and the leaves of a *na* tree. The shaman becomes possessed and raises the basket above the patient's head and prophesies recovery. The leaves are subsequently thrown away, but the beads and bangles are preserved for the *Yakino*. Presumably this is the origin of the similar or identical use of these objects in the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which, however, appears to be of Sinhalese origin.

[1] Nothing was ever said to cause us to suspect that she was connected with Gale Yaka or Indigollae Yaka.

[2] Kiriamma is in the plural in the Sinhalese, showing that all the *Maha Yakino* in the neighbourhood were invoked to partake.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

THE DOLA YAKA CEREMONY.

222 437 Collecting honey is almost as important to the Vedda as hunting, for not only is honey valuable as food but it is one of the most important articles of barter, and every year at the end of the honey season the Moormen pedlar[1] penetrates into the wildest parts of the jungle with iron, cloth, pots and beads to exchange for the highly prized jungle honey.

222 776 796 Nor is honey collecting without risk, for the "Little People of the Rocks" can be very angry, and their sting is deadly. Hence the Veddas ask for success in honey collecting from their natural protectors the *yaku*, and Dola Yaka is especially invoked for this purpose. Although there is no tradition concerning his actions or his dwelling place his aid is invoked for success in collecting *bambara* honey from trees, and for the more dangerous task of cutting the combs from the craggy hill tops and rock faces in which the colonies of the rock bee make their homes. The successful invocation of Dola Yaka can only take place in the early afternoon at the time when the bees are most active in visiting flowers.

796 778 A *maesa* with a single platform about 4 ft 6 in. from the ground was built, and two arrows were fixed in the centre of the space cleared for the dance (Plate XLVII). A betel leaf was placed on the top of each and pressed down on the shaft so that it rested on the feathers, and a small bead necklace was looped over the head of each arrow and rested on the betel leaf. These leaves were said to represent the large bundles of leaves which the Veddas use to smoke the bees from the comb, and the necklaces represent the creeper by which the twigs would be tied together and by which it would be lowered over the cliff edge. It was noted that one arrow was taller than the other, and we were told that the taller arrow was the one which would be used in cutting the comb, and that when the honey was taken it would be thrust through the withy binding the bundle of leaves used

[1] The term Moormen is applied to the numerous Mohammedans who make their living as shopkeepers and pedlars. Many of them are proud of their alleged Arabic descent, but it is only in a minority that skin colour or features suggest Arab blood, and the appearance of the majority of Moormen scarcely differs from that of the Tamils of the East Coast, among whom their most considerable settlements are found.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Invocations to Bambura Yaka.

782
539

The invocations to Bambura Yaka are the most puzzling of all those we collected. None of our informants understood them and the translations given were fragmentary, or else we were told that although the words of the sentences could be translated so as to make some sort of sense, the significance of the invocation was unknown, or if appreciated did not necessarily agree with the meaning of the literal translation. Further, although it is certain that Bambura Yaka especially gives success in searching for yams and hunting pig, Mr Parker's translations make it quite certain that these invocations really apply to honey collecting. The reference to the "golden creeper," i.e. the ladder made of jungle creepers and used in taking honey, lowered across the face of the Inginiya rock makes this certain. Nevertheless both at Sitala Wanniya and Uniche, invocations with these expressions in them were recited as invocations to Bambura Yaka to send pig, and none of our informants regarded Bambura Yaka as having anything to do with honey. It may be suggested tentatively that the resemblance in sound of Bambura the home of the *yaka* and *bambara*, the word for the rock bee, may have brought about this confusion.

[222
417]

Sitala Wanniya.

XXVII. *Mē magē Bamburuṇi, Bamburaṇi. Magē Bamburō bat haddī nāḍow nāḍow gala gala suniyantyō.*

Mē masā muratata gaḍu maḍānā maḍuhat hāpu hapata sindu dendē hapa no hiyandē. Mē hudē Inginiyā galata hāpu ray wasla galat gala gala mē wara wasfī gelē.

This is my Bamburā, Bamburā. While my Bamburā is eating rice make a sound, make a sound, "gala, gala"—save, save (him)—by magic.

At this very instant destroying the mounds (on the face of the rock) be pleased to give to the mouth that has eaten honey (the power to sing) songs (correctly and) not to speak nonsense. Save, save (both) the golden creeper that has been lowered down this little Inginiya rock and the rock, (or otherwise) this time the rock will fall.

"Bamburō (pl.) and Bamburani are honorific forms of Bamburā. Compare *Maharajani*, used in addressing a king.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411 648 It appears that painted and lacquered arrows were sometimes presented to the Veddas by the Sinhalese kings as signs of gratitude or favour, just as ceremonial forms of other objects were presented to particular Sinhalese[1]. Dr Willey told me of a lacquered bow and arrow which he heard of among a community of sophisticated Veddas, and which he was told ultimately found their way to the Kandy Museum. Among the peasant Sinhalese of Nilgala we heard of a lacquered arrow—said to have been lost recently—which, according to tradition, had been presented many generations ago to the Vedda ancestors of its last owner by one of the kings of Ceylon. With regard to the specimen in the Kandy Museum, the arrow is feathered in the usual Vedda style, the condition of the lacquer on it shows that it is of considerable age. The iron which is said to belong to it is loose, and it is entirely unlike any arrow head we have seen. Instead of having a tang it has a socket into which the end of the shaft must have fitted, and there is a shoulder or "stop" upon the iron. The bow shown us as having been acquired with the arrow was in much better condition and had a small band of silver or some metal resembling silver round it. According to the account given at the museum both specimens were procured from a priest who gave a history of the specimens which does not connect them with any Veddas[2].

224 177 Traps and snares are unknown among the least sophisticated Veddas, but at Danigala we saw a small deadfall trap avowedly introduced.

HONEY.

222 The importance of honey in the Vedda diet has been mentioned in Chapter IV as well as the large part it plays in barter. The honey of the *bambara* (*Apis indica*) is taken in June and July, though at other times of the year small combs are taken

[1] There is in the Colombo Museum a beautifully lacquered weaver's shuttle, presented to certain cloth makers by one of the Sinhalese kings.

[2] It was stated that the bow and arrow had been found in the verandah of a disused house with some broken articles said to have been thrown there, having been taken from the *walawwa* (house) of Molligoda Adigar. The house was in the Kegalle district. The villagers gave the bow and arrow to a priest who brought them to the museum.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from trees. Besides the *bambara* other species including the small stingless bee supply a considerable quantity. The first two months of our sojourn in the Vedda country (January and February) was at a time when honey was particularly scarce, and even at the end of March and in April it was not abundant, yet such was the courtesy of the Veddas that each community managed to make us a small present of honey, though this often entailed a long search and the combs were frequently full of grubs. In two communities only, which were better off than the others, namely Danigala and Kulukalaeba, were we given large pots of strained honey, the remains of the previous year's store. 222

The manner in which *bambara* colonies are regarded as property has been discussed in Chapter V. Writing in 1886 Nevill says, "Honey forms a great part of their diet. It is eaten fresh in large quantities, wax and all; combs with young bees in them being considered especially wholesome. It was also the practice formerly to store strips of dried meat in honey, filling in a cavity of some tree with it, the cavity being first lined with clay. At present they barter away their surplus meat and honey, during the hunting season, and keep no store for the rainy season. This often brings privation and is one cause of the rapid decrease in their numbers. 262 251 [437]

"They tell me their health is never so good as when their food largely consists of yams and honey. 262

"To procure honey they rapidly cut open hollow trees, even of the hardest wood; and to take the hives of the large black bambara bee, they make long ladders of cane, called 'rang kendiya,' by which they descend precipices, and cut off the combs adhering to their sides. 222 [417]

"They do this at night, generally, as the bees are not so savage then; and smoke them with a sort of resin. The hives are often cut off with a sort of wooden sword, made for the occasion. These frail ladders swing fearfully, and the task is so dangerous, only the boldest and most athletic attempt it. While engaged on the task they sing lustily, songs specially made, which appease the spirit of the rock, and prevent him from dashing the hunter off the ladder. They also go about [413] 222 533

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 the work with songs, so as to get up a certain degree of excitement, necessary to carry them through the task. A song is chanted, and a little honey sprinkled for the spirits, before the combs are cut off the rock[1]."

533

Fig. 12. *Mastiya* × $\frac{1}{10}$.

222 413 415

Before honey collecting as many pots as possible are made and old pots and gourds are overhauled. The wooden sword which Nevill mentions is probably the *mastiya* (fig. 12). This is a stout stick about 2½ metres long with four prongs at one end, which the Vedda carries hanging by a loop from his forearm and which he uses to detach the comb and convey it into the vessel called a *maludema* in which the honey is collected. This is also carried hanging from the forearm and should be made of deer's hide so that it may not be broken against the rocks as the honey collector swings to and fro. Plate LXV shows a *maludema* collected at Sitala Wanniya. An arrow is also carried and is largely used in detaching the combs from the rock.

222 476

Before taking the honey a bundle of green leaves is set alight and lowered in order to stupefy the bees. The smoker is called *odiya* (Sin. *kula*) and the creeper attached to it *yotwella*[2]. Several men of the community join together to collect rock-honey, the whole spoil being equally divided without any special consideration for the owner of the land, though it seemed that the owner would decide when the honey should be collected. The women accompany their men to crags and gulleys where the *bambara* build their combs. They hold torches and sing while the honey is being collected.

231

Plate LXVI shows a gourd, used as a hive for a colony of the stingless bee, hanging outside one

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

[2] For the use of these see Chapter IV where the pantomime of honey getting is described.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the huts in the Morane chena settlement at Henebedda. It was shown us with pride by Handuna who said he was keeping it for his twelve year old son. He told us that in the old days the hollow branches, the homes of colonies of these bees, were frequently kept in the rock-shelters. 231

The ladder with the help of which *bambara* honey is collected consists of a greatly elongated loop of cane, apparently derived from a species of *Calamus*, across which rungs of creeper are stretched. In Plate LV (p. 290) there can be seen the bottom of the ladder some fifty feet long, used for training the young, hung from the top of the cliff across the face of the rock mass at Sitala Wanniya. In spite of the fact that honey is usually gathered at night the Veddas do not travel or hunt at night and know only two stars by name. One of these is a star or more probably a planet which often appears close to the moon and is called *pantaru* which, we were told, is the name by which the Sinhalese know it. The other named star appears soon after sunset, always in the same place and before the other stars, and is almost certainly Venus; this is called *irabada tarua*, i.e. "side of sun star." Although the Veddas hunt in the dusk of the dawn the idea that anyone would roam about at night seemed absolutely ludicrous to them (Sitala Wanniya), they roared with laughter at it, "why should one go into the jungle? it would be too dark to see to shoot, besides bears are about, absurd idea," they laughed again, in fact it was quite ten minutes before Kaira had forgotten the joke. 222 417 821 484 621 522

MASTICATORIES.

All Veddas chew eagerly, but as they can rarely obtain a supply of areca nuts they commonly use instead of these the bark of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) and the *dawata* tree (*Carallia integerrima*). Concerning the other plants that they use as masticatories Nevill says, "They occasionally chew the leaves of several aromatic herbs, particularly *Anisochilus suffruticosus*, a sort of sage that grows on rocks. The areca does not grow wild in the Eastern Province, but Veddas are very fond of the seeds of the lakada bush, *Gardenia carinata*, a 261 276

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

ward, shoot their long-bladed arrows in the soft fleshy part under the forearm, and so disable him.* 224

They have a great dread of meeting elephants at night, and have charms to protect them from them—not only to turn them from their path, but to render innoxious the bear, the leopard, and the wild boar. And I must here record, that they are the only charms I have entire faith in. 825 789

I never shall forget the first time one of these Veddah charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation. The moon had not quite risen, and the stems of the trees and the gigantic pendent creepers were flickering in the uncertain light cast by the torches, which my Veddah guides, gliding through the forest, bore before me. I was chatting to an intelligent Veddah by my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms, having been till then, like Tennent, ignorant of the fact.† I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant "behegang! wirooowee! wiroowah!" which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success.‡

Honey, and the grub in the comb, before it becomes the bee, are both staple food with the Veddahs, and their acuteness in discovering hives, when bee-hunting, is very remarkable. I have seen a Veddah stealing through the forest, suddenly stop—listen for an instant with uplifted hand—dart off into the jungle and return in an incredibly short space of time with a fresh honey-comb; while I have been in vain endeavouring 222 [262]

* This fact I established beyond a doubt. I questioned many Veddahs on that practice, which Knox treats as a fable, p. 63, viz., striking an axe into the sole of an elephant's foot; and I was assured by several that, though they never practise it themselves, the Veddahs of Batticaloa do, and that they even hamstring elephants. To those who know the pluck and dexterity of the professed elephant catchers in the north of the island, there is nothing extraordinary or incredible in a Veddah approaching sufficiently close to an elephant to wound his foot or to hamstring him. But I have inquired, and cannot satisfactorily establish the truth of the statement; and I confess that I am inclined to doubt their physical power to do either.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 448, 2nd edit.

‡ Tennent, vol. i, part ii, chap. i, p. 139, gives a lamentable account of the inefficacy of a charm for bears. I dare say the unhappy moorman there mentioned would have been more fortunate had he known the Veddah charm. The Singhalese have charms for the same purpose; but they differ from those of the Veddahs. [171]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 to catch the hum of bees, which so instantaneously struck his ear. Their forest life naturally quickens their powers both of seeing and hearing, and renders them, in these respects, far superior to those whose more civilized lives do not compel them to rely on those faculties for their daily food.

They take honey in the manner common to the Singhalese. The bee-hunter enlarges with his small axe the hole in the tree at which the bee enters, and putting his mouth to the aperture, blows into it. This has generally the effect of making the bees fly out; or, at least, of making them vacate the comb, and retire into the innermost recesses of the hollow tree, when the honey can be taken with the hand. If this do not succeed, however, a second puff, after the bee-hunter has chewed some aromatic substance, has the desired effect.

Taking the honey of the bambera (*apis Indica*), a large and
222 very venomous bee, is a much more serious affair. This bee hives
283 on very lofty trees, or in clefts of precipitous rocks. If on a
481 tree, the hunter ties tendrils to it, and armed with a bundle of blazing faggots, climbs to the vicinity of the comb and smokes the bees out, being often severely stung during the operation. If in a cleft of rock, he will, if he cannot otherwise approach it, lower himself with ropes made of creepers, and take the honey by the same process.

To the Veddahs, honey is not only favourite food, but valuable
439 as an object of barter, for the Kandyans prize it greatly for medicinal purposes. They use it, too, as Knox tells us, for pre-
251 serving flesh. "They cut a hollow tree and put honey in it, and then fill it with flesh, and stop it with clay, which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want."* And when they are short of food, they mix honey with decayed wood, and so eat it. It
261 satisfies their craving more readily than plain honey. Davy properly describes the practice, as "not so much for nourishment as to distend the empty stomach and to allay the distressing feelings of emptiness and the pains of hunger." It is curious that Tennent should have entirely omitted all allusion to this remarkable custom. "Romba" is the term used by the Veddahs, for this decayed wood, and the practice I have described may have given rise to the epithet, which Knox applies to the "wild sort" called "Ramba Veddahs," who, he says, "never shew themselves" —but no "sort" is so called now, nor is the name remembered.†

* Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63.

† Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63. The wood so used is chiefly that of the
[824] eriminia creeper (*zizyphus œnophlia*, Mill.), the ettamba—wild mango (*mangifera Indica*, Quin.), the weera (*hemicyclia sepiaria*, W. and A.), the rêna, the nooga, a species of fig; any wood, indeed, not poisonous, is used. They reject the wood of the kaduru (*cerbera odallum*, Gmstn.), the goda

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 quite close to me. Presently one of them lit on my wrist, and began sipping the moisture as it came from my skin. The second insect quickly followed exactly the same procedure on my slowly extending my arm.

At a small puddle, measuring about 2 ft. by 18 in., I found the whole of the damp ground covered with wasps sipping the moisture.

Some idea of the dryness of the locality can be judged from these instances, and I submit that animal distribution must be affected thereby.

137 The distribution of plants, not of direct value to man, moreover shows certain erratic conditions. The most striking instance of this is in the distribution of the Dipterocarps. At Monaragala, and a little to the eastward, our common Hora (*Dipterocarpus zeylanicus*) is moderately plentiful. From Liyangalla onwards towards the east it is absent, but to the north-east of Siyambala-anduwa, near the village of Newgalla, one finds fringes of *Vatica obscura* on the banks of the dry streams; in other words, there is an enormous belt of country the opposite sides of which have representations of this important order of trees, with no examples in the intermediate area.

On the other hand I found no examples of *Vatica obscura* to the south of Siyambala-anduwa on any of the streams I crossed.

Of the Dilleniaceæ, I found *Dillenia indica* on the higher reaches of the Heda-oya, and a few individual examples—probably introduced—towards Waragoda in the north and at Kumuna in the south-east.

Of the Anonaceæ, the usual dry-zone *Polyalthias* are very abundant. Both *Anamirta paniculata* and *Tinospora cordifolia* are abundant representations of the Menispermaceæ.

In the tanks where there was water, both *Nymphæa lotus* and *Nelumbium speciosum* are common Lotuses. Both roots [222] and bulbs of these plants are eaten.

In some of the chenas I found *Brassica juncea* grown with the other crops, but I could get no definite explanation why it was cultivated.

Of the Capparideæ, the typical *Capparis zeylanica* is plentiful. [262] Its fruits are eaten by the Veddas as well as the Tamils. I

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 "We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412 were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of [342] these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 224 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *hong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

804 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schleichera trijuga, Nephelium longana,* respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as *na* leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger. [157] 776 [325]

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey." 312

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves. 186

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish. 621 342 222 252 757 262 164

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify. [622] 222 [481] [757]

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst. 222

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food. 000

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 [103] to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though [262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287 281] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and [534] manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothuru-pathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree
that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of
the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of
brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pine-
apple.

The height[1] was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the
superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then
the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There,
crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadina-
gala; to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thanagoda* (breast-
mounds) and behind them *Thanakirigoda* (breast milk mound) with
wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222 ●
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks
driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the
summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach
of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale:
A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a
ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing
daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by
just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within
reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it.
When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep
into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards
it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge
collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year.
On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor
fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife
who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena halanghal-
angme popekorai*," which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 535
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were
hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with
slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose
and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that
these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted
by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with
great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that [534]
studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch
perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For
a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step
dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they out-
distance us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

1 [the hill called Westminster Abbey. — Analyst]

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 342 114 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aratchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 224 482 142 609 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

600 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

241 THE genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark
181 by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a *chena* than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas
[184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a
222 large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much
177 to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his
142 outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature—
[826] and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a degree, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

267 There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
224 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the " a-he-hik " so characteristic of them when startled.

252 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his
[482] shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, " Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent
824 to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251 little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle
252] like meat.

Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is
222 plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galseembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibuda* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *katuala*, *hirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261 various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galseembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up
752 with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapotho*, *anguluo*, *lulo*, *katukanao*, *kanupatho*, *antho* (eels), *maguro*, *hungo*, *keheliyo*, *petky*, *walikondo*, *sethalu*, *badapathalo*, *walikairiyo*, *piniweliyo*, *kovalayo*, *galpandurao*.

† *Kukurumang-gedde*, *kala-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

342 eggs of gekkoes very like candle droppings. A few of the caves have drip ledges (evidence of Sinhalese occupation) which serve to keep them dry: those without this feature are all adrip during the rains and their floors are mossy. Rocky out-crops, large loose stones and, perhaps a white-ant hill or two, divide up the floor space into sections in which the various Vedda families lie grouped, each in its allotted span. Here and there the stony floor is cupped where maize has been pounded, or worn [372] smooth where *kurrukhan* has been rubbed to flour with the flat polished stones that lie about. A fire-place or two, a cooking frame, and dry leaves (*pana*, *pinney dea*, or *helanea*), the bedding of these people, complete the picture.

Let us take the more important of the caves as we pass them on our way from Bingoda to Newaragala. Like our houses they are all named.

Matigaha galge is a deep roomy grotto formed by a superincumbent rock mass supported slantwise on large flanking boulders. Partially obstructing its entrance, and just within cover of its roof, is a steep rounded stone which one family would occupy silhouetted against a [312] tree-intersected sky. Its only source of water is the Magalavatan Aar a quarter mile away. This disadvantage, and its nearness to the Bingoda homes, accounts for its present disuse. Suthu Banda was born here. Kaurala who had not seen it since his childhood could not help a word of regret on seeing it now after the long years: "Ah!" he sighed. "Is this the old home. No one to inhabit it now,"

Gallhale galge (Rock-slab cave) owes its name to a slab of rock within it, beneath which one must crawl to gain a gloomy inner compartment. A reedy pool below, and the cyfax, cactus and vines about its mouth give it a touch of wild picturesqueness.

Alu galge (Ash cave), which lies at the base of Newaragala, is less a cave than a passage under an immense boulder spanning two lateral outcrops. It is so well concealed by large stones guarding its mouth that one would not suspect its presence even when standing within a few feet of it. The floor slopes up steeply towards a narrowing exit, and is so bestrewn with rocks as to afford no convenient resting place. Yet, in a cranny here or a basin there, the Veddas contrive to make themselves comfortable, as the withered leaves that have served them as mats testify. A small tripodal frame shows where flesh has been [312] roasted. There is no lack of water here; for not only does a perennial spring lie at its entrance, the resort of innumerable bears during the drought, but in the rainy season a rivulet flows right through the cave.

● 222 This cave is a favourite of the Veddas who come here when the jak trees, which grow on the slopes of Newaragala, are in fruit. Then, spending [261] a few days, they feast to surfeiting on the tender fruit, and with their characteristic improvidence carry none away. It was here that Kaurala stayed when he "skinned" Nuwaragala—which was his own beautiful way of saying he had stripped it clean of hives. How secret are the ways of Veddas may be judged from the fact that here was a cave frequented by them without its being known to the Sinhalese who lived six miles away. And we who had once spent a night on Newaragala were ignorant that here below us was a cave used by the very Veddas we yearned to know.

261 But of all the caves I have seen *Dhik galge* was the best. I have already described this cave; it remains for me to add a few vital touches. In

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

5. NESTS AND HIVES

This is the time to climb the steep;
Up through the shadowy woods to grope,
Over the stones where the lichens creep,
On to the crag that crowns the slope;
To the wild bees stronghold hushed in sleep.

J. STILL

NESTS

136 In dark fearsome caverns, and down the sides of dizzy ravines, the little edible-nest swiftlet builds its dainty nest fashioned of hardened saliva 222 and moss. Those who think they know better will tell you that the all but invisible specks, sometimes seen high away in the empyrean at dusk, are flights of these birds on their way to the sea to gather salt foam with which to build.

222 One of the favourite pursuits of the Veddas is the collecting of these nests for barter. They call the birds *kudukarayas* (nest-makers) and their [439] nesting caves *kudu galges*. These caves are often deep gloomy recesses only entered with lighted candles (made by squeezing a column of bees-[373] wax round a central wick of cloth or bark) to scare away the scores of poisonous snakes (*karawalas* and *mapilas*) that gather there to eat the eggs and young. Sometimes the nests stud the steep sides of narrow [417] gorges, and are then taken by the aid of cane ladders let down from above.

The nesting-places are a secret the Veddas guard closely. When they took me on one of their expeditions it was on the condition that no bearers came. A hard climb brought us to near the summit of the tree-covered mountain side. "*Cho-ho-ho*," shouted the Veddas as a warning to possible bears. The approach to the cave was over-run with *aralu-wel* (used for bows) and *niyande* (of which waist strings are made). The cave itself, surmounted by an enormous rock the fall of which seemed imminent, was dark and stifling; and it was quite a time before one could discern the cup-shaped nests that clung in clusters to the vaulted roof. A Vedda handed me a parent bird he had trapped, a tiny-beaked, brownish thing, with sweeping wings, black feet and unswallow-like tail. It was quite a time too before one realised that there was a commotion in the air, and that little wraith-like forms were flitting in and out in sore distress "Swish, swish; wing, wing; twit, twit; kisiri, bisiri; takara, takara; kata, kata, kata," as from fairy castanets, came the barely audible sounds. Outside, these were louder, "Chara-chiris, chara-chiris; che-week, che-week, che-week," they twittered in futile resentment. But to these sounds the ruthless despoilers were deaf, as, mounted on heaps of stones, they scraped away with knife or arecanut cutter the trim nests from their tenacious attachments, leaving only those with eggs behind, lest the colony be killed outright. On a boulder near by [252] was a fire-place where the young had been roasted, as Kauwa of Divulana had described.

[p. 86]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222
417
481

" Over the edge." (Page 89)

222
373

Honey-gatherer, girt with torches and stake, ready to descend. (Page 89)

[Facing p. 87]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

HIVES

There are five varieties of honey bee in Ceylon :—The large *bambara* (*Apis dorsata*) that builds huge combs of very pure wax on bare hill sides and the large branches of lofty trees ; the *mee massa* (*Apis indica*) sweetest honey bee of all, whose combs are to be found in hollow trees, rock-clefts and within ant-hills ; the *dandual massa* (*Apis flores*), the smallest honey-bee in the world, that hives on rocks and boughs ; the *kanava massa* (Rosin or Dammar bee) a docile, stingless, friendly little creature whose long black combs within tree crevices yield a delicious, if heady, honey ; the *kotha massa*, an even smaller species, whose puny comb is hardly worth the taking. 222 136

Kanava and *kotha* combs are available all the year round ; they are the *pathinchikarayas* or stayers. If the Vedda is hungry it is for one of these he goes at a pinch. The *bambara* and *mee massa*, the most abundant honey makers, are seasonal in their habits ; and June and July are the great honey months ; the fruit season synchronising with this, marks these months as the festive time of the jungle ; then the Veddas leave their homes for caves and stream beds, take their fill, and have a surplus for barter. 222 [439]

On the flavours of honey the Veddas are connoisseurs. They can tell by tasting a comb the flower or medley of flowers that contributed to its making. That honey is relished most which prevails when the *mora*, *veera* and *galseembela* are in bloom. [151 262]

Honey gathering is the master art of the Vedda. Supreme as he is in other jungle crafts, he is supremest in this. As he travels through the forest he is alive to the faintest hum, and no hive, however concealed, escapes him. His adroitness in tracking a bee to its lair is well described in a delightfully euphonious song they have (beginning, *Thomba, thomba Gomba me-na-na*), that tells of a Vedda Thutha who goes on the honey quest with his brothers Gomba and Naga. Thutha leads in the trail of a particular bee ; and as he goes he sings to his brothers, indicating various trees in which bees are busy ; but not decoyed by these, and with his eye steadily on the bee he first sighted, he follows it, till eventually it guides him to its hive within the skull of an elephant—*kolanathe gatche* (tree without leaves) as he quaintly describes. [533]

The taking of any hive, other than that of the rock *bambara*, is a very simple thing for the Vedda. All he does is to climb the tree, steady himself at the hole containing the comb, and blow into it to drive the bees away. Then with his axe he enlarges the opening sufficiently to enable him to introduce a hand and secure the cache, stopping every now and then to blow inside or to slap an offending bee. He eats the comb at his perch, grubs and all, throwing down fragments to those below.

The *bambara* comb is quite a different proposition. These great bees build high on the precipitous sides of rocks ; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only. A dangling cane at Westminster Abbey gave us some idea of the daring of the enterprise. To reach the combs ladders of vines are lowered from the summit of the rock ; and down these the collector descends ; as this does not bring him within arm's length of the hives, he has usually to rely on the use of a long stake. Sometimes [417 481]

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222 the hives are beyond the reach even of this: and then, though the honey itself may not be secured, the wax may, by being dislodged with long bamboos and collected at the foot of the hill; *iti bambara* (wax hives) such combs are called. There are others, so safe under prominent brows, that they are absolutely untakeable; *yakhini baliya* (she-demon's portion) is the name of them.

[417] When the rock is not too high, the ladder is made long enough to reach the ground, where it can be held slantwise close up against the face of the rock, bringing the gatherer within easier access of the hive. But where the hill is too lofty for this, as usually happens, the ladder hangs free, and the gatherer may even have to swing to and fro to enable him to get at the combs. Nor is this all; the *bambaras*, several of which may kill a man, have to be reckoned with; they can only be dispersed by heavy smoking; and, what is worse, when several hives are clustered together in a colony, the work has to be done on a pitch dark night.

Imagine then the picture of the man smothered in smoke, assailed by angry bees, swinging in the darkness two hundred feet or more above the stony earth, with neck and knee hitched to the ladder so as to leave the arms free to manipulate torch and prong. Is it a wonder that every Vedda is not a *kapunkaraya* or cutter, but only the boldest of them; and that he, when he descends to his work, does so without thought in his heart of life or father or mother?*

222 417 284 We will now describe the scene as it actually takes place:—On Panihela were five large combs the Veddas meant to have one night. That morning they assembled on the rock. Their first business was to collect the canes and vines that go to the making of the ladder (*yothala*). Two canes, some twenty or thirty feet long and about an inch in diameter, were cut, dragged to the top of the hill, and lined out. Knotting the end of one to a tree they split it in half. One man, standing at the end, held these apart; while two others stood in between, constructing strong rungs at intervals of two feet with *kiriwel* creepers, which they first looped round the two halves of the cane and then bound together with a running twist. A ladder of any length may thus be constructed; for, should a single cane not be long enough, its ends are looped and interlocked with similar loops in another length of split cane. The ladder is finished off by overlapping and binding together the free ends in the form of an U. This is the type of ladder employed in the perilous descents; where the drop is easier they do not go to all this trouble, but merely split the end of the cane for a yard or so and tie a stick across; standing on this the man is lowered.

372 222 The ladder having been completed, the *hullas* or torches and the *matha* or forked stake are yet to make. The torches, four of which are required, are designed to give a maximum of smoke, and are therefore constructed by enclosing dry *mana* grass, leaves and bark within a sheath of green leafy twigs. The *matha* or *masleya* is a stake six feet long, made of the light *velang* or *walumala*; it is pointed at one end and forked at the other by being split cross-wise into four pointed prongs which are kept apart by two pieces of stick wedged in cross-wise and tied. Both *matha* and *hulas* have long loose loops attached to them by which they are slung to the arms when not in use.

* "*Pana epa hiyath wala bahinay; amma thatha epa hiyala.*"

Lastly, there is the *hangotuwa* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakha-hatte* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom. 222 415 776

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuape**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight. 222 [372]

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *hulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation* to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone. [587] 607 [782]

With smoking *hulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *hulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *hulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives. [412]

---

*"The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

†*Yothinawa* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Haiboa, haiboa, haiboa.
Ma ninthegang hotuahee maritchee,
Alut upang nawanthongis maihi helaney,
Maihi ural opuhova thenawa hithen,
Hamatheyan santhosen opuaragana harunahagena.
Tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222 And as he works he sings the cutter's song* and many a vulgar song besides. For this is the epic event of the Vedda's life, and never is he so happy as when engaged in the perilous work. Wild is the jungle night and the rocks around re-echo to his song.

[533: 152]

[439]

The honey-gatherer at work

When the "devil's mouth" is full, he releases it from the ladder and shouts "*adapo*" (lift) to those above; they pull on the attached rope. With a series of short jerks, the cutter climbing and helping from below, the honey is lifted. As each pull brings the vessel to the level of the cutter's head he calls out "*ho-ho*," and the hauling is stopped; then, climbing a rung or two he gives a helping hand and cries "*adapo*" again. And so, with "*adapo*..... *ho-ho*" following each other in quick succession, the precious freight is safely hauled over the edge of the cliff. It may be that the cutter has to descend to his work again. With the last load he climbs over the top, a figure to behold—sweating, exhausted, honey-bedaubed, bereft of all the stamina that has sustained him so long. He throws himself down. Nor have all his arts availed him against the bees, for he is covered with stings. Solicitously his wife and a friend or two group round him, and with pitying words pick off the stings. But, impatient of this, he besmears himself with sand that the ants may not worry him, and is soon asleep.

Such is the story behind the potful of *bambara* honey the Vedda offers for a trifle of grain or a fragment of cloth.

**Borri, borri, borri, borri,*
Borri, borri, borri, borri.
Ama, ama,
Aramaya, aramaya, aramaya, aramaya,
Thelung badonage adung padung hothoi heyya
Esale harale palang anda kanthulang
Gegung thesgena yanna
Alutta Vanniya!

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 bears, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.*

They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of those beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries, I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross-examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh.

They do not scruple to eat animals which have died a natural death, and have (in common with the Kandyans) a decided preference for their game "high"—if so mild a term can describe the exceedingly advanced condition, in which venison should be to suit the palate of a Veddah (or Kandyan) epicure.

They are fond of fish, which they catch by mixing with the
226 water the juice of particular fruits and barks of trees, which stupify them. A similar practice is common among the Singhalese.

Their arrows procure for them the flesh of the animals they eat,
224 and I can find no trace of pit-falls or traps being in use among
231 them. In Bintenne, some of them employ the hunting buffalo to enable them to approach their game unseen.† Their dogs track out the wounded animals, and are also trained to catch the iguano,

Tennent is wrong in saying that they procure birds with the
223 bow. They are not good enough shots for that. They catch them with bird-lime, made from the juice of the bo-tree *(ficus*
[824] *religiosa)*—and also watch them to their nests, and take them at night. Their skill as marksmen is most indifferent, and they never exercise it at small objects.

The most choice food, in their estimation, is, of land animals,
224 the flesh of the pengolin, or of the iguano; and, of fish, the eel.
[262] Though they eat no part of the elephant, yet he is the object of their pursuit, both for their own protection and on account of
[439] the ivory, so valuable to them as an article of barter. They will steal up to an elephant, and, as he is in the act of stepping for-

---

* It is curious that, while in the Batticaloa district Veddahs are said to eat bats, those of the Badulla district—certainly of Nilgala—reject them.

† The use of the hunting buffalo is common all over the Island. The manner in which the animal is trained is curious. When its horns are young and tender, a string is tied tightly round the base of one of them. The pain thus produced is so acute, that the poor animal is easily guided by the cord, and answers to the slightest touch. The ligature is gradually relaxed; and, when the buffalo is full grown, the recollection of the pain it occasioned is so vivid that he will answer readily to a thin string tied loosely to his horn. With an animal so trained, the hunter can easily approach the deer unseen at night. The buffalo feeds; the hunter crouches under his lee; a touch will guide him, and the hunter advances under cover.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

166 In one instance there had been intermarriage with Sinhalese,
563 and we suspected this in other cases, though the majority appear to be reasonably pure-blooded.

361 These people make chenas[1] on which they live temporarily
231 in bark-covered huts; Plate X, figure 1, represents the chena settlement of the local group of the Namadewa *warige*, some of the members of which are shown in Plate X, figure 2. They gather honey and hunt, several of them possess guns, and some
[222 of them rear cattle for the Sinhalese villagers. Indeed, for
224] Veddas their lot is singularly happy, since they live in the heart of the park country where game is still abundant. Bailey first induced some Veddas in the Nilgala district to make chenas about the middle of the last century, before which all the Veddas in this district were probably living their natural hunting, honey-gathering life.

It is not often that a community that has taken to the semi-
361 civilised life of chena cultivation is seen, in which its members
511 are so healthy and well fed, for Veddas dislike settling down and do not generally do so until they find they can no longer subsist on the game in the country, when they either drift into Sinhalese settlements, or make extremely rough chenas for themselves, the produce of which is seldom sufficient to feed the community. Besides which, as is the case with the Sinhalese peasants themselves, the crop is often pledged to Moormen pedlars before it is reaped. The poor Veddas then subsist as best they can on yams, honey and berries, and usually fall
[164] a prey to fever. Several Veddas in this wretched condition were seen between Namal Oya and Bandaraduwa, while those at Godatalawa were scarcely better off.

In the Nilgala district the conditions are different. Chena making and cattle rearing had been introduced while game was still abundant, families are still able to leave the chena settlement and hunt and gather honey, living during such times in rock shelters within their own hunting boundary. However, the

[1] Bailey defines a chena as "a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again: it is released again after intervals of from five to ten years," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.* Vol. II, 1863, p. 282.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 601 Since the children of two brothers or two sisters cannot marry each other, they are not *kura* and *naena* but call each other "brothers" and "sisters," using the terms for elder or younger brother or sister according to their age[1].

621 ●224 606 (Every Vedda so readily helps all the other members of his community and shares any game he may kill or honey he may take in so liberal a manner that at first it was difficult to determine who were the individuals who had a special claim on others of the group. Certainly at first sight it seemed as if all game were equally divided among the members of the group, but after a little time we perceived that while an unmarried man looked especially after his mother, a married man's father-in-law had at least an equal claim on his son-in-law and in practice often received more attention, since a man generally spent most of his time with his wife's family) That the relationship between 606 father-in-law and son-in-law is very close was shown in a number of ways, thus, when discussing children and their bringing up with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, we asked him whether Veddas [842] preferred to have a son or a daughter, the answer was prompt and decided, "a daughter, for thus a man obtains a son-in-law"; and on another occasion when discussing relationship he stated very decidedly, *amma mama ekei*, mother and mother's brother (i.e. father-in-law) are alike, and pointed out that as a man treats

[1] It may be worth while to say something concerning the alleged intermarriage of brother and sister among the Veddas, since Bailey and Hartshorne believed that such marriages occurred, and the Sarasins considered further investigation advisable. Our conclusions agree so thoroughly with Nevill's that we feel that we need do no more than quote what he has written on this subject. "Much nonsense has been written by persons who ought to have known better, about marriage of Vaeddas with their sisters. Such incest never was allowed, and never could be, while the Vaedda customs lingered. Incest is regarded as worse than murder. So positive is this feeling, that the Tamils have based a legend upon the instant murder of his sister, by a Vaedda to whom she had made undue advances. The mistake arose from crass ignorance of Vaedda usages. The title of cousin with whom marriages ought to be contracted, that is, mother's brother's daughter, or father's sister's daughter, is *naga* or *nangi*. This in Sinhalese is applied to a younger sister. Hence if you ask a Vaedda, 'Do you marry your sisters?' the Sinhalese interpreter is apt to say, 'do you marry your naga?' The reply is (I have often tested it), 'yes—we always did formerly, but now it is not always observed.' You say then, 'What? marry your own sister naga?' and the reply is an angry and insulted denial, the very question appearing a gross insult; and if put by a Sinhalese, the Vaedda would probably not even reply to him, but turn away with a gesture of contempt." *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nevill has pointed out that besides the territory of the group which is common land, every Vedda has "within this...a subdivision of his own which compares with the manor." In this he is no doubt right, though it was only at Sitala Wanniya that we were able to trace even approximately the hunting grounds belonging to individuals, which are theirs for the whole of their life, and descend to their heirs unless voluntarily alienated with the full consent of the group. So well is private ownership in a portion of land belonging to the group recognised in this community, that a man would not hunt even on his brother's land without the latter's permission; and if game started and wounded on his own land were killed on another man's domain, the man on whose territory the animal died would be given a portion of the flesh, apparently that side of the animal which touched the ground as the animal lay dead. Among other Veddas it was said half, or more generally a quarter, of the animal belonged to the man on whose land it died.

At Sitala Wanniya we not only found particular hills regarded as the property of individuals, but besides the big cave Pihilegodagalge, which was the property of the whole group of five families, there were smaller caves which were the property of the heads of individual families to which no others would have been welcomed, even had they thought of intruding. An exception was, however, made in the case of a man's *baena* (son-in-law), who we were told would naturally come and go as he pleased.

As has been shown in the chapter on Family Life, presents are often given at marriage, and these may take the form of personal property or hills or pools. In this section we shall deal with such transfers of real property, which in normal circumstances were made only to children and sons-in-law, and even then were not made over without the assent of every adult male member of the group. As this difficult subject does not lend itself to a general description, we shall limit ourselves to giving actual instances of land transfer with which we became acquainted.

When Vela of Sitala Wanniya married a woman of Bingoda his father-in-law gave him a piece of land in Marniye *pangua*

621 To illustrate and prove these propositions we must examine
771 in detail the beliefs of some of the communities in which each stage is respectively dominant. The Veddas met at Godatalawa and Sitala Wanniya form the best example of the first stage of belief. In comparing their beliefs it must, however, be remembered that the Godatalawa family have drifted away from their hunting grounds and are in dire want, and that their oldest man and leader (now quite infirm though still mentally vigorous) was never a shaman and consequently could give only the lay opinion of his group on religious matters. It must then not be assumed that no spirits beyond the *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Bilindi Yaka were known to the shaman of the Galmeda community, although the fact that the laymen only knew of these spirits shows how vastly more important they were than any other.

The Sitala Wanniya people, on the other hand, were living in a condition which must have been general from ancient times up to about 70 years ago. Four of the five families had never made even rough chena or built bark houses, but lived on game, honey and yams and wandered about from rock-shelter to rock-shelter within their territory.

776 At Godatalawa Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were both
782 known though they were not recognised as brothers, and Kande Yaka was said to be greater than all other *yaku*. They are the two principal *yaku* invoked in order to obtain game, but with them there are invoked three other *yaku*, who, it was stated, are not the spirits of the dead but have existed as *yaku* from the beginning. These were, however, of little importance, and our informant, an old man the senior of the group but not a shaman, did not remember their names. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka would be invoked in order to obtain game at the *hirikoraha* ceremony, or simply when dancing round an arrow
[224] struck in the ground. These dances were not in gratitude for game already killed, but when the hunting had been successful, pieces of flesh from the neck and chest of the kill were cooked on the ashes and Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked to come to this offering which a few minutes later would be consumed by the Veddas. If part of the meat were not thus

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 At Sitala Wanniya the principal *yaku* are Kande Yaka,
773 Bilindi Yaka, Bambura Yaka and the *Nae Yaku*. According to these people Kande Wanniya killed his younger brother Bilindi when the latter was only an infant. The story is that their parents were out hunting when Bilindi, feeling hungry, began to cry and would not desist in spite of the endearments lavished upon him by Kande. At last Kande threw the child on the ground in despair and so killed him.

776 It appeared that as a hunting hero Bambura Yaka is on the whole as important as Kande Yaka, though he is certainly not looked upon as so benevolent nor so loved as the latter, who helps men to kill deer and never sends sickness. Bambura Yaka is a somewhat grim spirit who although he gives yams and helps men to kill pig, also sends sickness and must be invoked to remove it, and he is also invoked when dogs are lost or taken by leopards. Because of his giving yams he is sometimes known as Ale (yam) Yaka, and yams are offered to him together with other vegetable food when this can be obtained.

● 224 The *kirikoraha* ceremony is performed to obtain game, in
776 gratitude for which the head and a portion of the flesh from
782 the breast of every deer killed is cooked as an offering to Kande Yaka and is afterwards eaten by the community. If this were not done Kande Yaka would be angry and little game would be killed.

The *kirikoraha* seen at Sitala Wanniya is described on pp. 223 to 226, and the ceremony at which Bambura Yaka is invoked on pp. 237 to 245.

775 The spirits of the dead become the *Nae Yaku* and with
782 Kande Yaka are invoked for success in hunting; a description
769 of this ceremony will be found on pp. 230 to 233. A few days after a death the dead man is invoked for assistance in hunting, being addressed as *mal paewae wanna*, and when the relatives or the group leave the cave to look for game they repeat the invocation as they move along. After this, if they are successful, they know that the spirit of the dead man has become powerful as a *Nae Yaku* and invoke him at the *kirikoraha* among the *Nae Yaku* called upon. The *Nae Yaku* must obtain permission

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered.

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding.

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *aude* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo.

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the Sinhalese. I do not understand *taekae*, there may have been some mistake in writing down the charm." 789 539

Charms to Obtain Food.

Neither amulets nor verbal formulae are used to insure straight shooting or the killing of deer or sambar, the two animals providing the greater part of the flesh consumed by the Veddas; nor are there amulets or charms to obtain success in pig hunting. Doubtless this is because the *yaku* when properly invoked give success in these matters. There are, however, no *yaku* whose special business it is to give success in the monkey drives which are, or were until recently, practised, and we found that certain formulae were sung by the members of the driving party, and in some case muttered by the men who waited in ambush for the monkeys to be driven to them. And we were told that the singing or reciting of these formulae was necessary to the success of the drive. 789 224

Mr Parker uses the diminutive "doggie" in the translations of the two following charms collected at Bandaraduwa in order to retain the sense of the originals, which clearly indicates that the reciter is speaking coaxingly to the monkeys. The words of the charm are literally "dog" and "bitch," the use of which in the translation would give a wrong impression. In one charm the hunters call the monkeys to them assuring them that they are quite safe, for certainly they cannot shoot them. 789 224 539

Charm sung while driving Wandura monkeys (Bandaraduwa).

Ammā maya mā kolandāni
Kolandan kandē piṭa yanni
Ekī kiyalā innē kāṭā,
Ēkit awalā yanḍama yanni.
"Tack, tack," kiyalā wāren ballā.
"Kik, kik," kiyalā wāren baellī.
Nāwini nāgax kandē piṭā,
Ēkiṭa dunnak widala kādeyi
Ēkī yanḍama yanḍama yanni.
Keliyen keliyaṭa wāren ballā,
Keli madalāgena dewagena wāru.

Mother mine, the leaf-clad chief,
Pops behind a leafy trunk;

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
224
539

Tells another who is there;
She, excited, runs away.
"Taek, taek," crying, doggie come;
"Kik, kik," crying, doggie come.
In the Na-tree forest hid,
Safe behind a banyan trunk,
With a bow she can't be shot,
Setting off to go, to go.
Playing, playing, doggie come.
Stop your games and running come.

Charm sung while driving Rilawa monkeys (Bandaraduwa).

Ammā māyē nā rāsāni
Rāsan handē piṭa yanni
"Rō, Rō" kiyala wāren halla.
Burutak handē piṭa yanna.
Keliyen koliyaṭa duwaguna wāru,
Keli maḍalāgena duwaguna wāru.

Mother mine, the lovely chief,
Pops behind a cotton trunk,
"Ro, Ro" crying, doggie come.
Behind a satin stem she goes.
Playing, playing, running come;
Stop your games and running come.

The Sinhalese heading of this charm, collected at Henebedda (where it was dictated by Poromala of Bingoda) runs *Wanduraṇ nawa tanaka wiya*, the translation of which is "said at a place where *wandura* stay."

Ātu surā damanni
Ō man handīṭa pāninni.
"Ah, Oh," kiyā wārī nam
Kola surā damanni,
Mī man handī naṭanni.
Bala siṭā aeyi dennā?

The branches they scratch off and throw down,
They spring on to that trunk (?).
Come, indeed, saying "Ah, Oh."
They scratch off and throw down the leaves.
They dance on this trunk (?).
Why did they stop and look, both of them?

789

We could find no trace of any ceremony having for its object the control of the supply of game and honey or the increase of the number of yams and edible berries. It is assumed that

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

THE AVANA CEREMONY.

796 The *avana* ceremony which we saw at Henebedda may be described here. Mr Bibile told us that he had heard of it having been performed in his father's time by Sinhalese in the neighbourhood of Bibile, and the former Korala of Bakiella in the Eastern Province, a man particularly versed in magic and spiritual matters, knew all about this custom, while on the other hand many Veddas did not know of it. Our impression is that we are here dealing with an original Vedda custom, consisting of an offering of part of the game killed, which has been modified by the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedda country, and again adopted from them in its modified form by the Veddas.

The following account of the *avana* custom records what we 796 actually saw done on the night of February 7th, at Henebedda ● 224 on the occasion of the death of a fine buck. The stag, which 782 had been shot a short distance from Bendiyagalge caves, was carried to a convenient slab of rock between our camp and the caves and there cut up, an arrow being most skilfully used to skin and disjoint the animal; the throat was opened low down in the front of the neck, one or more big veins being severed, and three double handfuls of blood were smeared upon a heap of *mora* leaves which had previously been laid on a rock. Then six long narrow pieces of muscle called *anda malu* (eel flesh, because the strips of muscle are long like eels) were cut from the root of the neck as well as two morsels from the tongue, the nostril and the ears. These twelve pieces of meat, constituting 796 the offering called *avana*, were put on the blood-smeared leaves 782 for the Kadawara Yaku, who were said to be the spirits of eleven 773 Veddas who were named and described as follows:

Avana Vedda, the first Vedda who instituted the rite.

Lē Vedda, the first man who smeared blood on the heap of leaves.

Mas Vedda, the first man who laid meat upon the heap of leaves.

Buta Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who sent the animal whose blood and flesh were used at the first *avana* ceremony.

Atu Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who makes noises in the

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

The sky is becoming purple, O thou Friend!
The earth is becoming purple, O thou Friend!
Blows even the wind also, O thou Friend!
Even the small birds are flying also, O thou Friend!

From behind the yellow sun, draw, draw the sun's rays.
What is the (reason of the) delay, Chief Nilā?

Shall I look, shall I look if a small heifer has stopped in the herd? (that is, is in the herd).
Even a small heifer is not in the herd, O thou Friend!
Shall I look if a large heifer has stopped in the herd, O thou Friend?
A large heifer is also not in the herd, O thou Friend!

Should he take the bow, he is able to shoot well, the Panikkiya.
Should he take the cudgel, he is good at stopping (the buffaloes), the Panikkiya.
Should he take the noose, he is able to tie well, the Panikkiya.
Today he will come here, the speckled Panikkiya.

Invocations to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka.

With a single exception (No. XXIII) all these invocations are recited in order to procure game. No. XV was sung whilst dancing round an arrow struck in the ground as is described in Chapter IX. [224]

The remainder (with the exception of No. XXIII already noted) are sung at the *kirikoraha* ceremony. Although the invocations used at the *kirikoraha* ceremony present almost every stage of development, and some invocations such as Nos. XVIII and XXII are obviously composed of fragments belonging to different strata of belief, in every case the *yaku* called upon are the spirits of Kande Wanniya and his brother Bilindi.

No. XXIII is especially interesting, as it shows that such powerful foreign spirits as Riri Yaka and Indigollae Yaka when adopted into the Vedda system assumed Vedda characteristics, and so became subject to Kande Yaka.

Bandaraduwa.

XV. *Kandi sipa Kandahapā nā hola andan*
Bē hola andan-itala tanā
Sonda sonda gal gawarungi piyen piyana
Ōṇ yanni maya kandi mul pola Wanniya.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411 648 It appears that painted and lacquered arrows were sometimes presented to the Veddas by the Sinhalese kings as signs of gratitude or favour, just as ceremonial forms of other objects were presented to particular Sinhalese[1]. Dr Willey told me of a lacquered bow and arrow which he heard of among a community of sophisticated Veddas, and which he was told ultimately found their way to the Kandy Museum. Among the peasant Sinhalese of Nilgala we heard of a lacquered arrow—said to have been lost recently—which, according to tradition, had been presented many generations ago to the Vedda ancestors of its last owner by one of the kings of Ceylon. With regard to the specimen in the Kandy Museum, the arrow is feathered in the usual Vedda style, the condition of the lacquer on it shows that it is of considerable age. The iron which is said to belong to it is loose, and it is entirely unlike any arrow head we have seen. Instead of having a tang it has a socket into which the end of the shaft must have fitted, and there is a shoulder or "stop" upon the iron. The bow shown us as having been acquired with the arrow was in much better condition and had a small band of silver or some metal resembling silver round it. According to the account given at the museum both specimens were procured from a priest who gave a history of the specimens which does not connect them with any Veddas[2].

224 177 Traps and snares are unknown among the least sophisticated Veddas, but at Danigala we saw a small deadfall trap avowedly introduced.

HONEY.

222 The importance of honey in the Vedda diet has been mentioned in Chapter IV as well as the large part it plays in barter. The honey of the *bambara* (*Apis indica*) is taken in June and July, though at other times of the year small combs are taken

[1] There is in the Colombo Museum a beautifully lacquered weaver's shuttle, presented to certain cloth makers by one of the Sinhalese kings.

[2] It was stated that the bow and arrow had been found in the verandah of a disused house with some broken articles said to have been thrown there, having been taken from the *walauwa* (house) of Molligoda Adigar. The house was in the Kegalle district. The villagers gave the bow and arrow to a priest who brought them to the museum.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

caloa and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.* 131 [177] [184]

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt. [137] [136]

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in *their* barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other. 184 361 342 224

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡ 161

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter 177

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenna. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited. [177]

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. [361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their [241] chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; [224] and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gâté, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticalao boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

439 now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough with the Singhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests.

224 411 They have the reputation of being expert with bow and arrow, and as it is only the larger game, such as elk, deer, etc., which they pursue, it is very probable that with their remarkable power of creeping stealthily through the jungle, they may be able to come upon their prey unawares and do execution. But they are miserable shots at a mark. I never saw more than two 411 decent hits made at several small "archery meetings," which I have, from time to time, got up for my own amusement and their pecuniary advantage. And with regard to the latter, I must con- [177] fess that I never saw that contempt for money which Tennent supposes is still existing.*

The practice of drawing the bow with the feet to which Tennent also alludes as still in use, has so long ceased, that in all my inquiries—and I was very particular on this point—I could not find a single Veddah who ever witnessed it, but it is undoubted that such a mode of archery once existed, as is traditional among them.†

224 They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no 231 distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued. Knox tells us, that dogs were given "for portions with their daughters in marriage;"‡ and Percival relates, that "before the last war broke out between us and Holland, a Dutch officer sold a couple of Weddah dogs at Surat, for 400 rix dollars, about £30."§

---

them not, they will do him a mischief one time or another by shooting in the night. If the smith make the arrows, he leaves them in the same place where the Veddahs hung the flesh." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 62. *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, and note; also vol. i, part. v, chap. ii, p. 568, 2nd edition.

* "Money to them is worthless." *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, 2nd edit. I had been told that they would refuse silver, not knowing what it was, and would accept copper. But I never had a rupee refused when I tendered it; and the word "rupee" is by no means unintelligible to them. A good many years ago, I can well believe money was worthless to them, but that was long before Tennent's time.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part iv, chap. iii, p. 439. Some wild Veddahs of the Batticaloa district shewed Mr. Birch, when making some inquiries among them at my request, how the bow was drawn with the foot, but said it was never so drawn now.

‡ Knox, part iii, chap. i. § Percival, chap. xiii.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 bears, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.*

They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of those beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries, I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross-examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh.

They do not scruple to eat animals which have died a natural death, and have (in common with the Kandyans) a decided preference for their game "high"—if so mild a term can describe the exceedingly advanced condition, in which venison should be to suit the palate of a Veddah (or Kandyan) epicure.

226 They are fond of fish, which they catch by mixing with the water the juice of particular fruits and barks of trees, which stupify them. A similar practice is common among the Singhalese.

224 231 Their arrows procure for them the flesh of the animals they eat, and I can find no trace of pit-falls or traps being in use among them. In Bintenne, some of them employ the hunting buffalo to enable them to approach their game unseen.† Their dogs track out the wounded animals, and are also trained to catch the iguano.

223 Tennent is wrong in saying that they procure birds with the bow. They are not good enough shots for that. They catch them with bird-lime, made from the juice of the bo-tree *(ficus* [824] *religiosa)*—and also watch them to their nests, and take them at night. Their skill as marksmen is most indifferent, and they never exercise it at small objects.

224 The most choice food, in their estimation, is, of land animals, the flesh of the pengolin, or of the iguano; and, of fish, the eel. [262] Though they eat no part of the elephant, yet he is the object of their pursuit, both for their own protection and on account of [439] the ivory, so valuable to them as an article of barter. They will steal up to an elephant, and, as he is in the act of stepping for-

---

* It is curious that, while in the Batticaloa district Veddahs are said to eat bats, those of the Badulla district—certainly of Nilgala—reject them.

† The use of the hunting buffalo is common all over the island. The manner in which the animal is trained is curious. When its horns are young and tender, a string is tied tightly round the base of one of them. The pain thus produced is so acute, that the poor animal is easily guided by the cord, and answers to the slightest touch. The ligature is gradually relaxed; and, when the buffalo is full grown, the recollection of the pain it occasioned is so vivid that he will answer readily to a thin string tied loosely to his horn. With an animal so trained, the hunter can easily approach the deer unseen at night. The buffalo feeds; the hunter crouches under his lee; a touch will guide him, and the hunter advances under cover.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

ward, shoot their long-bladed arrows in the soft fleshy part under the forearm, and so disable him.* 224

They have a great dread of meeting elephants at night, and have charms to protect them from them—not only to turn them from their path, but to render innoxious the bear, the leopard, and the wild boar. And I must here record, that they are the only charms I have entire faith in. 825 789

I never shall forget the first time one of these Veddah charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation. The moon had not quite risen, and the stems of the trees and the gigantic pendent creepers were flickering in the uncertain light cast by the torches, which my Veddah guides, gliding through the forest, bore before me. I was chatting to an intelligent Veddah by my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms, having been till then, like Tennent, ignorant of the fact.† I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant "behegang! wirooowee! wiroowah!" which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success.‡

Honey, and the grub in the comb, before it becomes the bee, are both staple food with the Veddahs, and their acuteness in discovering hives, when bee-hunting, is very remarkable. I have seen a Veddah stealing through the forest, suddenly stop—listen for an instant with uplifted hand—dart off into the jungle and return in an incredibly short space of time with a fresh honey-comb; while I have been in vain endeavouring 222 [262]

* This fact I established beyond a doubt. I questioned many Veddahs on that practice, which Knox treats as a fable, p. 63, viz., striking an axe into the sole of an elephant's foot; and I was assured by several that, though they never practise it themselves, the Veddahs of Batticaloa do, and that they even hamstring elephants. To those who know the pluck and dexterity of the professed elephant catchers in the north of the island, there is nothing extraordinary or incredible in a Veddah approaching sufficiently close to an elephant to wound his foot or to hamstring him. But I have inquired, and cannot satisfactorily establish the truth of the statement; and I confess that I am inclined to doubt their physical power to do either.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 448, 2nd edit.

‡ Tennent, vol. i, part ii, chap. i, p. 139, gives a lamentable account of the inefficacy of a charm for bears. I dare say the unhappy moorman there mentioned would have been more fortunate had he known the Veddah charm. The Singhalese have charms for the same purpose; but they differ from those of the Veddahs. [171]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
776
[539]

"My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?" *

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions when the intervention of the guardian spirits is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.†

[224] Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. "Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come, wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!" And they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.‡

776 782 They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. "Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!" was the only reply I received to repeated questions.§ They have

* I find in my notes another version of this invocation, which slightly alters the first words. It runs thus: "Ma mini, ma mini!—my gem, my gem;" but "miya," which signifies "dead," is the most common. [The word in the invocation translated "God" is evidently a corruption of the Sanskrit deva, a god or divinity. EDIT.]

† And they are invoked without any ceremony at all—by a mere mental ejaculation. I once saw a Veddah make a bad shot, and he threw down his bow with a gesture of impatience, saying—"That was because I did not call on my Billindoo Yakkoon." And before making his next shot, he muttered an invocation.

‡ A superstition similar somewhat to this is prevalent among the neighbouring Singhalese. If a man die who has lived a good life, his relatives give alms to the poor, calling on the dead by name to look down on them, and enable them to follow his good example. If he has lived an evil life, alms are also given; but these are propitiatory offerings for his sins, and to avert his evil influence from his survivors. For, in this case, he has become an evil spirit, apt to injure his own family and their cattle unless civilly treated. The degree of malignity depends on the degree of evil in the life led by deceased. If he dies with a hankering after worldly things, he haunts the house in which he lived in a variety of forms—perhaps most commonly that of a toad or a cobra, probably because these frequent houses. It is also, in some parts, a common belief that if a man die, and shortly after one of the family fall sick, and is not cured by the usual medicines and ceremonies, the sickness is attributed to the spirit of the dead, who must be propitiated by a mess of rice, left in the house for him. This, generally, is supposed to effect a cure.

§ It is curious that in one of their invocations, "mà Deyà", my God! [782] occurs, see before; and that of thunder they say, "a spirit, or a god has cried out".

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177 primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553 name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
●224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
593 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411] carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412 were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of [342] these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukkan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 224 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

[137] *A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

†*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schlrichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

were loath to purchase their intimacy with gifts. Time enough for that, when we had won them over by less humiliating means. Besides, these Veddas were evidently spoilt, and we wished to show them they were not the important personages they imagined themselves to be. 123

"We are going then," said Handuna. It was now our turn for dejection. Was it for such an ungracious issue we had travelled so far?

I had a last card, having brought some neosalvarsan, a sovereign remedy for yaws so rife among these people. The offer was received with indifference. There was only one case among them, they said, and the patient was too ill to come. This being just what we wanted, I offered to visit them the next morning. [164]

"You cannot come where we live unless we allow you," said the irrepressible Kaira. "And we won't show you our caves or anything, unless you give us presents."

Sick with exasperation and disgust at the behaviour of these impossible children, I told them they could take our offer or leave it as they chose, and turned to other work. The result was a grudging acquiescence; and, leaving a guide behind, they went away.

A word of explanation regarding the sophistication of a people so remote. They were in fact about the purest-blooded Veddas extant; indeed, it was to this very circumstance they owed their disappointing behaviour; for it had attracted Seligamann among them. What that implied may well be imagined. To obtain the valuable sociological information with which his book abounds, he had gained the confidence of these folk with scrupulous consideration and kindness, showering on them gifts of all kinds. Moreover, the patient investigation of the most intimate details of their lives by such a man, heightened their self-esteem. Of this we had an amusing illustration. I was obliged to admonish a group of Sinhalese that embarrassed us with their attentions. A Vedda sidled up and, tapping me familiarly on the shoulder, whispered, "Those people don't like us, they are jealous of us. We and you gentlemen are one; they are different!" 156 114 [126]

To dismiss these Veddas as spoilt uninteresting folk would imply failure to discern their innate simplicity, beneath the veneer of pose and importunity, for which contact with an indulgent stranger had been responsible. In their homes they still are as artless as their forbears were before ever white man set foot on these shores.

We were out hunting early that afternoon, when a sudden snapping sound arrested our attention. The Vedda we were with listened a few seconds. "Catching *talagoyas*," (monitor-lizards), he said laconically. The excited barking of a dog and rebuking human voices soon confirmed his conjecture. Going up, we found two men, one of whom carried a large quivering monitor just killed; while two dogs, still spirited with the chase, danced round their victim and growled and snapped at us. One of the men now set about to disjoint the quarry's tail at the middle, leaving it connected only by a tag of sinew; then, slitting the submandibular web, he rove the tail through till it locked at the division, making the reptile eat its own tail as it were, and carried it neatly in a loop. The monitor is best hunted at high noon; after four in the afternoon it takes to trees and holes. 224 231

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854

Handuna's household. (Page 18)

142
291
224
411
482

Hennebedde Veddas (Page 16)

The iguana hunter. (Page 17)

[facing p. 17]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. *It is windowless and dark, except* for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the goa-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Maraweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

361 to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the [103] sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though [262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that [28] ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and [534] manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothuru-pathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Habbaha, a weighted frame-work for trapping animals. (Page 48)

The dancers of Bowala. (Page 48)

324
292
534
535

Bag made of threshed *rili* bark and monkey skin pouch. (Page 48)

281
287
415

[Facing p. 48]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of 342 a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, 114 to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aratchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy 224 group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and 482 *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the 142 picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as 609 our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

680 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VI

VEDDAS OF BINGODA

I. BINGODA HOMES

Innumerable years had flown,
Since first the chisel in her hand
Necessity, the sculptor, took,
And in her spacious meaning planned
These forms, and that eternal look.

L. BINYON

197 CONCEDE me three points and I shall attempt to show that there exist
[101] in Ceylon to-day Veddas worthy of the name. Language, apparel and weapons are the concessions I ask.

Let us begin by confessing, that the Veddas we shall tell of have no pure language of their own, but merely a patois, in which Sinhalese words predominate and Vedda words are few ; their clothing is not the traditional
291 leaf or threshed *riti* bark, but fragments of foul rag affording, if anything, less cover ; the weapons they favour are guns (of a type almost as
411 dangerous to user as to quarry) and not bows and arrows which they employ only in sore necessity.

Vital issues, you will say, which should deprive this people of their name. But language, dress and arms may change without materially altering, for a time at least, ancient customs and primeval instincts.

101 The word Vedda originally meant hunter ; and a people supreme in jungle-craft, always capable of gleaning from the unfriendly forests a sufficiency for their needs and utterly incompetent to husband even the primitive agriculture of the *chena*, has surely a claim to the name.

224 It must not be supposed that every Vedda possesses a gun ; far from it ;
[411] occasionally there may be a single weapon to a whole clan. The usual thing is for the Sinhalese or Moors to lend their guns to these superb
[427] trackers, who never waste a shot and seldom return without their quarry, a large share of which goes by agreement to the owner of the gun.

114 Of my first accidental meeting with these Veddas amid the hills of Galmede, I have already told. Barely four months had elapsed before I found myself renewing their acquaintance ; this time with set purpose.

Arriving at the forest village of Mullegama, sacred to Buddhists, and abounding in lime groves and Moors, I was fortunate enough to run up against my friend Kaurala of Kottelinde, who, so difficult of acquisition before, now became our willing guide.

131 Bingoda, the home of our Veddas, is some three miles from Mullegama, and lies on the Dhungolla Oya, a tributary of the Magalavatan Aar which connects Bingoda with Galmede ten miles away—all in the circuit of

535 to all the spirits combined. Suddenly he stooped, twirled the chatty
796 on the ground, and shouting "hooy", fell swooning into the arms of one who had for some time been waiting to catch him. The dance was over. He was artist enough to impart something of his wild fervour to his spectators.

● 224 The next day at the appointed hour we set out, the Veddas buoyed up with the certainty of success. We had not gone far when Kaurala, who was leading, suddenly levelled his gun (or rather mine) and fired. A fine buck bounded away.

"Cha", he said, examining the spot where the animal had stood; "now why did that animal not fall? So close too. That was the *kirikoraha* deer right enough; did you not see the horns?" When he discovered that he had fired the barrel containing small shot and not the bullet, he fell to cursing my gun.

782 Should an animal be killed after a *kirikoraha* ceremony an offering of
224 boiled rice, with flesh from the head and chest, is made to the propitious spirits. Of this offering the hunters may themselves partake with a view to continuance of success.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

In their inhospitable forests, the most wild and arid in the Island, where food is scarce and only attained with great hardship, the Vedda is king. His lifelong apprenticeship to the harsh conditions fits him superbly to the mercile s task. He knows season and place and is sensitive to the slightest clue. How ill-fitted for this life are we of the towns who would starve by a tree with a honey-comb or with a succulent yam under foot. They make us feel like children, in that environment, these admirable Crichtons of the jungle, and our urban refinements as dross compared with their simple skill and hardihood. 311

It is truly a delight to travel with the Vedda and watch his ways. Moving silently, speaking no word except to "hum" an animal call to attract each other's attention, they allow nothing to escape them, and read the ground like a book, indicating spoor where you see nothing. Becoming sceptical of such claims I thought I would test the skill of Suthu Banda, also known as Porumola. Telling him to turn his face away, I tip-toed lightly on the bed of leaf that carpeted our path, and asked him to indicate my foot-prints. 151 224

"Here they are, and here," he said without a moment's hesitation. "Why, it's easy; don't you see the leaves turned?" (I certainly did not, demonstrate as hard as he might). "What is the difficulty for us to see a human foot-print here," he continued, "who have to follow a mouse-deer's trail on ground that shows less than this."

We had halted by a tree of great height and enormous girth, branchless for quite forty feet from the ground—as awkward a proposition for a climber as one could wish. I asked Suthu Banda whether he could climb it. "Why not," he said; and, without so much as putting down the axe hitched to his shoulder, he mounted the rock beside which the tree stood, and looked up a second or two. Then, shinning up an adjacent sapling that shot high, swung on to the slender extremity of the big tree's lowermost branch that sagged under his weight, and moved along with a carelessness painful to watch. He was soon among boughs no bigger than a man's wrist, and from the dizzy height wished to know whether we wanted him to go higher! None of your artificial aids, such as loops, for the Vedda; he is a veritable quadrumana, with feet as prehensile as hands. 481

They have a sure method of killing sambur. In the rainy months, and also, more rarely, in the drought, these animals climb to the tops of solitary hills. The Vedda, always watchful for the opportunity, is quick to detect this by the spoor. Cautiously attaining the summit, one or two of them guard with guns the only path by which the sambur must 224

Yams, chillies and melons survive a few months longer. After one to one and a half years the *chena* is abandoned as worthless, and a fresh acreage leased; for *kurrukkan* especially, is reputed to take such heavy toll of the soil, that this must be allowed to lie fallow for some ten or twelve years before being fit for recultivation! A terrible consumption of forest land results, unless controlled; harmless enough where a few families exist in vast forests; but sadly devastating in places at all populous. [241]

Irrigation, as these people know it, is solely what heaven bestows. Water may lie to hand but is not seriously utilized. A drought brings ruin, and scatters the folk far in quest of food. It is time a more economic system of agriculture was introduced to the Vanni, and the people taught, by the institution of model *chenas*, at least the value of forest leaf mould as a manure, and the advantages of some simple system of irrigation from available streams or wells, such as the Tamils of Jaffna and the Moors of the Eastern Province exploit so well.

5: Spittel D-5 ((ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
267 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike
224 its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

257 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five
[482] minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with
824 poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251 little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle
252] like meat.

Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is
222 plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galseembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *katuala*, *kirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261 various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galseembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which
752 they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *W'alapotho*, *anguluo*, *lulo*, *katukanao*, *kanupatho*, *antho* (eels), *maguro*, *hungo*, *keheliyo*, *pethy*, *walihondo*, *sethalu*, *badapathalo*, *walihairiyo*, *piniweliyo*, *kovalayo*, *galpanduruo*.

† *Kukurumang-gedde*, *kalu-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
224

An ape for dinner. (Page 82)

342

Alu-galge, a Vedda cave. (Page 84)

[Facing p. 86]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously. 131

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. 101 [301] [157]

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were apparently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very jealous of their women. [361] [626] 152]

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine. 576 [411]

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukkan* and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community. 342 [241]

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit! 101 361

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting. 161 177

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from 224

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224 a bear-bite, came one afternoon with two dogs and suggested a monitor hunt.

After having walked aimlessly through the jungle for the better part of an hour, we got impatient, and asked the Veddas what manner of hunt was this, and of what breed were their useless mongrels? They replied, and with justice, that the jungle was none of their choosing, and that there were no *goas* about for their dogs to scent them, as any one could see from the lack of traces. Once within the jungle, we had expected the dogs to shake off their lethargy and nose about at every scent. Not so these beasts, they hung on the heels of their masters, the least enthusiastic of the company. However, our remarks put the men on their mettle and, walking ahead, they tried to set their dogs to; one of them actually whistling and snapping his fingers after the manner of us in towns!

We had given up all hope of even seeing a monitor when suddenly there was a rustle in front of us, and a Vedda and his dog shot forward. We followed to find the Vedda gazing helplessly at a hole high up in the trunk of a tall tree, and his cur, its enthusiasm already wilted, lying contentedly with closed eyes, as if nothing was further from his thoughts than lizards in general and this one in particular.

224 313 The tree up which the reptile had sought refuge was quite four feet in diameter. The Vedda was not long in doubt as to how he should act. Walking round the tree he tapped it with the head of his axe, and, finding it reasonably hollow, what should he do but proceed to fell it with that toy axe of his the cutting edge of which was no more than one and a half inches! So astonished were we at this that we settled down to a smoke, and watched.

After almost two hours of arduous toil, the great tree groaned and bore slowly down through thwarting lianas and the boughs of its huddled neighbours. It hesitated in its fall and then, despite ominous cracklings, remained poised aslant. A half hour more, and a supporting tree of no small girth was sacrificed with many an obscene curse; then another, and another tree; and finally the giant fell.

But what of the monitor? There was not the least sign of him. The dogs, roused to expectation by the falling tree, had already resumed their repose. The Veddas, to their chagrin, discovered by tapping the trunk that its whole length was hollow. They hewed an opening into it some feet away from the entrance hole; and then with long sticks vainly tried to poke the reptile out. Two more windows were made, and much more progging done before, with the onset of dark, the project was abandoned as hopeless. "Why not have smoked the animal out?" you will ask; we did suggest it, only to learn that, while it would answer for the pangolin, it was useless for the monitor which tenacious creature will rather die suffocated in its lair than emerge to fall a victim to axe or canine jaw. That little beast certainly had the laugh of us!

This incident demonstrates well how wasteful of forest vegetation Veddas are. Often one sees great trees—even satin or ebony—felled across the path, only to find on inspecting them that they were sacrificed for a parrot's nest or a honey-comb! Be the crime what it may in the eyes of the law, it required a demonstration such as this to inspire us with respect for the toy-like axe the Vedda carries on his shoulder, and the stamina of his stringy arm.

[pp. 97-110 not processed]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps 226 were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 278 water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *nahapata*, *puselpatu* (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

There are a few Verdas at Panichchenkeni, while near Vakarai still further to the north there is a Verda settlement of considerable size. Some eight miles beyond this are two Verda settlements Parchenai and Nargantonai situated close together. We heard of other smaller settlements of Coast Veddas in the neighbourhood of Batticaloa, but these were not visited as time was short and it appeared that those Verdas we did not see differed in no respect from those we met. We were told that formerly there were Coast Veddas south of Batticaloa and we later discovered that there were, and still are, certain shrines or temples within a few miles of the coast (e.g. at Mandur), which were generally recognised as Vedda shrines at which Veddas especially worshipped. This matter has been alluded to in Chapter VIII, and here it is only necessary to point out that the religion of the Coast Veddas is strongly tinged with Tamil customs and beliefs; indeed, many Verdas had Hindu sect marks upon their foreheads.

Some, but not all, of the Coast Veddas know the names of the *waruge* to which they belong, and a few also know the names of some of the more important *waruge* of the Veddas inland. Uru *waruge* appears to be the *waruge* to which most of the Coast Veddas who remembered their ancestral *waruge* belonged, but a few men stated that they belonged to Ogatam, Kavatam, Umata or Umatam, Aembalaneduwe and Aembale *waruge*; the last named and the one before it probably being the same as the Aembela *waruge* found inland. Some of the Coast Veddas whom we questioned said they had heard of, and still knew of certain of the old Vedda *waruge*, and such men were generally able to mention Morane *waruge* while fewer also knew of Unapane *waruge*.

The Coast Veddas have become expert fishermen and make and use various forms of nets including a cast net. They also spear and shoot fish, using a bifid iron spear-head which they have adopted from the Tamils. For shooting fish they use the usual Vedda bow, but the arrow has become a harpoon with a shaft as long as the bow into which the iron with its running line fits loosely. One of the nets used by the Coast Veddas is seen drying behind the house in the background of Plate LXIX,

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 bears, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.*

They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of those beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries, I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross-examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh.

They do not scruple to eat animals which have died a natural death, and have (in common with the Kandyans) a decided preference for their game "high"—if so mild a term can describe the exceedingly advanced condition, in which venison should be to suit the palate of a Veddah (or Kandyan) epicure.

226 They are fond of fish, which they catch by mixing with the water the juice of particular fruits and barks of trees, which stupify them. A similar practice is common among the Singhalese.

Their arrows procure for them the flesh of the animals they eat,
224 and I can find no trace of pit-falls or traps being in use among
231 them. In Bintenne, some of them employ the hunting buffalo to enable them to approach their game unseen.† Their dogs track out the wounded animals, and are also trained to catch the iguano,

Tennent is wrong in saying that they procure birds with the
223 bow. They are not good enough shots for that. They catch them with bird-lime, made from the juice of the bo-tree *(ficus*
[824] *religiosa)*—and also watch them to their nests, and take them at night. Their skill as marksmen is most indifferent, and they never exercise it at small objects.

The most choice food, in their estimation, is, of land animals,
224 the flesh of the pengolin, or of the iguano; and, of fish, the eel.
[262] Though they eat no part of the elephant, yet he is the object of their pursuit, both for their own protection and on account of
[439] the ivory, so valuable to them as an article of barter. They will steal up to an elephant, and, as he is in the act of stepping for-

---

* It is curious that, while in the Batticaloa district Veddahs are said to eat bats, those of the Badulla district—certainly of Nilgala—reject them.

† The use of the hunting buffalo is common all over the island. The manner in which the animal is trained is curious. When its horns are young and tender, a string is tied tightly round the base of one of them. The pain thus produced is so acute, that the poor animal is easily guided by the cord, and answers to the slightest touch. The ligature is gradually relaxed; and, when the buffalo is full grown, the recollection of the pain it occasioned is so vivid that he will answer readily to a thin string tied loosely to his horn. With an animal so trained, the hunter can easily approach the deer unseen at night. The buffalo feeds; the hunter crouches under his lee; a touch will guide him, and the hunter advances under cover.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 According to my authority the Veddas indulged in no games, unless, indeed, the custom of tossing dry leaves in the air and speculating on their position when they fell back upon the ground could be called a game. This, I am told, was only an occasional recreation, and indulged in by boys alone.

423 614 628 The limits of the hunting ground were jealously guarded by the Veddas, and anything like poaching by the members of one clan in the area recognized as belonging to another was punishable by death. Should a hunter lose his way and fall into the hands of a neighbouring clan, he would be closely watched, remaining for the time being in a sort of captivity. If the man's conduct during that time was such as to disarm suspicion he was permitted to go, and might even be accompanied to the confines of the clan's hunting ground, but he would have to proceed at once without looking back, or his conduct might lead to the belief that he was a spy, with fatal consequences.

●226 The method of fishing was to hem in a piece of water by closely fencing in both ends of the stream. People would then enter the enclosed piece of water, armed with slender sticks, thrashing the water therewith till a fish was actually struck, when it would be captured. I saw this actually done in one pool on the Kumbukkan.

173 My informant told me that the Veddas were at one time harassed by a race of pygmy people, called the Nittawo, who lived in the country known as Lenama, that extended from Bagura in the Panawa Pattu in the east to the confines of the Kattaragama hills on the west.

According to him, these people lived in small troops of from 10 to 40, inhabiting caves, hollow trees, and crevices of precipices. They were about 3 feet or a little more in height, exactly like normal human beings, only in miniature. Their legs were hairy like those of the Wanduroo; they walked erect, and had no tails.

Their arms were short and very powerful, with strong hands, and talon-like finger-nails with which they tore and disembowelled whatever they captured. These generally were small animals, such as hare, mouse-deer, monkeys, iguanas, and tortoises. Their method of attack was by surrounding

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
267 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike
224 its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

257 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his
[482] shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent
824 to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251 little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle
252] like meat.

Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is
222 plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galsembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyanerya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *katuala*, *hirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261 various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galsembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up
752 with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *W'alapotho*, *angulwo*, *lulo*, *katukanao*, *kawupatho*, *anitho* (eels), *maguro*, *hungo*, *kekeliyo*, *pethy*, *walikondo*, *asthalu*, *bodapathalo*, *walikairiyo*, *piniwaliyo*, *kovalayo*, *galpandurwo*.

† *Kukurumang-gedde*, *kala-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

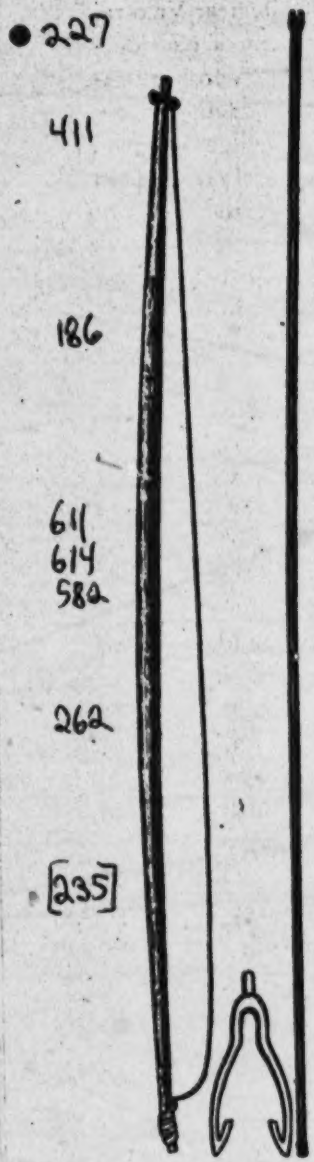
1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

There are a few Verdas at Panichchenkeni, while near Vakarai still further to the north there is a Verda settlement of considerable size. Some eight miles beyond this are two Verda settlements Parchenai and Nargantonai situated close together. We heard of other smaller settlements of Coast Veddas in the neighbourhood of Batticaloa, but these were not visited as time was short and it appeared that those Verdas we did not see differed in no respect from those we met. We were told that formerly there were Coast Veddas south of Batticaloa and we later discovered that there were, and still are, certain shrines or temples within a few miles of the coast (e.g. at Mandur), which were generally recognised as Vedda shrines at which Veddas especially worshipped. This matter has been alluded to in Chapter VIII, and here it is only necessary to point out that the religion of the Coast Veddas is strongly tinged with Tamil customs and beliefs; indeed, many Verdas had Hindu sect marks upon their foreheads.

Some, but not all, of the Coast Veddas know the names of the *waruge* to which they belong, and a few also know the names of some of the more important *waruge* of the Veddas inland. Uru *waruge* appears to be the *waruge* to which most of the Coast Veddas who remembered their ancestral *waruge* belonged, but a few men stated that they belonged to Ogatam, Kavatam, Umata or Umatam, Aembalaneduwe and Aembale *waruge*; the last named and the one before it probably being the same as the Aembela *waruge* found inland. Some of the Coast Veddas whom we questioned said they had heard of, and still knew of certain of the old Vedda *waruge*, and such men were generally able to mention Morane *waruge* while fewer also knew of Unapane *waruge*.

The Coast Veddas have become expert fishermen and make and use various forms of nets including a cast net. They also spear and shoot fish, using a bifid iron spear-head which they have adopted from the Tamils. For shooting fish they use the usual Vedda bow, but the arrow has become a harpoon with a shaft as long as the bow into which the iron with its running line fits loosely. One of the nets used by the Coast Veddas is seen drying behind the house in the background of Plate LXIX,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5



[113] Fig. 13. Verda bow and harpoon × 1/15. Iron harpoon head × 1/3.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *waruge* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *waruge*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *waruge* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 330.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

166 In one instance there had been intermarriage with Sinhalese,
563 and we suspected this in other cases, though the majority appear to be reasonably pure-blooded.

361 These people make chenas[1] on which they live temporarily
231 in bark-covered huts; Plate X, figure 1, represents the chena settlement of the local group of the Namadewa *warugs*, some of the members of which are shown in Plate X, figure 2. They gather honey and hunt, several of them possess guns, and some
[222 of them rear cattle for the Sinhalese villagers. Indeed, for
224] Veddas their lot is singularly happy, since they live in the heart of the park country where game is still abundant. Bailey first induced some Veddas in the Nilgala district to make chenas about the middle of the last century, before which all the Veddas in this district were probably living their natural hunting, honey-gathering life.

361 It is not often that a community that has taken to the semi-
511 civilised life of chena cultivation is seen, in which its members are so healthy and well fed, for Veddas dislike settling down and do not generally do so until they find they can no longer subsist on the game in the country, when they either drift into Sinhalese settlements, or make extremely rough chenas for themselves, the produce of which is seldom sufficient to feed the community. Besides which, as is the case with the Sinhalese peasants themselves, the crop is often pledged to Moormen pedlars before it is reaped. The poor Veddas then subsist as best they can on yams, honey and berries, and usually fall
[164] a prey to fever. Several Veddas in this wretched condition were seen between Namal Oya and Bandaraduwa, while those at Godatalawa were scarcely better off.

In the Nilgala district the conditions are different. Chena making and cattle rearing had been introduced while game was still abundant, families are still able to leave the chena settlement and hunt and gather honey, living during such times in rock shelters within their own hunting boundary. However, the

[1] Bailey defines a chena as "a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again: it is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.* Vol. II, 1863, p. 282.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

custom of the country and also selling those they have bred themselves. However, all this was unknown to us when we first met the people, nor would it have been possible to guess their prosperous condition from the first sight of their settlement. It was well known throughout the Vedirata that investigations were about to be made among the Veddas, and all the village headmen had been given instructions to render assistance. They therefore told the Veddas to expect us, and would have sent for them to come to the Public Works Department bungalow on our arrival had we not expressly stated that we preferred to visit the people in their homes. A very rough track led to the top of the Danigala Hill, about 1200 feet high, where, on a rounded shoulder of rock, stood the skeleton hut of the Danigala Veddas shown in Plate II. This was built on the pattern of the ordinary village Vedda habitations but entirely lacked the slats of bark which make the sides moderately weather proof. By its side was an even rougher shelter consisting of a large bough with the smaller branches trimmed and overlaid with banana leaves. Kaira the patriarch or "senior" of the group sat outside the hut with three other men; there were also present three women, a boy of about 12, and two younger children, and although both of the latter had many teeth they suckled persistently. This hut and some of its occupants are shown in Plate II, the rough shelter by its side in Plate XI, figure 1.

Although Mr Bibile, whom all these people knew quite well, was with us, they were quite apathetic, their attitude was clearly not the result of shyness, but simply due to the fact that they took no interest in our presence; the women continued to suckle their infants and the men squatted or lay upon the rocks and chewed in gloomy silence, and when addressed they grunted "yes" or "no." One of the infants who smiled and cooed and tried to gain our attention was the only member of the group who seemed to take the least notice of us. Kaira told us that the people we now saw represented all that remained of the Danigala Veddas. We noticed some bananas (which do not grow wild in Ceylon) on the further side of the ridge and we asked to see their plantation. A prompt denial of its existence was the result, though Kaira afterwards told Mr Bibile that he

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

would show him his chena but that he did not wish the white people to know anything about it. Further talk with these people showed that it was impossible to obtain reliable information from them, they had been utterly spoilt as the result of being frequently interviewed by travellers. 609 123

The Veddas have long been regarded as a curiosity in Ceylon and excite almost as much interest as the ruined cities, hence Europeans go to the nearest Rest House on the main road and have the Danigala Veddas brought to them. Naturally the Veddas felt uncomfortable and shy at first, but when they found that they had only to look gruff and grunt replies in order to receive presents they were quite clever enough to keep up the pose. In this they were aided by the always agreeable villagers ever ready to give the white man exactly what he wanted. The white man appeared to be immensely anxious to see a true Vedda, a wild man of the woods, clad only in a scanty loin cloth, carrying his bow and arrows on which he depended for his subsistence, simple and untrained, indeed, little removed from the very animals he hunted. What more easy than to produce him? The Nilgala headman sends word when strangers are expected, then the Veddas repair to their very striking hut on the rock dome and often post a look-out on a big rock about half way up, for on our second visit the leading man of our party who was carrying the camera stated that he saw a Vedda bolting from this rock as we came up. These folk, who when we saw them [291] wore their Vedda loin cloths and were smeared with ashes, are reported to wear ordinary Sinhalese clothes when not in their professional pose, and Mr Biblie, who has himself seen one or more of them in sarongs, points out that the imposture is kept up for two main reasons; firstly, they fear that their cultivation might be stopped (evidently an echo of the chena difficulty of the Eastern Province), or that they might be taxed if they did not appear to be poor fellows living on hardly won jungle produce; secondly, their pose of poverty interests strangers and procures them visitors, whose generosity is the greater the more primitive their mode of life appears to be.

As a matter of fact the Danigala Veddas like those of Henebedda (with whom we became really friendly) keep cattle 231

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

231 for the Sinhalese of Potuliyadde, receiving every fifth calf that is born. The community has, or recently had, ten or more head of cattle of their own and have sold bulls to the brother-in-law of our *tavalam*[1] leader for as much as 30 Rs., indeed, our *tavalam* leader stated that he had himself visited the Danigala chena and had also seen the cattle. On this occasion Kaira and his sons 291 wore a coloured cloth as the Sinhalese do and their women wore a *hambaya* and coloured breast handkerchief. Mr Bibile was 621 able to confirm some of these statements from his own know- 177 ledge and on making investigations among the local villagers 609 discovered that there was a whole community living on the chena settlement, some of whom had married Sinhalese. Indeed it appeared that not only have members of this community learnt to play the part of professional primitive man, but there has even been specialisation, for as far as we could learn, the men we met at the look-out hut are those who always receive visitors or come to Bibile when sent for, while the others whom we did not see do not pose as wild Veddas. Probably the part they now play had only recently crystallised into a professional rôle, but it must be remembered that so long ago as 1863 Bailey discussing these Veddas, or their fathers, says "they were brought in from the forests to be 'looked at'" and he adds, "I never saw that contempt for money which Tennant supposes is still existing[2]."

Kovil Vanamai. In the Eastern Province in the neighbour- 101 hood of Devulani tank the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are found, this term being applied to a number of groups of Veddas living in this neighbourhood. The name Kovil Vanamai means temple [346] precincts and seems to have arisen from there being one or more temples in this part of the country, while some of these shrines are traditionally associated with Veddas, apparently with old settled coast and village Veddas, for we have no reason to think that the ancestors of the folk we saw at Bandaraduwa, or the other wilder Veddas of fifty years ago, were in any way guardians of the temples or dependent on their 511 bounty. Although at the present day the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are represented by scattered groups, for the most part

[1] A *tavalam* is a train of pack bulls.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

months previously to wander into Tamankaduwa where they hoped to get yams and perhaps some game. A number of women left the village immediately after our arrival, explaining that if they did not go and find some yams they and their children would get nothing to eat that night. Some of the men possessed bows and arrows but game was scarce, and their living was obviously precarious, yams, monitor lizards, honey and berries forming their staple diet. Fowls were kept and were taken down to the road (10 miles distant) to sell. Like all Veddas they possessed dogs, invaluable to them in catching monitor lizards when there is no bigger game to hunt, and their care for them was shown by a small shelter which they had built in order to shade a bitch with a litter of puppies.

In physical characters these Veddas[1] somewhat resembled the neighbouring Sinhalese, but were less stoutly built; this appearance may however in part have been due to malnutrition. Their headman is a short, well-nourished, exceedingly active and intelligent individual, whose only Vedda characteristic is his short stature. Plate XIV, figure 2, represents a number of Omuni women.

Unuwatura Bubula. The position of the Unuwatura Bubula Veddas is extremely difficult to understand, they occupy two small groups of huts (one of which is shown in Plate XV, figure 1) a little distance from the huts of some peasant Sinhalese. They formerly lived at Mudugala and have doubtless been in close contact with the Sinhalese for many generations, but whether they are the remains of village Vedda settlements or are settled wild Veddas cannot be stated with certainty, though the latter seems more probable. It must be explained that though this community has mixed much with the Sinhalese and has doubtless been much influenced by them, they have their own shamans and they perform their own rites quite apart from their Sinhalese neighbours. Unfortunately the shaman of these people who knew most about the customs and rites of this community was ill, having overtaxed his strength at the first ceremony performed for us, and was not able to talk much, but he was present at most of our conversations and was thus a check on the younger man, but for the reason indicated many

[1] [i.e., Veddas of Omuni. – Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423 The care with which the seclusion of the rock-shelter is still maintained probably belongs to a different category of ideas, and is an example of the jealousy with which Vedda women are guarded.

423 627 At Sitala Wanniya we heard of the following method of settling disputes concerning boundaries, though Handuna my informant had never known of any example of a difficulty of this kind arising, and had only heard of the method of settling them from his father and father-in-law. When two Veddas, or groups of Veddas, are not satisfied as to the position of a boundary, the disputants each bring their "seisin" stone to the land over which the quarrel has arisen. Here the stones are placed in pots upon supports of the kind used in the Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa (Plate XXXVI, figure 1). When this has been done the disputants invoke certain spiritual agencies, but who these are my informants could not tell me. As a result of this, a wild animal, usually an elephant, would come and destroy the pot set up by the party wrongfully claiming the tract of land.

231 431 Every Vedda has one or two dogs with which he does not readily part, though with characteristic generosity he is ever willing to give away pups to any of his friends or relatives. Vedda dogs are invariably well fed and well treated, and it was clear that the warmest feelings exist between a man and his dogs. As evidence of the importance of dogs in the community we may cite their use as wedding gifts and refer to the process of anointing them with a part of the offering dedicated to the *yaku* described in Chapter VI. Bailey's account of the relation of Vedda dogs to their masters brings out so much of this feeling that it is quoted here at length. "They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued....

231 435 "But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. 'What would you do,' I asked a Veddah once, 'if your bow were stolen?' 'No one could steal it,' he replied, 'the dog would not let him.' 'But if anyone killed your dog?' His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 435

"And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic[1]. He never attempted to deny what he had done. 'It is true,' he said at the coroner's inquest, 'I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted for my support[2].'" 231 674

The following is a list of the names of dogs and bitches obtained from the Henebedda Veddas: 552

Dogs. Kapura, Kadiya (*kadi*, black ant), Muranduwa (obstinate), Hudena (white), Pandina (spotty), Dimbula, Boriya, Taniya, Tambula, Senba, Katakaluwa (black mouth), Bahira, Pulana, Kambiliya, Komiya (a Sinhalese corruption of "come here," the name of a dog belonging to the Korale of Nilgala).

Bitches. Pandi (spotty), Katakalu (black mouth), Handani (white), Dassi (clever), Dimbile, Makedi (like iron), Bosari, Hudu Valli, Mukulu.

The following list represents the usual property of an elderly Vedda, that is, of one of the influential men of the group, and actually records the property of Poromala (Walaha) the "senior" of the Henebedda Veddas; one axe, bow and arrows, three pots, a deerskin, a "flint and steel" and supply of tinder, a gourd for carrying water, a betel pouch containing betel cutters and some form of vessel or small box, perhaps of metal (e.g. an old brass covered cartridge case), for holding lime. Most Veddas also possess a certain amount of cloth besides that actually in use on their person, and Handuna was no exception to this rule. 422

Kaira of Henebedda had only two pots, but otherwise the list of his property is identical with that already given. Handuna

[1] "The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance."

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.*, pp. 286—287.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered.

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding.

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *aude* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo.

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 533 the work with songs, so as to get up a certain degree of excitement, necessary to carry them through the task. A song is chanted, and a little honey sprinkled for the spirits, before the combs are cut off the rock[1]."

222 413 415 Before honey collecting as many pots as possible are made and old pots and gourds are overhauled. The wooden sword which Nevill mentions is probably the *masliya* (fig. 12). This is a stout stick about 2¼ metres long with four prongs at one end, which the Vedda carries hanging by a loop from his forearm and which he uses to detach the comb and convey it into the vessel called a *maludema* in which the honey is collected. This is also carried hanging from the forearm and should be made of deer's hide so that it may not be broken against the rocks as the honey collector swings to and fro. Plate LXV shows a *maludema* collected at Sitala Wanniya. An arrow is also carried and is largely used in detaching the combs from the rock.

222 476 Before taking the honey a bundle of green leaves is set alight and lowered in order to stupefy the bees. The smoker is called *odiya* (Sin. *hula*) and the creeper attached to it *yotwella*[2]. Several men of the community join together to collect rock-honey, the whole spoil being equally divided without any special consideration for the owner of the land, though it seemed that the owner would decide when the honey should be collected. The women accompany their men to crags and gulleys where the *bambara* build their combs. They hold torches and sing while the honey is being collected.

231 Plate LXVI shows a gourd, used as a hive for a colony of the stingless bee, hanging outside one

Fig. 12. *Masliya* × $\frac{1}{12}$.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

[2] For the use of these see Chapter IV where the pantomime of honey getting is described.

Plate LXVI

231

Gourd used as bee hive (Henebedda)

[facing p. 328b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the huts in the Morane chena settlement at Henebedda. It was shown us with pride by Handuna who said he was keeping it for his twelve year old son. He told us that in the old days the hollow branches, the homes of colonies of these bees, were frequently kept in the rock-shelters. 231

The ladder with the help of which *bambara* honey is collected consists of a greatly elongated loop of cane, apparently derived from a species of *Calamus*, across which rungs of creeper are stretched. In Plate LV (p. 290) there can be seen the bottom of the ladder some fifty feet long, used for training the young, hung from the top of the cliff across the face of the rock mass at Sitala Wanniya. In spite of the fact that honey is usually gathered at night the Veddas do not travel or hunt at night and know only two stars by name. One of these is a star or more probably a planet which often appears close to the moon and is called *pantaru* which, we were told, is the name by which the Sinhalese know it. The other named star appears soon after sunset, always in the same place and before the other stars, and is almost certainly Venus; this is called *irabada tarna*, i.e. "side of sun star." Although the Veddas hunt in the dusk of the dawn the idea that anyone would roam about at night seemed absolutely ludicrous to them (Sitala Wanniya), they roared with laughter at it, "why should one go into the jungle? it would be too dark to see to shoot, besides bears are about, absurd idea," they laughed again, in fact it was quite ten minutes before Kaira had forgotten the joke. 222 417 821 [484] 821 522

MASTICATORIES.

All Veddas chew eagerly, but as they can rarely obtain a supply of areca nuts they commonly use instead of these the bark of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) and the *dawata* tree (*Carallia integerrima*). Concerning the other plants that they use as masticatories Nevill says, "They occasionally chew the leaves of several aromatic herbs, particularly *Anisochilus suffruticosus*, a sort of sage that grows on rocks. The areca does not grow wild in the Eastern Province, but Veddas are very fond of the seeds of the lakada bush, *Gardenia carinata*, a 261 276

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

439 now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough with the Singhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests.

224 411 They have the reputation of being expert with bow and arrow, and as it is only the larger game, such as elk, deer, etc., which they pursue, it is very probable that with their remarkable power of creeping stealthily through the jungle, they may be able to come upon their prey unawares and do execution. But they are miserable shots at a mark. I never saw more than two 411 decent hits made at several small "archery meetings," which I have, from time to time, got up for my own amusement and their pecuniary advantage. And with regard to the latter, I must con- [177] fess that I never saw that contempt for money which Tennent supposes is still existing.*

The practice of drawing the bow with the feet to which Tennent also alludes as still in use, has so long ceased, that in all my inquiries—and I was very particular on this point—I could not find a single Veddah who ever witnessed it, but it is undoubted that such a mode of archery once existed, as is traditional among them.†

224 231 They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued. Knox tells us, that dogs were given "for portions with their daughters in marriage;"‡ and Percival relates, that "before the last war broke out between us and Holland, a Dutch officer sold a couple of Weddah dogs at Surat, for 400 rix dollars, about £30."§

---

them not, they will do him a mischief one time or another by shooting in the night. If the smith make the arrows, he leaves them in the same place where the Veddahs hung the flesh." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 62. *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, and note; also vol. i, part. v, chap. ii, p. 568, 2nd edition.

* "Money to them is worthless." *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, 2nd edit. I had been told that they would refuse silver, not knowing what it was, and would accept copper. But I never had a rupee refused when I tendered it; and the word "rupee" is by no means unintelligible to them. A good many years ago, I can well believe money was worthless to them, but that was long before Tennent's time.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part iv, chap. iii, p. 439. Some wild Veddahs of the Batticaloa district shewed Mr. Birch, when making some inquiries among them at my request, how the bow was drawn with the foot, but said it was never so drawn now.

‡ Knox, part iii, chap. i. § Percival, chap. xiii.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 422 [685]

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days. 648 685 [754]

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in goal, he might carry back with him some little civilization to his own people. 648

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist. [301]

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguano, and pengolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, 262

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Samba deer (*rusa Aristotelis*). [136]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 bears, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.*

They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of those beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries, I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross-examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh.

They do not scruple to eat animals which have died a natural death, and have (in common with the Kandyans) a decided preference for their game "high"—if so mild a term can describe the exceedingly advanced condition, in which venison should be to suit the palate of a Veddah (or Kandyan) epicure.

226 They are fond of fish, which they catch by mixing with the water the juice of particular fruits and barks of trees, which stupify them. A similar practice is common among the Singhalese.

224 Their arrows procure for them the flesh of the animals they eat, and I can find no trace of pit-falls or traps being in use among 231 them. In Bintenne, some of them employ the hunting buffalo to enable them to approach their game unseen.† Their dogs track out the wounded animals, and are also trained to catch the iguano,

223 Tennent is wrong in saying that they procure birds with the bow. They are not good enough shots for that. They catch them with bird-lime, made from the juice of the bo-tree (*ficus* [824] *religiosa*)—and also watch them to their nests, and take them at night. Their skill as marksmen is most indifferent, and they never exercise it at small objects.

224 The most choice food, in their estimation, is, of land animals, the flesh of the pengolin, or of the iguano; and, of fish, the eel. [262] Though they eat no part of the elephant, yet he is the object of their pursuit, both for their own protection and on account of [439] the ivory, so valuable to them as an article of barter. They will steal up to an elephant, and, as he is in the act of stepping for-

* It is curious that, while in the Batticaloa district Veddahs are said to eat bats, those of the Badulla district—certainly of Nilgala—reject them.

† The use of the hunting buffalo is common all over the Island. The manner in which the animal is trained is curious. When its horns are young and tender, a string is tied tightly round the base of one of them. The pain thus produced is so acute, that the poor animal is easily guided by the cord, and answers to the slightest touch. The ligature is gradually relaxed; and, when the buffalo is full grown, the recollection of the pain it occasioned is so vivid that he will answer readily to a thin string tied loosely to his horn. With an animal so trained, the hunter can easily approach the deer unseen at night. The buffalo feeds; the hunter crouches under his lee; a touch will guide him, and the hunter advances under cover.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

than in densely populated areas, where the individuality of the creature is lost in environmental immensity. In the one case he and his are known, in the other he and they are but a fraction.

Considerations of space preclude my enlarging on this subject, or describing in detail the individual conditions of the different villages that I explored, but I venture to think that a careful examination of local factors would throw much light on the evolution of the race from its early stages of primitive existence to its present state of partial civilization.

Domestic Animals.—These consist of cattle, buffaloes, goats, dogs, cats, and fowls.

Black cattle are abundant in all the inhabited parts of the country I explored, and naturally more so where the opportunities for trade in them exists than in very isolated places. Milk is nearly always procurable, but I heard of no instance of children being exclusively reared upon cow milk. Buffaloes are, where possible, reared for agricultural purposes, and also for the supply of milk, which is often turned into a form of junket that is in much demand.

In one village in the Panawa Pattu I found a Tamil man owning a large herd of buffaloes, and to my surprise I found that he called them by individual names, the animals responding to his call.

I was informed that quite a large proportion of the domesticated buffaloes were half-breeds between the wild and the tame. This may explain why the Vedda-country animal is so much larger than the buffalo of, say, the Western Province.

Goats are rare, and only occur where there are Tamil or Moorish people. I met with them occasionally, but nowhere away from the influences above mentioned. Pigs, except wild, I never met with. Dogs are plentiful, and of a much superior build and type to the village pariah of the civilized country. This is doubtless due to the care the real Vedda has bestowed upon this animal from the earliest time. In point of size the dogs of the Vedda country are large, powerfully built, and bold. Black and white, or brown and white, are the usual colours of these animals. Cats are, generally speaking, scarce, though I remarked at Kumana that while I only saw one dog, I found six cats in that little village.

Sri Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukkan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*ites vekhee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

"How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

†*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schlichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

were loath to purchase their intimacy with gifts. Time enough for that, when we had won them over by less humiliating means. Besides, these Veddas were evidently spoilt, and we wished to show them they were not the important personages they imagined themselves to be. 123

"We are going then," said Handuna. It was now our turn for dejection. Was it for such an ungracious issue we had travelled so far?

I had a last card, having brought some neosalvarsan, a sovereign remedy for yaws so rife among these people. The offer was received with indifference. There was only one case among them, they said, and the patient was too ill to come. This being just what we wanted, I offered to visit them the next morning. [164]

"You cannot come where we live unless we allow you," said the irrepressible Kaira. "And we won't show you our caves or anything, unless you give us presents."

Sick with exasperation and disgust at the behaviour of these impossible children, I told them they could take our offer or leave it as they chose, and turned to other work. The result was a grudging acquiescence; and, leaving a guide behind, they went away.

A word of explanation regarding the sophistication of a people so remote. They were in fact about the purest-blooded Veddas extant; indeed, it was to this very circumstance they owed their disappointing behaviour; for it had attracted Seligamann among them. What that implied may well be imagined. To obtain the valuable sociological information with which his book abounds, he had gained the confidence of these folk with scrupulous consideration and kindness, showering on them gifts of all kinds. Moreover, the patient investigation of the most intimate details of their lives by such a man, heightened their self-esteem. Of this we had an amusing illustration. I was obliged to admonish a group of Sinhalese that embarrassed us with their attentions. A Vedda sidled up and, tapping me familiarly on the shoulder, whispered, "Those people don't like us, they are jealous of us. We and you gentlemen are one; they are different!" 156 114 [186]

To dismiss these Veddas as spoilt uninteresting folk would imply failure to discern their innate simplicity, beneath the veneer of pose and importunity, for which contact with an indulgent stranger had been responsible. In their homes they still are as artless as their forbears were before ever white man set foot on these shores.

We were out hunting early that afternoon, when a sudden snapping sound arrested our attention. The Vedda we were with listened a few seconds. "Catching *talagoyas*," (monitor-lizards), he said laconically. The excited barking of a dog and rebuking human voices soon confirmed his conjecture. Going up, we found two men, one of whom carried a large quivering monitor just killed; while two dogs, still spirited with the chase, danced round their victim and growled and snapped at us. One of the men now set about to disjoint the quarry's tail at the middle, leaving it connected only by a tag of sinew; then, slitting the submandibular web, he rove the tail through till it locked at the division, making the reptile eat its own tail as it were, and carried it neatly in a loop. The monitor is best hunted at high noon; after four in the afternoon it takes to trees and holes. 224 231

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kukula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botua-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by
[281 his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
362] open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[84] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda,
[171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. YAKKURE

This be the verse you grave for me;
Here he lies where belonged to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. STEVENSON

THROUGH a lush meadow studded with fragrant wood-apple, we entered Kalukolu Eba a hamlet of some twenty huts nestling in the picturesque dishabille of a *chena* rank with maize, vegetables and chillies. Here as elsewhere in the Vanni there was much evidence of parangi (framboesia). Fully three-fourths of the people showed active or quiescent traces of the disease. A boy had a necklace of loathsome papules; a woman covered with nodes in practically every bone of her body was boiling a decoction of dry leaves as a salve; another was stewing monitor flesh in chilli-water.

The first sign of our nearness to Yakkure was a cattle-penstamped clean, where half a dozen boys were securing cows and yearlings for the night. Scratching around the stockade with the tameness of domestic fowls were a jungle cock and his dames, and from every side came the jerky cries of wild chanticleers. A cairn of tumbled stones marked the site of an old *vihare*. Blue in the distance, across a wide lagoon bordered with sedge, lotus and dead trees, stood the long rock called Gunner's Quoin, with a bare patch, high on its tree-mantled flank, pointed out to us as the Maraweethiya, a historic cave.

Yakkure itself was a negligently palisaded hamlet nestling ina grove of tamarinds, in full view of a beautiful tank. We were unfortunate in our choice of a camping place. Five days of seclusion in the forest had made us forget that the immediate proximity to a village always meant flies, smells, and embarrassing attentions from forward men and coy but curious women. There were other draw-backs too. At sunset, from a pool near by, came a low, ominous hum auguring ill for our night's rest. We lit fires, bestowed meticulous care on bed curtains, and bedaubed ourselves with mosquitol. The lapwing's desolate cry, the doleful music of water fowl, the booming of great owls, the distant trumpeting of elephants, and more than all, the baffled mosquito murmur around, soon lulled me to sleep. But my companion who had failed to stop up betimes several holes in his curtain, the inside of which was found at dawn to be plastered with a blood-sodden host, tells a different story!

Three miles from Yakkure are the well-known falls of the Mahaweli. At flood-time their thunder is heard at the village. Once in a decade the waters creep up to and submerge the huts, sending the people up trees, and their cattle into the forest to be drowned or killed by leopards. With a *kapua* (priest) for guide, for the place is held eerie, we set out to visit the falls. Skirting an ancient aqueduct (*yoda ella*) which tapped the river a mile above the falls, we came to open jungle bordering the banks, that allowed us free passage through its colonnades of giant

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the *goa*-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Maraweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

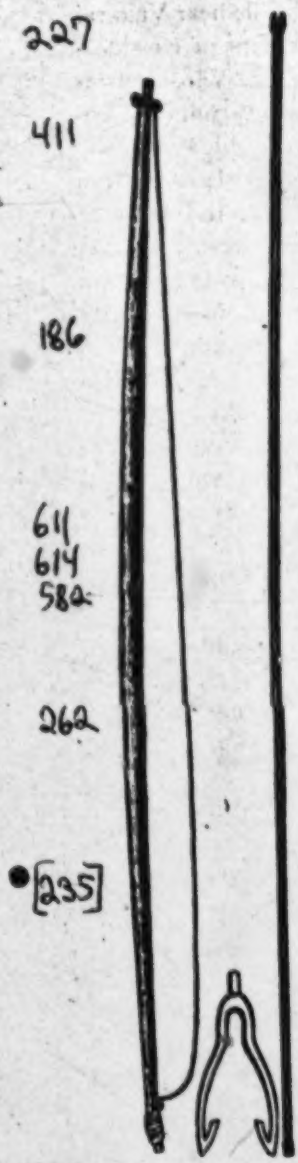
From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5



[113] Fig. 13. Verda bow and harpoon × $\frac{1}{12}$.
Iron harpoon head × $\frac{1}{3}$.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *waruge* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *waruge*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *waruge* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 330.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

235 Of fowls, I observed a remarkable diversity of breed. They may be classed as—

(a) The Bantam type, with the medium length of saddle and conspicuous *erect* tail.

(b) The wild type, with long saddle and large *drooping* tail.

(c) The Cochin-China type, with feathered tarsi.

In the first of these the crow of the cocks is quite distinct, it being what I call a shrill falsetto. In (b), what I call the wild type, the plumage of the males approximates that of our jungle fowl, both in its beauty of colouring and in the disposition of the tail feathers. The hens, too, were more commonly brown than in the Bantam type, where white is the prevailing colour of this sex. In (c) the feathered leg is the outstanding characteristic. Here the size of bird is larger than in the first group, but shorter in the back than in what I call the wild type. In no case did I find birds with yellow combs, though the early presence of the comb in cock chickens is particularly noticeable. It would appear, therefore, that the domestic fowl has here developed characteristics that would imply crossing from three stocks, one of which is analogous to, if not identical with, the wild bird. On the other hand, the unmistakable crow of the wild bird is different from that of any of the village races.

Of wild animals, the following is a brief list of observed
136 mammalia:—

(1) *The Gray Wanduroo.*—Scarce in the Maha Wedirata, plentiful towards the sea coast in the Panawa Pattu and in the valley of the Kumbukkan river. Probably this species was common all through the Vedda country, but as its flesh was eaten it became exterminated, except in uninhabited places.

(2) *The "Red Monkey" or Rilawa* (Macacus pileatus).—Not common. I found a few in the valley of the Heda-oya and near Lahugala.

(3) *The Loris* (Loris gracilis).—Very rare. I did not see a single example, but I was told by the people that it was known near the "Westminster Abbey" range of hills, and again near Monaragala.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moora." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.); the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

3. SOME VEDDA ARTS AND A DANCE

EDIBLE LIME

321 276 [237] THE Vedda method of making from snail-shells an edible lime, the concomitant of a betel or bark chew, is interesting. Four varieties of snail afford it :—The large, white, land snails (*wantako* or *godang bello*) ; the small, black, river snails (*alang bello* or *gadu bello*), found in dry stream beds ; the bivalved *ethal bello* ; and the convoluted *kankuro* or *lanu bello*.

The *wantako* give the best lime. Six to twelve of their shells are dropped into a small fire, and a layer of dry twigs is laid over them. The flame is now vigorously fanned with a leafy sprig, to prevent the shells getting charred. When the overlying layer of twigs is reduced to embers, and the shells glow white, they are gently picked off with a stick, taken on the palm and placed in a large leaf (*kenda* or *halmilla*). A little water is then added or, in its absence, saliva ! The leaf is quickly folded over the shells which now disintegrate and " ripen." They are then smashed up with the fingers, and the chunam is distributed.

When the small *gadu bello* are used, the process is slightly different : the burnt shells, moistened and bundled in a leaf as before, are replaced on the embers quietened down with a sprinkling of water. The chunam from these is coarser and more gritty than that from the *wantako*.

FIRE MAKING

372 Fire is obtained by jungle folk in a variety of ways. When gun-powder is to hand there is a choice of two methods : (*a*) A little powder is placed on a stone and closely surrounded with small fragments of cloth or tree cotton. It is then ignited, and the rag set on fire, by striking it sharply with an axe-head previously warmed by rubbing on a rock. (*b*) When, in addition to powder, a cap is available, the powder is put into a small square of rag with the upturned cap in its centre. Into the cap the point of a knife is inserted, and the rag is closed over and clapsed firmly against the blade. The striking of this on a stone explodes the cap, ignites the powder, and lights the rag.

These methods being too wasteful for routine use, the commonest mode of fire-making in the jungles is by means of a C-shape iron strike-a-light (*gini-katuwa*) and a piece of chert or crystalline quartz (*irimana gal*), against which is a piece of *kitul* cotton or rag to take the spark when the two are struck together.

The most primitive, and essentially Vedda, art of making fire is by the attrition of two sticks. Although I had hitherto travelled much in Ceylon forests, always making inquiries about this mode of obtaining [184] fire, it was not until I came to Bingoda that I was able to see it done, and that with astonishing ease. In Henebedde and Bintenne the art was dead ; indeed some of the Veddas had never even heard of it !

The light *velang* stick of which arrows are made is the wood *par excellence* for fire making. Elephants being fond of the tree, the dry

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

322 is taken, barked, and straightened by being passed rapidly a few times
411 through a fame, and then bent over the knee or between the hands. It is shaved down to uniform thickness with an arecanut-cutter or arrow blade, and cut to suitable length, roughly gauged by holding it along the outstretched arm from the nearer nipple to the end of the middle finger, giving it an average measure of two and a half feet, or slightly less. An arrow belonging to the great bow I have mentioned, measured three and a half feet. The nock or notch is a quarter of an inch deep and cut square.

411 The arrow is feathered with the wing plumes of the owl, devil-bird,
● 237 jungle-cock, or large crane (*mana koka*); the owl's, besides being the
284 best, are easily picked up along dry stream beds, on the trees bordering which the birds usually roost. A feather is split unequally down the rachis, only the larger segment being used. Four such segments, about two inches long, are arranged equidistantly round the shaft, an inch and a quarter from the end, and bound neatly down with *aralu* fire, the mouth helping in the process. The first turns are merely taken round that part of the shaft, which is immediately below the feathers, then round the bared lower ends of the rachis, and then carried along, at spaced intervals, between the carefully separated barbs. Should a strand not prove long enough, it is finished off by having its end tucked in between rachis and shaft, and another is similarly begun. Finally the ruffled barbs are straightened out between the thumb and fingers moistened with saliva. A few turns of fibre just below the notch serve to give grip to the drawing fingers.

411 The arrow-head is made of flattened iron obtained from local black-smiths. It is three to five inches long, of lanceolate shape in imitation of the *na* leaf, and sharp at the edges; serving as much as a cutting implement as an arrow. By a tang it is let into the end of the shaft to which it is firmly secured with fibre. All the strung parts of the arrow,
[824] as well as the bow-string, are finally dressed with the sticky milk of *kiri-wel* to prevent untwisting. Both bow and arrow, being very liable to the ravages of boring insects, are always kept hung over the smoke when not in use.

The method of stringing the bow is by placing one end of it, to which the string is knotted, on the ground, and then pressing on its centre either with the bent knee or by a foot thrust. A correctly strung bow should measure at its centre a span between string and belly of bow; this is rather more than the "fist-mele" (clenched fist with thumb upright) the rough estimate of European stringing.

The arrow release favoured by the Veddas is that in which the cord is drawn with the first joints of the index and middle fingers, the arrow being usually placed on the left of the bow. The style of archery is often peculiar: the arrow fitted to the bow is raised head high; the right elbow is now swung up in an awkward flourish above the head, and then brought slowly down to alignment with the eye, as the string is drawn out to its fullest extent and the arrow delivered.

DANCING

177 The ceremonial dances of the Veddas have been minutely described
and illustrated by Seligmann. The dance we are about to describe
536 seems to have been performed before him in its greatest purity at Hene-bedde. The differences between his description and ours must be

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
173 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *waruge*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

241 The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
342 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

415 They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
534 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized.
[361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families.
[342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in
[241] wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their
[224] chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in
[161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe,
423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles
[224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those
184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not
619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha-
142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and
[147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gâté, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticalao boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was 993 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their 782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual 224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain 843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

● 241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bowels I found, in a damp valley, a *Sonerila* growing in a rocky crevice. *Memecylon umbellatum*, *M. grande*, and *M. capitellatum* are all very common in the forest areas. 137

Of the Lythraceæ, I found *Lagerstrœmia flos-reginæ* not uncommon on the banks of the larger streams, where it frequently occurs as a large tree. *Lawsonia alba* is cultivated at Panawa. In the "park country" I found a few examples of *Woodfordia floribunda*, but this is far more common near Passara and Bandarawela.

The poisonous *Modecca palmata* is often to be met with, but is not common. I was surprised to notice that it was little known to the people. *Passiflora fœtida*, however, appears to be well known, though its distribution is probably more restricted. The Papaw has been introduced here, and is to be found in some of the gardens, but sparingly.

Of the Cucurbitaceæ, I found *Trichosanthes integrifolia* to be fairly common, its brilliant red billiard-ball-like fruits being very conspicuous. I suspect that it is eaten by monkeys, as I frequently found fragments of the fruit. *Cephalandra indica* is often to be seen in dampish forests. In all the chamas Cucumbers of sorts are grown, and appear to find a considerable market demand. [241]

Possibly these may have originated in the well-known cucumber, but owing to degeneration and environment have changed their form, for certainly the average shape of Vedda-country "Kekiri" is more round in outline than ovate. The "rind" is remarkably bitter to the taste.

Of the Begonias, I found a few examples of what I take to be *B. malabarica* not far from the base of Westminster Abbey, but it may have been an "escape."

Our monotypic *Tetramelas undiflora* occurs but sparingly in the north of the Maha Wedirata, while the individual trees are immense.

Of the Cactaceæ, *Opuntia* (?) *dillenii* is frequently to be met with, both in a semi-wild state and in hedges. I found it growing in profusion at Okanda, and all down the coast where there were, or had been, gardens. I am unable to say if the Veddas knew it, though the name Katu-patuk is well known. I am inclined to suppose that it was spread by the Tamils.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *hurrukkee* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

on summer days, it flamed through the Island making it its permanent home, while in India, the land of its birth, it dwindled away.

We had undertaken this trip with the object of visiting Menikgallagolla where we learned the wildest Veddas of the Eastern province lived; but on coming to Ottuma we found that that place, only twelve miles away, was quite unknown to the present folk of Ottuma, a pathless barrier of dense jungle intervening. We made the best of a bad job; and, abandoning our original project, struck west for Dolagalwella.

At evening we camped by a desolate pool called *Hawan-kapana-walle* (rush-cutting nook). There is barely a spot in these jungles, however lone, that has not its name, thanks to the nomadic Veddas. Here was a glade in which they hunted, or a pool at which they drank, there a hole in which an axe was found (*Pore-thatu-walle*).

The only indications of the track we followed were the barely recognisable prunings, fifteen years old, of saplings. The forest was ideal for travel; in the shelter of the great trees the morning air was cool and refreshing. Coming to the Maduru Oya we walked a mile up-stream and climbed the mimosa-covered bank, soon to be lost in a wilderness of trees. A leader monkey yelled a warning to his clan, a surprised sambur belled startlingly close; but after that a silence prevailed unbroken by the song of a single bird. We spent the night by a rocky streamlet close-hugged by dense forest walls. Heavy clouds crept over us to the rumblings of thunder. The blurred crescent of the moon struggled for freedom. Our camp fires crackled in the ghostly gloom, and quiet human voices pervaded the forest's deadly stillness save for the melody of the trickling water.

> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

Deserted Mahaella marked the limit of our westward journey. Here we struck at right angles the northern track to Yakkure, but, before taking it, deviated south to the village of Dolagalwella. For three days we had followed uncertain game trails, and seen no human beings besides those of our company. The path now began to show signs of use: there were chipped trees, polished stones on which axes had been whetted, and fire-places where monitors were roasted. Obviously we were nearing civilisation! Indeed, here it was.

Scaling a strong stockade we found ourselves in a *chena*, some twelve acres in extent, in which nestled the half dozen huts of the closely related families of a Vedda patriarchy. The maize and *kurrakkan* crops had been taken, and the place was now rank with a catch-crop of vegetables and fruit: beans, brinjals, melons, cassava, plantains and papaws. Chillies luxuriated; there was not a compound but had its vermilion heap, not a hut but had a section partitioned off with frame and fire-place for drying them during the rains; chillies were the current coin with which these folk traded with the pedlar Moors.

The males of the settlement were away in quest of food, and only the women and children remained. No folk on earth, perhaps, are shier than Vedda women; in the presence of the stranger they are dumb. Some of them were relatively fair-complexioned, presumably from Kandyan admixture; all wore an abundance of bead ornaments, finger

5: Spinal D/5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrakkan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpittiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *kabbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kotharu-pathaka* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

361 "But surely there are Veddas in Galmede; everybody told us so," I insisted.

"Veddas of a sort, yes," was the reply; "and perhaps among them, one or two good ones; but the best live away in the caves, in those rocks yonder. Now if you'd come yesterday you'd have seen two of them who brought me some *gaas* in exchange for betel and tobacco."

000 Disappointment melted into sudden hope. So, there were real Veddas still left. But oh! these people. Was ever chase so disheartening? Always the promise, never the fulfilment. Were we chasing phantoms of the wilderness, mocking spirits of a dead race, intolerant of the intrusion on their tranquil sepulchres?

There was no possibility of visiting the cave-Veddas that day. So I decided to stay over and visit them the next morning, travelling across the pathless hills to the high road; while my companion,—fed up to the teeth by now at the very mention of the word Vedda, and in a bad way with festering tick-bites, heat exhaustion, and lack of fresh food—tried to dissuade me from an adventure that promised no success. But I was bent on it. So we agreed that most of the bearers should accompany him to Maha Oya by an easier route, while I remained behind with three men and a two days' ration of tinned food.

With nightfall my prospect of securing a guide to the Galmede hills was no nearer than in the morning. The only man who could be relied on was down with fever. I was seated disconsolately in the Chetty's garden after dinner, close to a chatting group, when suddenly I saw a shadow slip in out of the darkness and join them; there was some whispering; "Ah, is this the man they call Meenemaruwa?*" I heard 648 one of my bearers ask.

● 291 "Yes, I am he they call murderer, rogue and everything besides." The answer came loud and unabashed from the man himself.

115 Rumour had spoken of him as far away as Kotelinda; and it had not spoken kindly. He lived three miles up the river by himself, inspiring the neighbourhood with awe of him. He was in a quandary that night. Returning home after a short absence, he had found that his brother had been taken into custody for illicit *chena* cultivation. He waxed eloquent on his wrongs, while the others listened: "Now what I want to know," he said "is why they should have taken my brother, who is a fool and cannot say a word in his defence, when they might have taken me? No, they wouldn't do that because I can talk. My brother cultivated the *chena* it is true, but it was I who gave it to him; the land is mine. They want me to pay taxes, I who am a Vedda! My grandmother was a 426 Vedda of Veddas, you should have seen her. How well I remember the 799 piece of human liver she carried in her betel-bag. We children would take it from her and want to throw it away; she would pluck it from us, saying, 'Hu, what do you want with this, isn't it mine?' Io, why do they treat me like this? Someone is angry with me. It must be the *araichi*. No, the *araichi* is good to me; he and I are friends. Now *Hettyar*, what must I do? I must go to the courts myself and get a petition drawn." Thus he talked interminably, while I wondered how a Vedda could come to argue like a lawyer.

"Now leave all that aside," I interrupted, "and tell me how I am to see these Veddas of the rocks tomorrow."

*Murderer.

2. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

241 181 THE genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a *chena* than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas [184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 222 177 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his 142 outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature—and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have [826] it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a degree, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

423 But what irony is all this talk of chiefs and clans and possessions, where
656 only a mere handful of spiritless people is concerned. The Veddas alone recognise their boundaries, Government does not. Quite rightly they are not permitted to fell their forests without sanction, or to give their lands away; for what would be easier than to cozen such simple folk. These Veddas may cultivate *chenas* with permission from Government but without tax; a privilege they are impotent to avail themselves of, and are still hunters enough to disregard, whether under encouragement or compulsion. "What lands have the Veddas now?" lamented Kaurala "Our rightful lands! Why should we be deprived of them? The earth of our land is honey to us". And in those words he spoke the doom of his race.

Let us leave the last of the Veddas alone, and not try to fashion them to our ways; for that would kill them the sooner. Let them die out, scattered in their lonely jungles, the hunters they have always been. A few decades hence and the Vedda will be but a name.

651 Not every Vedda is exempt from taxation. I believe those in the Eastern Province are taxed, while those of Uva are not. Why this distinction, it is hard to understand; except for the plea that nowadays it is difficult to say who is a Vedda and who not. But, in cases of doubt, the conditions of life that characterise a particular community should be the criterion that influences the decision, favourably or otherwise. It does seem hard that these poor people, who never handle a single cent from one year's end to another, and have barely a rag with which to cover their nakedness, should have to pay a tax of two rupees with the richest in the land! In default of payment, a penalty of some ten days' work on the roads is imposed; an equitable provision on the face of it; but what of the family with the bread-winner thus engaged? After all, these people only live from day to day; and even sickness very often means starvation.

241 As for *chena* cultivation,* there can be little doubt that it is the one form
311 of agriculture, best suited to the primitive folk of the arid forests; but a serious attempt should be made to better the wasteful methods now in
656 vogue. I remember once travelling through a Province where a progressive, but misguided policy—as applied to these parts—prevailed: *chena* licences had been with-held that year with a view to enforcing paddy cultivation; (in such forests! and among such folk!). The result was disastrous. It was heart-rending to see the starved, emaciated villagers Sinhalese and Veddas alike, digging out wild, unsavoury yams from
261 the baked ground. They would have given their lives for a little *kurrukhan* or maize, which was nowhere to be had.

Chenas represent a very primitive and wasteful form of agriculture. In June of each year an area of jungle is leased by several families. The trees are felled, and burnt two weeks later. The land is then cleared, except for a residue of charred trunks. Temporary huts are suitably disposed, and the whole surrounded by a fence-work of burnt logs, so strong that it must be proof against elephants, so tall that it must top the sambur's leap, so close that it must keep out the hare. By August this work is completed.

In September the crops are sown:—Maize or *irinda* which takes 4 months, and manioc which takes a year to mature; vegetables such as pumpkins, melons and beans (*pukul, wattaka, ikimbiri, kakiri, lerma*); yams such as *kuhul-alla, wal-alla, watapol, kodol*. In October and November, *kurrukhan*, chillies, green-gram, and perhaps a little paddy is planted.

During February, March, and April the *kurrukhan* and maize crops are harvested—or rather what is left of them when the elephants and drought have had their say

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

In their inhospitable forests, the most wild and arid in the Island, where food is scarce and only attained with great hardship, the Vedda is king. His lifelong apprenticeship to the harsh conditions fits him superbly to the mercile s task. He knows season and place and is sensitive to the slightest clue. How ill-fitted for this life are we of the towns who would starve by a tree with a honey-comb or with a succulent yam under foot. They make us feel like children, in that environment, these admirable Crichtons of the jungle, and our urban refinements as dross compared with their simple skill and hardihood. 311

It is truly a delight to travel with the Vedda and watch his ways. Moving silently, speaking no word except to "hum" an animal call to attract each other's attention, they allow nothing to escape them, and read the ground like a book, indicating spoor where you see nothing. Becoming sceptical of such claims I thought I would test the skill of Suthu Banda, also known as Porumola. Telling him to turn his face away, I tip-toed lightly on the bed of leaf that carpeted our path, and asked him to indicate my foot-prints. 151 224

"Here they are, and here," he said without a moment's hesitation. "Why, it's easy; don't you see the leaves turned?" (I certainly did not, demonstrate as hard as he might). "What is the difficulty for us to see a human foot-print here," he continued, "who have to follow a mouse-deer's trail on ground that shows less than this."

We had halted by a tree of great height and enormous girth, branchless for quite forty feet from the ground—as awkward a proposition for a climber as one could wish. I asked Suthu Banda whether he could climb it. "Why not," he said; and, without so much as putting down the axe hitched to his shoulder, he mounted the rock beside which the tree stood, and looked up a second or two. Then, shinning up an adjacent sapling that shot high, swung on to the slender extremity of the big tree's lowermost branch that sagged under his weight, and moved along with a carelessness painful to watch. He was soon among boughs no bigger than a man's wrist, and from the dizzy height wished to know whether we wanted him to go higher! None of your artificial aids, such as loops, for the Vedda; he is a veritable quadrumana, with feet as prehensile as hands. 481

They have a sure method of killing sambur. In the rainy months, and also, more rarely, in the drought, these animals climb to the tops of solitary hills. The Vedda, always watchful for the opportunity, is quick to detect this by the spoor. Cautiously attaining the summit, one or two of them guard with guns the only path by which the sambur must 224

Yams, chillies and melons survive a few months longer. After one to one and a half years the *chena* is abandoned as worthless, and a fresh acreage leased; for *kurrukkan* especially, is reputed to take such heavy toll of the soil, that this must be allowed to lie fallow for some ten or twelve years before being fit for recultivation! A terrible consumption of forest land results, unless controlled; harmless enough where a few families exist in vast forests; but sadly devastating in places at all populous. [241]

Irrigation, as these people know it, is solely what heaven bestows. Water may lie to hand but is not seriously utilised. A drought brings ruin, and scatters the folk far in quest of food. It is time a more economic system of agriculture was introduced to the Vanni, and the people taught, by the institution of model *chenas*, at least the value of forest leaf mould as a manure, and the advantages of some simple system of irrigation from available streams or wells, such as the Tamils of Jaffna and the Moors of the Eastern Province exploit so well.

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were 131
unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously.

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these 101
parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow [301]
stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved
and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was [157]
the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne.

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found [301]
the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two
to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation
we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were appar- [626
ently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep
the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very 152]
jealous of their women.

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each 576
hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted
us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to [411]
know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave
us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly
wretch craved for medicine.

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for 342
Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so
characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were
finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukkan* [241]
and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and
contented community.

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the 101
same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered
about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a 361
rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were
obviously there for our benefit!

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never 161
before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On
previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we
had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen
in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about
fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by 177
their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their
representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne.
This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that
are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows;
but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting.

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, 224
better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251

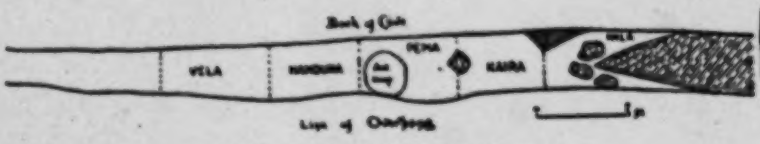


Fig. 9. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

[342] 423 592

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [595] 837

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from trees. Besides the *bambara* other species including the small stingless bee supply a considerable quantity. The first two months of our sojourn in the Vedda country (January and February) was at a time when honey was particularly scarce, and even at the end of March and in April it was not abundant, yet such was the courtesy of the Veddas that each community managed to make us a small present of honey, though this often entailed a long search and the combs were frequently full of grubs. In two communities only, which were better off than the others, namely Danigala and Kulukalaeba, were we given large pots of strained honey, the remains of the previous year's store. 222

The manner in which *bambara* colonies are regarded as property has been discussed in Chapter V. Writing in 1886 Nevill says, "Honey forms a great part of their diet. It is eaten fresh in large quantities, wax and all; combs with young bees in them being considered especially wholesome. It was also the practice formerly to store strips of dried meat in honey, filling in a cavity of some tree with it, the cavity being first lined with clay. At present they barter away their surplus meat and honey, during the hunting season, and keep no store for the rainy season. This often brings privation and is one cause of the rapid decrease in their numbers. 262 251 [437]

"They tell me their health is never so good as when their food largely consists of yams and honey. 262

"To procure honey they rapidly cut open hollow trees, even of the hardest wood; and to take the hives of the large black bambara bee, they make long ladders of cane, called 'rang kendiya,' by which they descend precipices, and cut off the combs adhering to their sides. 222 [417]

"They do this at night, generally, as the bees are not so savage then; and smoke them with a sort of resin. The hives are often cut off with a sort of wooden sword, made for the occasion. These frail ladders swing fearfully, and the task is so dangerous, only the boldest and most athletic attempt it. While engaged on the task they sing lustily, songs specially made, which appease the spirit of the rock, and prevent him from dashing the hunter off the ladder. They also go about [413] 222 533

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 to catch the hum of bees, which so instantaneously struck his ear. Their forest life naturally quickens their powers both of seeing and hearing, and renders them, in these respects, far superior to those whose more civilized lives do not compel them to rely on those faculties for their daily food.

They take honey in the manner common to the Singhalese. The bee-hunter enlarges with his small axe the hole in the tree at which the bee enters, and putting his mouth to the aperture, blows into it. This has generally the effect of making the bees fly out; or, at least, of making them vacate the comb, and retire into the innermost recesses of the hollow tree, when the honey can be taken with the hand. If this do not succeed, however, a second puff, after the bee-hunter has chewed some aromatic substance, has the desired effect.

Taking the honey of the bambera (*apis Indica*), a large and
222 very venomous bee, is a much more serious affair. This bee hives
283 on very lofty trees, or in clefts of precipitous rocks. If on a
481 tree, the hunter ties tendrils to it, and armed with a bundle of blazing faggots, climbs to the vicinity of the comb and smokes the bees out, being often severely stung during the operation. If in a cleft of rock, he will, if he cannot otherwise approach it, lower himself with ropes made of creepers, and take the honey by the same process.

To the Veddahs, honey is not only favourite food, but valuable
439 as an object of barter, for the Kandyans prize it greatly for medicinal purposes. They use it, too, as Knox tells us, for pre-
251 serving flesh. "They cut a hollow tree and put honey in it, and then fill it with flesh, and stop it with clay, which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want."* And when they are short of food, they mix honey with decayed wood, and so eat it. It
261 satisfies their craving more readily than plain honey. Davy properly describes the practice, as "not so much for nourishment as to distend the empty stomach and to allay the distressing feelings of emptiness and the pains of hunger." It is curious that Tennent should have entirely omitted all allusion to this remarkable custom. "Romba" is the term used by the Veddahs, for this decayed wood, and the practice I have described may have given rise to the epithet, which Knox applies to the "wild sort" called "Ramba Veddahs," who, he says, "never shew themselves" —but no "sort" is so called now, nor is the name remembered.†

---

* Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63.

† Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63. The wood so used is chiefly that of the
[824] eriminia creeper (*zizyphus œnophlia*, Mill.), the ettamba—wild mango (*mangifera Indica*, Quin.), the weera (*hemicyclia sepiaria*, W. and A.), the rêna, the nooga, a species of fig; any wood, indeed, not poisonous, is used. They reject the wood of the kaduru (*cerbera odallum*, Gærtn.), the goda

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena* ; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house" ; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark ; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that ; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats ; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone ; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned :

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas ; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain : it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good !

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes. *Gona-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meat;

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

267 There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
224 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

252 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his
[482] shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent
824 to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251] little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle
252] like meat.

222 Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galseembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *katuala*, *hirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261] various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galseembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up
752 with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapotho*, *angulwo*, *lulo*, *katukanao*, *kanupatho*, *anlko* (eels), *maguro*, *kunge*, *keheliyo*, *pethy*, *walikondo*, *sithalu*, *badapathalo*, *walikairiyo*, *pinisweliyo*, *kovalayo*, *galpandurwo*.

† *Kukurumang-gedde*, *hala-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave.

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men.

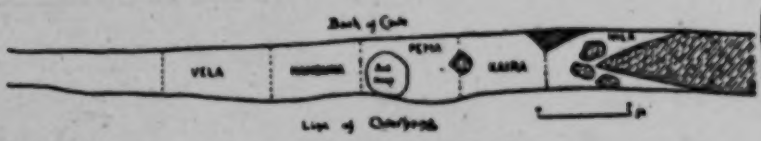


Fig. 9. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]."

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity,

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

resin obtained from the *timbiri* tree (*Diospyros embryopteris*). 411
The shaft of the arrow is commonly made of the wood of the 322
wulan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*). The arrow is still the almost universal cutting tool, as we had good opportunity of ascertaining at Henebedda. There was no knife in the community, and we noticed the skill with which a deer was skinned 412 252
and cut up with an arrow. The Veddas certainly desired no better tool, and when we pressed a butcher's knife on one of them in order to see how he would handle the unaccustomed tool, it was interesting to note how slowly he worked and how poor the result was compared with that he obtained with an arrow, which he held just above the blade somewhat as a European holds a penholder. No less astonishing was the skill employed in removing the skull cap with a few strokes of the axe, not only was the brain lifted out and cooked entire, but it was removed so neatly and cleanly that the result was more suggestive of an anatomical preparation than a piece of butcher's work.

The Veddas we met were all bad or indifferent shots, and 411
we have no doubt that game is seldom shot at a distance much beyond fifteen or twenty yards, the marvellous stalking of the Veddas enabling them to approach within this distance. The bow, to which the string is securely fastened at one end, is carefully unstrung when not in use. To string it, this end is placed upon the ground, the upper end of the shaft and the string being held in the hands, the sole of one foot is then placed against the middle of the shaft which is steadied, we might almost say gripped, between the great toe and the second toe. Much of the weight of the body is thrown against the middle of the shaft while the hands pull down the upper end to which the string is quickly secured, as is shown in Plate LXIII. Plate LXIV shows the position of the hands and arms immediately before the arrow is released. The bowman is Handuna
of Henebedda, who is left-handed and who in spite of being the [145]
father of a large family remains the only left-handed individual in the community. The length of a bow collected at Henebedda was 172 cm., while four arrows also obtained at Henebedda varied from 88 to 105 cm. in length.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [257] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguana, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kadura (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (*ebony, ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as as leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpatha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in families under various trees. It was the season of the *heng* fruit, of which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *heng* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 ·AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *patkan kukula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *kotuwa-kapua*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
[281 362] open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like
[841] structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indisposition. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda,
[171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fireplace at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

● 252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disembowled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 264] the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various fragments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *hurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *hurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *hurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the halloo all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brushwood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

S: Spinal D-S (ca. 1920) 1945 AXS Vedda AXS
Gypsies 215
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 303 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarm- 155 ing blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a 252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company G of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gargs, unlike 101 those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the 105 jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night 539 with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of 392 that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. 361 The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

000 A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the V Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That [132] evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena*; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house"; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing wafer out of a stone; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned:

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain: it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good!

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes: *Gona-peruma* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Lo-peruma* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Gon-thal-peruma* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

262 There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
224 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

257 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his
[482] shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent
824 to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251 252] little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle like meat.

222 Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galseembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibuda* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *katuala*, *hirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261] various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galseembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up
752 with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapotho*, *anguluo*, *lulo*, *katukanao*, *kanupatho*, *antho* (eels), *maguro*, *hungo*, *keheliyo*, *pethy*, *walikondo*, *sethalu*, *badapathalo*, *walikairiyo*, *piniweliyo*, *hovalayo*, *galpandurno*.

† *Kuhurumang-gedde*, *kalu-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

5. NESTS AND HIVES

This is the time to climb the steep;
Up through the shadowy woods to grope,
Over the stones where the lichens creep,
On to the crag that crowns the slope;
To the wild bees stronghold hushed in sleep.

J. STILL

NESTS

136 222 In dark fearsome caverns, and down the sides of dizzy ravines, the little edible-nest swiftlet builds its dainty nest fashioned of hardened saliva and moss. Those who think they know better will tell you that the all but invisible specks, sometimes seen high away in the empyrean at dusk, are flights of these birds on their way to the sea to gather salt foam with which to build.

222 One of the favourite pursuits of the Veddas is the collecting of these nests for barter. They call the birds *kudukarayas* (nest-makers) and their [439] nesting caves *kudu galges*. These caves are often deep gloomy recesses only entered with lighted candles (made by squeezing a column of bees-[373] wax round a central wick of cloth or bark) to scare away the scores of poisonous snakes (*karawalas* and *mapilas*) that gather there to eat the eggs and young. Sometimes the nests stud the steep sides of narrow [417] gorges, and are then taken by the aid of cane ladders let down from above.

The nesting-places are a secret the Veddas guard closely. When they took me on one of their expeditions it was on the condition that no bearers came. A hard climb brought us to near the summit of the tree-covered mountain side. "*Cho-ho-ho*," shouted the Veddas as a warning to possible bears. The approach to the cave was over-run with *aralu-wel* (used for bows) and *niyande* (of which waist strings are made). The cave itself, surmounted by an enormous rock the fall of which seemed imminent, was dark and stifling; and it was quite a time before one could discern the cup-shaped nests that clung in clusters to the vaulted roof. A Vedda handed me a parent bird he had trapped, a tiny-beaked, brownish thing, with sweeping wings, black feet and unswallow-like tail. It was quite a time too before one realised that there was a commotion in the air, and that little wraith-like forms were flitting in and out in sore distress "Swish, swish; wing, wing; twit, twit; kisiri, bisiri; takara, takara; kata, kata, kata," as from fairy castanets, came the barely audible sounds. Outside, these were louder, "Chara-chiris, chara-chiris; che-week, che-week, che-week," they twittered in futile resentment. But to these sounds the ruthless despoilers were deaf, as, mounted on heaps of stones, they scraped away with knife or arecanut cutter the trim nests from their tenacious attachments, leaving only those with eggs behind, lest the colony be killed outright. On a boulder near by [252] was a fire-place where the young had been roasted, as Kauwa of Divulana had described.

[p. 86]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the huts in the Morane chena settlement at Henebedda. It was shown us with pride by Handuna who said he was keeping it for his twelve year old son. He told us that in the old days the hollow branches, the homes of colonies of these bees, were frequently kept in the rock-shelters. 231

The ladder with the help of which *bambara* honey is collected consists of a greatly elongated loop of cane, apparently derived from a species of *Calamus*, across which rungs of creeper are stretched. In Plate LV (p. 290) there can be seen the bottom of the ladder some fifty feet long, used for training the young, hung from the top of the cliff across the face of the rock mass at Sitala Wanniya. In spite of the fact that honey is usually gathered at night the Veddas do not travel or hunt at night and know only two stars by name. One of these is a star or more probably a planet which often appears close to the moon and is called *pantaru* which, we were told, is the name by which the Sinhalese know it. The other named star appears soon after sunset, always in the same place and before the other stars, and is almost certainly Venus; this is called *irabada tarua*, i.e. "side of sun star." Although the Veddas hunt in the dusk of the dawn the idea that anyone would roam about at night seemed absolutely ludicrous to them (Sitala Wanniya), they roared with laughter at it, "why should one go into the jungle? it would be too dark to see to shoot, besides bears are about, absurd idea," they laughed again, in fact it was quite ten minutes before Kaira had forgotten the joke. 222 417 821 [484] 621 522

MASTICATORIES.

All Veddas chew eagerly, but as they can rarely obtain a supply of areca nuts they commonly use instead of these the bark of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) and the *dawata* tree (*Carallia integerrima*). Concerning the other plants that they use as masticatories Nevill says, "They occasionally chew the leaves of several aromatic herbs, particularly *Anisochilus suffruticosus*, a sort of sage that grows on rocks. The areca does not grow wild in the Eastern Province, but Veddas are very fond of the seeds of the lakada bush, *Gardenia carinata*, a 261 276

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

261 beautiful species of Gardenia with fragant flowers and crimped
276 laurel-like leaves. These seeds or nuts are astringent and to me resemble exactly in taste those of the areca palm. They are only an occasional luxury however. The bark which he chews is almost a necessity to a Vedda, the leaves or seeds a mere luxury[1]."

[625] It is not always that the Veddas can obtain lime, which they
276 make by burning the shells of a land snail *wantaiko* (*Cyclophorus involvulus*). The shells are laid on red hot pieces of charcoal, more glowing embers are heaped around and upon them, and the whole is fanned with a tuft of green leaves for a few minutes, when the embers surrounding the shells are raked away and the shells allowed to cool before being crushed and dropped into the vessel in which the lime is carried. This is [415] often a tin match box or it may be a brass covered cartridge case. Specially made lime spatulae do not exist, but one Vedda of Henebedda had a long broad nail with which he removed the lime from his tin match box.

The betel pouch is usually a roughly sewn bag of trade
276 cloth, but the Henebedda Veddas also make pouches of monkey
415 skin, one of which is shown in Plate LXVII. We omitted to inquire how the hair was removed, but probably it was singed off, the whole skin being subsequently scraped.

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. I. p. 191.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 to catch the hum of bees, which so instantaneously struck his ear. Their forest life naturally quickens their powers both of seeing and hearing, and renders them, in these respects, far superior to those whose more civilized lives do not compel them to rely on those faculties for their daily food.

They take honey in the manner common to the Singhalese. The bee-hunter enlarges with his small axe the hole in the tree at which the bee enters, and putting his mouth to the aperture, blows into it. This has generally the effect of making the bees fly out; or, at least, of making them vacate the comb, and retire into the innermost recesses of the hollow tree, when the honey can be taken with the hand. If this do not succeed, however, a second puff, after the bee-hunter has chewed some aromatic substance, has the desired effect.

Taking the honey of the bambera (*apis Indica*), a large and
222 very venomous bee, is a much more serious affair. This bee hives
283 on very lofty trees, or in clefts of precipitous rocks. If on a
481 tree, the hunter ties tendrils to it, and armed with a bundle of blazing faggots, climbs to the vicinity of the comb and smokes the bees out, being often severely stung during the operation. If in a cleft of rock, he will, if he cannot otherwise approach it, lower himself with ropes made of creepers, and take the honey by the same process.

To the Veddahs, honey is not only favourite food, but valuable
439 as an object of barter, for the Kandyans prize it greatly for medicinal purposes. They use it, too, as Knox tells us, for pre-
251 serving flesh. "They cut a hollow tree and put honey in it, and then fill it with flesh, and stop it with clay, which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want."* And when they are short of food, they mix honey with decayed wood, and so eat it. It
261 satisfies their craving more readily than plain honey. Davy properly describes the practice, as "not so much for nourishment as to distend the empty stomach and to allay the distressing feelings of emptiness and the pains of hunger." It is curious that Tennent should have entirely omitted all allusion to this remarkable custom. "Romba" is the term used by the Veddahs, for this decayed wood, and the practice I have described may have given rise to the epithet, which Knox applies to the "wild sort" called "Ramba Veddahs," who, he says, "never shew themselves" —but no "sort" is so called now, nor is the name remembered.†

---

* Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63.

[824] † Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63. The wood so used is chiefly that of the eriminia creeper (*zizyphus œnophlia*, Mill.), the ettamba—wild mango (*mangifera Indica*, Quin.), the weera (*hemicyclia sepiaria*, W. and A.), the rêna, the nooga, a species of fig; any wood, indeed, not poisonous, is used. They reject the wood of the kaduru (*cerbera odallum*, Gæstn.), the goda

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *hong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schleichera trijuga, Nephelium longana,* respectively.

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

423 But what irony is all this talk of chiefs and clans and possessions, where
656 only a mere handful of spiritless people is concerned. The Veddas alone recognise their boundaries, Government does not. Quite rightly they are not permitted to fell their forests without sanction, or to give their lands away; for what would be easier than to cozen such simple folk. These Veddas may cultivate *chenas* with permission from Government but without tax; a privilege they are impotent to avail themselves of, and are still hunters enough to disregard, whether under encouragement or compulsion. "What lands have the Veddas now?" lamented Kaurala. "Our rightful lands! Why should we be deprived of them? The earth of our land is honey to us". And in those words he spoke the doom of his race.

Let us leave the last of the Veddas alone, and not try to fashion them to our ways; for that would kill them the sooner. Let them die out, scattered in their lonely jungles, the hunters they have always been. A few decades hence and the Vedda will be but a name.

651 Not every Vedda is exempt from taxation. I believe those in the Eastern Province are taxed, while those of Uva are not. Why this distinction, it is hard to understand; except for the plea that nowadays it is difficult to say who is a Vedda and who not. But, in cases of doubt, the conditions of life that characterise a particular community should be the criterion that influences the decision, favourably or otherwise. It does seem hard that these poor people, who never handle a single cent from one year's end to another, and have barely a rag with which to cover their nakedness, should have to pay a tax of two rupees with the richest in the land! In default of payment, a penalty of some ten days' work on the roads is imposed; an equitable provision on the face of it; but what of the family with the bread-winner thus engaged? After all, these people only live from day to day; and even sickness very often means starvation.

241 As for *chena* cultivation,* there can be little doubt that it is the one form
311 of agriculture, best suited to the primitive folk of the arid forests; but a serious attempt should be made to better the wasteful methods now in
656 vogue. I remember once travelling through a Province where a progressive, but misguided policy—as applied to these parts—prevailed: *chena* licences had been with-held that year with a view to enforcing paddy cultivation; (in such forests! and among such folk!). The result was disastrous. It was heart-rending to see the starved, emaciated villagers Sinhalese and Veddas alike, digging out wild, unsavoury yams from
261 the baked ground. They would have given their lives for a little *kurrukkan* or maize, which was nowhere to be had.

*Chenas represent a very primitive and wasteful form of agriculture. In June of each year an area of jungle is leased by several families. The trees are felled, and burnt two weeks later. The land is then cleared, except for a residue of charred trunks. Temporary huts are suitably disposed, and the whole surrounded by a fence-work of burnt logs, so strong that it must be proof against elephants, so tall that it must top the sambur's leap, so close that it must keep out the hare. By August this work is completed.

In September the crops are sown;—Maize or *irinŏu* which takes 4 months, and manioc which takes a year to mature; vegetables such as pumpkins, melons and beans (*puhul, wattaha, thimbiri, hakiri, leema*); yams such as *kuhul-alla, wal-alla, watapol, kodol*. In October and November, *kurrukkan*, chillies, green-gram, and perhaps a little paddy is planted.

During February, March, and April the *kurrukkan* and maize crops are harvested—or rather what is left of them when the elephants and drought have had their say

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

267 There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
224 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

257 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his
[482] shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
267 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent
824 to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251 252] little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle like meat.

222 Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galseembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkamtha*, *kibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyanseya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *katuala*, *hiratihala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261] various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galseembela*, *mora*, *habathaa*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, proviided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up
752 with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrassions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapotho*, *anguluo*, *lulo*, *katukanao*, *kanupatho*, *antho* (eels), *maguro*, *hungo*, *keheliyo*, *pethyr*, *walihondo*, *sethalu*, *badapathalo*, *walikairiyo*, *piniweliyo*, *hovalayo*, *galpanduruo*.

† *Kukurumanng-gedde*, *kala-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 . AX5 Vedda AX5

342 eggs of gekkoes very like candle droppings. A few of the caves have drip ledges (evidence of Sinhalese occupation) which serve to keep them dry: those without this feature are all adrip during the rains and their floors are mossy. Rocky out-crops, large loose stones and, perhaps a white-ant hill or two, divide up the floor space into sections in which the various Vedda families lie grouped, each in its allotted span. Here and there the stony floor is cupped where maize has been pounded, or worn [372] smooth where *hurrukkan* has been rubbed to flour with the flat polished stones that lie about. A fire-place or two, a cooking frame, and dry leaves (*pana*, *pinney dea*, or *kalamas*), the bedding of these people, complete the picture.

Let us take the more important of the caves as we pass them on our way from Bingoda to Newaragala. Like our houses they are all named.

Matigaha galge is a deep roomy grotto formed by a superincumbent rock mass supported slantwise on large flanking boulders. Partially obstructing its entrance, and just within cover of its roof, is a steep rounded stone which one family would occupy silhouetted against a [312] tree-intersected sky. Its only source of water is the Magalavatan Aar a quarter mile away. This disadvantage, and its nearness to the Bingoda homes, accounts for its present disuse. Suthu Banda was born here. Kaurala who had not seen it since his childhood could not help a word of regret on seeing it now after the long years: "Ah!" he sighed. "Is this the old home. No one to inhabit it now."

Galthale galge (Rock-slab cave) owes its name to a slab of rock within it, beneath which one must crawl to gain a gloomy inner compartment. A reedy pool below, and the cyfax, cactus and vines about its mouth give it a touch of wild picturesqueness.

Alu galge (Ash cave), which lies at the base of Newaragala, is less a cave than a passage under an immense boulder spanning two lateral outcrops. It is so well concealed by large stones guarding its mouth that one would not suspect its presence even when standing within a few feet of it. The floor slopes up steeply towards a narrowing exit, and is so bestrewn with rocks as to afford no convenient resting place. Yet, in a cranny here or a basin there, the Veddas contrive to make themselves comfortable, as the withered leaves that have served them as mats testify. A small tripodal frame shows where flesh has been [312] roasted. There is no lack of water here; for not only does a perennial spring lie at its entrance, the resort of innumerable bears during the drought, but in the rainy season a rivulet flows right through the cave.

This cave is a favourite of the Veddas who come here when the jak 222 trees, which grow on the slopes of Newaragala, are in fruit. Then, spending a few days, they feast to surfeiting on the tender fruit, and with their [261] characteristic improvidence carry none away. It was here that Kaurala stayed when he "skinned" Nuwaragala—which was his own beautiful way of saying he had stripped it clean of hives. How secret are the ways of Veddas may be judged from the fact that here was a cave frequented by them without its being known to the Sinhalese who lived six miles away. And we who had once spent a night on Newaragala were ignorant that here below us was a cave used by the very Veddas we yearned to know.

261 But of all the caves I have seen *Dhik galge* was the best. I have already described this cave; it remains for me to add a few vital touches. In

Sr Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1965 AX5 Vedda AX5

front of it is a much chipped *opulu* tree from which the Veddas every now and then renew their chew. Throughout the day the surrounding woods echo to the voices of food-gatherers or the blows of axes, as combs are cut out of hollow trees. At fiful intervals the *kolong koha* (stork-billed king-fisher), lord of the rocky stream, raises a clamorous cry, or the wood-pecker startlingly proclaims to the world that it sees the great she-demon (*maha yakkini*). As evening comes, the *kotaha* (gekko) that shares the cave, drawls in quaint imitation of his name, "ko-tak-ko." The night is ushered in by the solemn notes of the night jar* and bell-like sounds of frogs. The crescent moon shines through the trees, peopling the forest with mysterious shadows. Strange noises are heard around, a breaking branch perhaps, a dropping stone, or an animal's foot-falls. Then the little one creeps to its mother whispering, "Mother, the *kotha*"; and she, fondling, replies, "Yes, it is the *kotha*, child; be still." Now fires are stirred, and the Veddas, couched on leaves, and doubled up under their meagre rags, lie as close to them as they dare. For the caves are cold at night even on the hottest day. And every now and then throughout the dark, one or other of them groans with the chill, gets up, pokes the fire, and snuggles nearer to it. Is it a wonder that ash is the morning mark of the Vedda and *Alu galge* a favourite name of his cave? By six, the morning mists have melted and the cave begins to warm.

*At dusk, and all through the night, Horsfield's night jar gathers into its rich liquid notes the silence and mystery of the forest. There is no jungle, however desolate, in which this ever welcome music is not heard. It is at once the curfew of the jungle, the embodiment of all the stealthy, nocturnal life in it, and the destiny and doom of it.

Puthu-hath-porowa (seven-sons-axe) is the Sinhalese name of the bird in perfect imitation of its cry; and the following story explains it.—A woman once sent her seven sons into the jungle to fell trees. One of the trees falling in their direction, the brothers attempted to shoulder it off and were all killed. The mother, having cooked the evening meal, waited at home for her sons. But as they did not return she went out to look for them, and found them all dead beside the fallen tree. Taking up an axe she killed herself and became this bird; and now from dusk till dawn she cries *puthu-hath-porowa* through the lonesome woods

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 226 water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *nahapata*, *pusulpata* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

months previously to wander into Tamankaduwa where they hoped to get yams and perhaps some game. A number of women left the village immediately after our arrival, explaining that if they did not go and find some yams they and their children would get nothing to eat that night. Some of the men possessed bows and arrows but game was scarce, and their living was obviously precarious, yams, monitor lizards, honey and berries forming their staple diet. Fowls were kept and were taken down to the road (10 miles distant) to sell. Like all Veddas they possessed dogs, invaluable to them in catching monitor lizards when there is no bigger game to hunt, and their care for them was shown by a small shelter which they had built in order to shade a bitch with a litter of puppies.

In physical characters these Veddas[1] somewhat resembled the neighbouring Sinhalese, but were less stoutly built; this appearance may however in part have been due to malnutrition. Their headman is a short, well-nourished, exceedingly active and intelligent individual, whose only Vedda characteristic is his short stature. Plate XIV, figure 2, represents a number of Omuni women.

Unuwatura Bubula. The position of the Unuwatura Bubula Veddas is extremely difficult to understand, they occupy two small groups of huts (one of which is shown in Plate XV, figure 1) a little distance from the huts of some peasant Sinhalese. They formerly lived at Mudugala and have doubtless been in close contact with the Sinhalese for many generations, but whether they are the remains of village Veddia settlements or are settled wild Veddas cannot be stated with certainty, though the latter seems more probable. It must be explained that though this community has mixed much with the Sinhalese and has doubtless been much influenced by them, they have their own shamans and they perform their own rites quite apart from their Sinhalese neighbours. Unfortunately the shaman of these people who knew most about the customs and rites of this community was ill, having overtaxed his strength at the first ceremony performed for us, and was not able to talk much, but he was present at most of our conversations and was thus a check on the younger man, but for the reason indicated many

[1] [i.e., Veddas of Omuni. – Analyst]

C.Seligmann & Seligmann E-4 (1907-1908) 1911
AX3 Vedda AX3

814 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at 813 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *mada*, which fruits are 262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard 853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would 262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wandaru*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The 814 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round [184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 262] At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be dangerously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *kotandirala* (devil dancer) [165] would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who 834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa 551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

Tho
775
787

when he takes the shape of a well made young man dressed in white and with a white stick in his hand. Vedi Yaka also appears only in dreams, as a black man in a cloth with nothing else particular about him[1]."

The Avoidance of Certain Foods.

262

It must be assumed that the following prohibitions are of a religious or of a magico-religious nature, and for this reason they are included in the present chapter. They do not appear to be connected with totemism, yet we do not feel confident that they are derived from Hinduism, as is suggested by the Sarasins[2]. In this doubt we have the support of Mr Parker who writes: "This prohibition appears to have no connection with Hinduism, or the common Brown Monkey, *Rilawa* (*Macacus pileatus*), would be included, and also the Rat, as the vâhana of Ganêsa, and the Turtle as representative of Vishnu; or some of these[3]."

Bailey writes, "The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk, deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pengolin—all flesh indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.

"They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of these beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained, is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh[4]."

We are able to confirm Bailey's statement as far as it concerns the flesh of mammals, with the reservation that most Veddas do not eat porcupine. With regard to birds, the Veddas of Henebedda said they would not eat fowls or eagles. The majority of Veddas, including even the degenerate Veddas of the coast, avoid eating fowl, though many of the settled village Veddas keep them for sale or for the sake of their eggs, and in

[1] Both the passages quoted are from a report by Mr Hornbergh to the Colonial Secretary.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 415.

[3] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

[4] *Op. cit.* pp. 187 and 188.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

many places the flesh of the jungle cock is avoided as well as that of the domesticated bird. Many Veddas when questioned about fowl said, that though they did not eat it themselves other Veddas would, and some alleged that the reason for their abstinence was that fowls eat dirt. The lay members of the Sitala Wanniya community had no objection to eating fowl, though Handuna avoided it because he was a shaman. 262

Further, those Veddas who eat fowl, avoid eating it when about to take part in a dance. When discussing this matter at Sitala Wanniya, Vela, who was not a shaman, was about to take part in the Dola Yaka ceremony described in Chapter IX, and it was then explained that this day he must avoid fowl, though at other times it would not matter if he were to eat it or not. The reason was not clear, while one man said that it was because the *yaku* did not like fowl, and so would not readily enter him after he had eaten it, another said that should a man become possessed after eating fowl it might be difficult to regain consciousness. It is equally necessary for shamans to avoid eating pig, though the reason for this was more definitely stated, namely, that the *yaku* disliked this animal. 262 787

Although shamans will not eat pig, they have no scruples with regard to killing it, but they must not touch it or cut it up. If they were to neglect this observance they would be ill and shiver for four or five days afterwards, even when seated comfortably in the cave. The arrow with which a pig had been killed must be cleaned by a man who is not a shaman, and may then be used again by the shaman. The shaman of the sophisticated Veddas said that he would eat only rice, coconut milk, salt, bananas and cow's milk for some days before invoking the *yaku*, and this man insisted on having a daily ration of rice for several days before the *Nae Yaku* ceremony held after the death of Tuta. But as all these foods are foreign to the wilder Veddas and must be obtained by trade, these abstinences have assuredly been introduced, and certainly no custom of this sort is observed at Sitala Wanniya or even at Henebedda. 262 791

The suggestion that these prohibitions have been taken over from Hinduism will not explain the equally strong objection to 262

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 fowls of the majority of Veddas, or the abstinence from the flesh of fowls of the shaman in communities, the lay members of which eat fowl except before dancing. Nor does it explain the similar abstinence from pig which Mr Parker suggests may be due to the unclean nature of its food, for it is "an eater of dead bodies which might be those of human beings[1]." Further, the abstinence from the flesh of elephants, leopards and bears is hardly to be explained as due to foreign influence; we believe that these animals are not eaten because they are, and always have been, difficult to hunt by a people as poorly armed as the Veddas, who were not driven to attempt to kill them on account of the scarcity of game. There was in fact no necessity to attempt to kill them, for deer were easier to hunt and more pleasant to eat; so the Veddas gave them a wide berth and their flesh was not regarded as food, and if come by accidentally, as when a dead elephant was found in the jungle, its flesh was not eaten because it was new and strange[2].

In the same way the flesh of buffalo was not eaten, for buffalo are perhaps the most dangerous of all Indian animals to hunt, and as for the flesh of the domestic cattle, it is obvious that no Veddas except those who kept cattle or were village Veddas could have had the chance of eating this meat. Once this stage of sophistication had been reached, abstinence from the flesh of cattle might easily be dictated by contact with Hinduism, but hardly before. It is of course questionable how far the avoidance of strange food because it is strange and has not been eaten before in the community is a matter of religion, but we have thought it best to discuss the matter in this place because of the view which connects these observances with Hinduism.

ADDENDUM.

[?]7 Since our return to England we have received from Mr Parker important information concerning the popular beliefs of the Kandyan Sinhalese of the North Western Province. This information bears in a most interesting manner upon the beliefs

[1] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

[2] At Bandaraduwa we were told that once, two or three generations ago, a dead elephant was found in the jungle but its flesh was not eaten.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from trees. Besides the *bambara* other species including the 222
small stingless bee supply a considerable quantity. The first two months of our sojourn in the Vedda country (January and February) was at a time when honey was particularly scarce, and even at the end of March and in April it was not abundant, yet such was the courtesy of the Veddas that each community managed to make us a small present of honey, though this often entailed a long search and the combs were frequently full of grubs. In two communities only, which were better off than the others, namely Danigala and Kulukalaeba, were we given large pots of strained honey, the remains of the previous year's store.

The manner in which *bambara* colonies are regarded as 262
property has been discussed in Chapter V. Writing in 1886 251
Nevill says, "Honey forms a great part of their diet. It is eaten fresh in large quantities, wax and all; combs with young bees in them being considered especially wholesome. It was also the practice formerly to store strips of dried meat in honey, filling in a cavity of some tree with it, the cavity being first lined with clay. At present they barter away their surplus [437]
meat and honey, during the hunting season, and keep no store for the rainy season. This often brings privation and is one cause of the rapid decrease in their numbers.

"They tell me their health is never so good as when their 262
food largely consists of yams and honey.

"To procure honey they rapidly cut open hollow trees, even 222
of the hardest wood; and to take the hives of the large black bambara bee, they make long ladders of cane, called 'rang [417]
kendiya,' by which they descend precipices, and cut off the combs adhering to their sides.

"They do this at night, generally, as the bees are not so savage then; and smoke them with a sort of resin. The hives are often cut off with a sort of wooden sword, made for the [413]
occasion. These frail ladders swing fearfully, and the task is so dangerous, only the boldest and most athletic attempt it. While engaged on the task they sing lustily, songs specially 222
made, which appease the spirit of the rock, and prevent him 533
from dashing the hunter off the ladder. They also go about

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

113 Fig. 13. Verda bow and harpoon × 1/12.
Iron harpoon head × 1/4.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *waruge* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *waruge*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *waruge* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 330.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clear what opportunities existed for obtaining it. Deer and pig would be killed and eaten, and snakes were said to be killed without a scruple though one informant denied that he would kill a cobra. 262

Time did not allow of any systematic study of the religion of the Verdas, but it was clear that this had been much affected by Tamil influence while yet retaining some of the more obvious outward features of the Vedda cult of the dead. Unfortunately we had no opportunity of ascertaining definitely whether the Verdas have also retained the essence of the Vedda cult, i.e. the belief in the loving-kindness and the guiding influence of the spirits of their dead, though since the leader of the dance seen at Vakarai showed the classical signs of "possession," there seems to be every reason to hold this belief at least provisionally. The dance we saw rehearsed at Vakarai was said to be performed for sickness and in thanksgiving when a good harvest had been gathered. The dance took place at night, the men dancing in relays till daylight, the women squatting on the ground, but taking no part. No food is taken during the dance, but some is placed upon the "altar" *kudaram* (lit. cage or small shed, *T*) which is eaten by all in the morning. 771 177 575 796

The temple seen at Pellanchenai, of which a rough plan is given in fig. 14, was a building some 12 feet long by about 10 broad; it faced east and the roof was carried forward for a few feet beyond the front wall in which was a door. A stout pole (marked *P*), thought to be some 30 feet long and consisting of a young tree with the bark removed, stood in front of the temple about 30 feet from the entrance. To the north of the pole and about 8 feet from it was a hole in the ground *F*, really a small well containing water, while to the south of the pole and at a distance of about 12 feet from it there was a young tree before which a small platform *T* (*kudaram*) was built, on which a rough stone rested. Some distance beyond the pole and somewhat to the south of it stood a tree *H*, apparently quite dead, with a fringe of dried leaves and small twigs round its trunk, before which were the remains of a *kudaram*; to the south-west of the pole and roughly in the position of *Y* in the plan, a limb of a tree was planted in the soil. The branches 346

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 422 [685]

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days. 648 685 [754]

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in goal, he might carry back with him some little civilisation to his own people. 648

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist. [301]

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguano, and pangolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, 262

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Samba deer (*rusa Aristotelis*). [136]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 bears, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.*

They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of those beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries, I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross-examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh.

They do not scruple to eat animals which have died a natural death, and have (in common with the Kandyans) a decided preference for their game "high"—if so mild a term can describe the exceedingly advanced condition, in which venison should be to suit the palate of a Veddah (or Kandyan) epicure.

226 They are fond of fish, which they catch by mixing with the water the juice of particular fruits and barks of trees, which stupify them. A similar practice is common among the Singhalese.

224 231 Their arrows procure for them the flesh of the animals they eat, and I can find no trace of pit-falls or traps being in use among them. In Bintenne, some of them employ the hunting buffalo to enable them to approach their game unseen.† Their dogs track out the wounded animals, and are also trained to catch the iguano,

223 Tennent is wrong in saying that they procure birds with the bow. They are not good enough shots for that. They catch them with bird-lime, made from the juice of the bo-tree *(ficus* [824] *religiosa)*—and also watch them to their nests, and take them at night. Their skill as marksmen is most indifferent, and they never exercise it at small objects.

224 The most choice food, in their estimation, is, of land animals, the flesh of the pengolin, or of the iguano; and, of fish, the eel. [262] Though they eat no part of the elephant, yet he is the object of their pursuit, both for their own protection and on account of [439] the ivory, so valuable to them as an article of barter. They will steal up to an elephant, and, as he is in the act of stepping for-

---

* It is curious that, while in the Batticaloa district Veddahs are said to eat bats, those of the Badulla district—certainly of Nilgala—reject them.

† The use of the hunting buffalo is common all over the island. The manner in which the animal is trained is curious. When its horns are young and tender, a string is tied tightly round the base of one of them. The pain thus produced is so acute, that the poor animal is easily guided by the cord, and answers to the slightest touch. The ligature is gradually relaxed; and, when the buffalo is full grown, the recollection of the pain it occasioned is so vivid that he will answer readily to a thin string tied loosely to his horn. With an animal so trained, the hunter can easily approach the deer unseen at night. The buffalo feeds; the hunter crouches under his lee; a touch will guide him, and the hunter advances under cover.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

ward, shoot their long-bladed arrows in the soft fleshy part under the forearm, and so disable him.* 224

They have a great dread of meeting elephants at night, and have charms to protect them from them—not only to turn them from their path, but to render innoxious the bear, the leopard, and the wild boar. And I must here record, that they are the only charms I have entire faith in. 825 789

I never shall forget the first time one of these Veddah charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation. The moon had not quite risen, and the stems of the trees and the gigantic pendent creepers were flickering in the uncertain light cast by the torches, which my Veddah guides, gliding through the forest, bore before me. I was chatting to an intelligent Veddah by my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms, having been till then, like Tennent, ignorant of the fact.† I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant "behegang! wirooowee! wiroowah!" which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success.‡

Honey, and the grub in the comb, before it becomes the bee, are both staple food with the Veddahs, and their acuteness in discovering hives, when bee-hunting, is very remarkable. I have seen a Veddah stealing through the forest, suddenly stop—listen for an instant with uplifted hand—dart off into the jungle and return in an incredibly short space of time with a fresh honey-comb; while I have been in vain endeavouring 222 [262]

* This fact I established beyond a doubt. I questioned many Veddahs on that practice, which Knox treats as a fable, p. 63, viz., striking an axe into the sole of an elephant's foot; and I was assured by several that, though they never practise it themselves, the Veddahs of Batticaloa do, and that they even hamstring elephants. To those who know the pluck and dexterity of the professed elephant catchers in the north of the island, there is nothing extraordinary or incredible in a Veddah approaching sufficiently close to an elephant to wound his foot or to hamstring him. But I have inquired, and cannot satisfactorily establish the truth of the statement; and I confess that I am inclined to doubt their physical power to do either.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 448, 2nd edit.

‡ Tennent, vol. i, part ii, chap. i, p. 139, gives a lamentable account of the inefficacy of a charm for bears. I dare say the unhappy moorman there mentioned would have been more fortunate had he known the Veddah charm. The Singhalese have charms for the same purpose; but they differ from those of the Veddahs. [171]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 171 Almost omnivorous, I have before remarked their scrupulous abstinence from the flesh of cows and fowls, though they can assign no reason for it. Now, though good Buddhists as well as Hindús reject the flesh of cows, yet since the Veddahs have never associated with their Buddhist neighbours, they cannot have acquired this prejudice from them.

And though all over the south-east part of Ceylon, where even the superstitious awe of Skanda extends, the cock, the device on his banner, is to a certain degree respected; yet, since the Veddahs care no more for Skanda than they do for all the other gods in the Hindú Pantheon—the very names of whom, *as gods*, are unknown to them, they would not respect his sacred cock.* In

---

789 but Pasé-B'uddho—the only single allusion to Buddhism among them; but the very meaning of this and other charms is unknown to the Veddahs. They are repeated by rote; they do not pause to understand them, and could not if they would. It is enough for them, as for most Oriental people, that a particular formula is to serve a particular purpose.

Veddah Charm for Protection against a Wild Boar.

539

Ira deyené ôkma.	Boar (!) of the sun-god!
Sanda deyené ôkma.	Boar (!) of the moon-god!
Pasé buduné ôkma.	Boar (!) of the Pasé Buddha!
Situ ôkma situ.	Stay, boar, stay!

Singhalese Charm for Tooth ache.

Ira deyené myā!	Worm of the sun-god!
Sanda deyené myā!	Worm of the moon-god!
Pasé Buduné myā!	Worm of the Pasé Buddha!
Daté nositoo dat myā!	Stay not in the tooth, thou tooth-worm!

171 These are identical; yet the Veddahs and the Singhalese certainly do not associate so closely as to borrow one another's charms. Have they descended in each race since the time they were one? The term *okma* I can get no satisfactory explanation of. It is not Singhalese, certainly. I assume it means "wild boar", as this is the charm to arrest a boar in the path; but it is not the term used by the Veddahs for a boar in ordinary conversation. The allusion to the Pasé, or Pachó, Buddha, is curious as occurring in both; the one people being anything but Buddhist, while Buddhism is the religion of the other. As Gotama Buddha visited Ceylon long anterior to the final establishment of Buddhism in Ceylon, and descended in Bintenne, may not this solitary allusion to the religion have been handed down in this form among the Veddahs from a period even before the invasion by Wijalja? In the form of a charm which is repeated by rote, such an allusion would be most naturally retained. So far from having any Buddhist tendencies, they do not even show the slightest outward respect in the presence of a Buddhist priest. The other Veddah charms are, I believe, quite unlike those of the Singhalese, but on that point I am still making inquiries; aided, as I have been throughout, by Mr. De Loysa, the able and intelligent modhar of Benlotta.

* The far-famed Hindu temple of Katragam, which attracts thousands of pilgrims annually from India, and is regarded with awe by the Singhalese, is dedicated to Skanda, the Indian Mars. The temple is built on a spot which, according to tradition (though it is not mentioned in the Skanda Puranas), is the site of Skanda's camp in his wars with the Asuras.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

fact, neither scruple is now a religious one with them. Their 262
aversion to beef and fowls is an hereditary prejudice, now become 171
a custom amongst them.

The names borne by many of them are the designations of 551
Hindú gods and goddesses. It seems clear then, that these 171
Hindú customs and prejudices—these Hindú names, which we find still lingering amongst a people which does not profess that faith, and for twenty centuries have been far removed from those who do, indicate either that the Veddahs once professed it, or [174]
lived in the closest intercourse with those who did.*

The complicated and artificial ceremonial of that religion has naturally died away during the long ages of isolation in which the Veddahs have lived; the vestiges of its former existence among them have been preserved only in some of its strongest prejudices, and in the names derived from the Hindú mythology which have descended as customary family designations to the Veddahs of the present day.†

I should hardly say that the cock is "respected" in the neighbourhood of 171
Katagam; but fowls are rarely eaten by the people there, who, if they eat them, must undergo a course of purification. A fowl curry involves the necessity of an ablution of the head with limes and saffron. Peafowls, too, are rejected as an article of food in that part of the island, for a peacock is represented as the vehicle of the gods: of all this, however, and of the existence of Skanda or of Katragam, the Veddahs are profoundly ignorant. The names of Skanda are common appellations among Veddah men, and that of Valli, Skanda's consort, a common name for Veddah women.

* Let it be remembered that the Veddahs, of whom I am writing, have never had any communicatian with the Tamil-speaking Veddahs who inhabit the seacoast of the Batticaloa district, who are in direct contiguity with Hindús. [The inference drawn is not warranted by the fact referred to. The Hindús occasionally have names taken from those of foreign languages. Thus the Regent of Nepal, a pure and high-caste Hindú, bore a name consisting of two Persian words. EDIT.]

† It was not for years after I had collected this information regarding the superstitions of the Veddahs, that I read the Laws of Menu. It is impossible not to be struck with the similarity, if not identity, of their rude worship and its precepts; *e.g.*

"72. But whoever cherishes not the five orders of beings—those who demand hospitality—those whom he ought to maintain—*his departed forefathers* and himself—that man lives not, even though he breathes."

The Brahman is ordered to make an oblation every day to the following divinities, viz.:—

"First to Agni, *god of fire*, and to the *lunar god*;" .... to the "*goddess of the day*"; .... the *goddess of the earth and sky*"; to the "*winds*" and "*water gods*"; the "*gods of large trees*"; to the spirits "*that walk in light*", and those "*who walk in darkness.*" The reverence of deceased ancestors is then insisted on. "The Pitris, or great progenitors, are free from all wrath—intent on purity—even exempt from sensual passions—endued with exalted qualities."

"The divine Manes are always pleased with an oblation *in empty glades*,

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

136 quite close to me. Presently one of them lit on my wrist, and began sipping the moisture as it came from my skin. The second insect quickly followed exactly the same procedure on my slowly extending my arm.

At a small puddle, measuring about 2 ft. by 18 in., I found the whole of the damp ground covered with wasps sipping the moisture.

Some idea of the dryness of the locality can be judged from these instances, and I submit that animal distribution must be affected thereby.

137 The distribution of plants, not of direct value to man, moreover shows certain erratic conditions. The most striking instance of this is in the distribution of the Dipterocarps. At Monaragala, and a little to the eastward, our common Hora (*Dipterocarpus zeylanicus*) is moderately plentiful. From Liyangalla onwards towards the east it is absent, but to the north-east of Siyambala-anduwa, near the village of Newgalla, one finds fringes of *Vatica obscura* on the banks of the dry streams; in other words, there is an enormous belt of country the opposite sides of which have representations of this important order of trees, with no examples in the intermediate area.

On the other hand I found no examples of *Vatica obscura* to the south of Siyambala-anduwa on any of the streams I crossed.

Of the Dilleniaceæ, I found *Dillenia indica* on the higher reaches of the Heda-oya, and a few individual examples—probably introduced—towards Waragoda in the north and at Kumuna in the south-east.

Of the Anonaceæ, the usual dry-zone *Polyalthias* are very abundant. Both *Anamirta paniculata* and *Tinospora cordifolia* are abundant representations of the Menispermaceæ.

In the tanks where there was water, both *Nymphæa lotus* and *Nelumbium speciosum* are common Lotuses. Both roots [222] and bulbs of these plants are eaten.

In some of the chenas I found *Brassica juncea* grown with the other crops, but I could get no definite explanation why it was cultivated.

Of the Capparideæ, the typical *Capparis zeylanica* is plentiful. [262] Its fruits are eaten by the Veddas as well as the Tamils. I

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Of the Sapotaceæ, by far the most important is the Palu (*Mimusops hexandra*), but its distribution is erratic. It is plentiful between Lahugala and Pottuvil, but the individual trees are not large. Towards the Heda-oya, and in the arid country west of Panawa, it also occurs plentifully, but towards the Kumbukkan valley it again ceases to be abundant. This erratic distribution in a country that favours the growth of Palu is probably, as suggested earlier in this Paper, the outcome of early trade in this valuable timber. 137

Munamal (*Mimusops elengi*) occurs very frequently, but does not become very large. *Bassia longifolia* I have already referred to. It is very plentiful up the Kumbukkan river, the trees there attaining an enormous size; elsewhere it is practically rare.

Of the Ebenaceæ, perhaps the most common is *Diospyros embryopteris*, that occurs where there is moisture near at hand. The Veddas eat its fruit. [262]

D. ebenum, like "Palu," appears to have been largely exploited, with the result that it is only in remote spots that it is to be found in any abundance. *D. ovalifolia* occasional, growing in patches.

Both *Salvadora persica* and *Azima tetracantha* are abundant, the former being common near the coast, but neither in real forests.

Of the Apocynaceæ, the most distressingly common is undoubtedly *Carissa spinarum*, that occurs always where treed forest has been cleared. *Cerbera odollam* is fairly plentiful in the Panawa Pattu, and is regarded as useful for fencing fields.

Plumeria acutifolia is always associated with temples, abandoned or otherwise, but I failed to obtain any information regarding its introduction.

Alstonia scholaris is not uncommon, and attains enormous proportions.

Tabernæmontana dichotoma is also to be found sparingly, but generally in damp spots.

Of Asclepiads, *Hemidesmus indicus* is very plentiful in waste land.

Calotropis gigantea is very abundant, especially near the sea.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

in waste ground, as if introduced. *Sesamum indicum* is sparingly cultivated. 137

The Verbenaceæ afford, among many others, the valuable Milla (*Vitex altissima*), which is generally plentiful. I am inclined to doubt if var. *alata* can be sustained, as I repeatedly obtained examples of "broadly-winged" petiolated leaves on the same tree that bore normally petiolated leaves. This "winging" of the leaf stalk appears to be a matter of maturity, as in very young shoots the "wings" are often markedly pronounced. *V. leucoxylon* is common about tanks. *Gmelina asiatica* is moderately common in waste ground near habitations. *Premna tomentosa* and *P. serratifolia* are both abundant, the leaves of the latter being eaten. *Avicennia officinalis* is common in wet ground near the coast.

Passing to the Lauraceæ, the most useful is the well known "Ranai" (*Persea semecarpifolia*), fairly common in the forest areas, especially south of Kallu Obba and below Degalhela.

Of the Thymeleæaceæ, I repeatedly obtained *Gyrinops walla*, its value as a cordage being known to the Sinhalese Veddas.

With a rapid glance at the Euphorbiaceæ and the Urticaceæ I must conclude my notes on the plants of the Vedda country :—

Euphorbia antiquorum is frequently to be met with, but it does not attain the proportions so marked in the Hambantota District.

E. tortilis, if I may accept a *4-winged* branch as indicating this species, I observed near Buddama.

E. tirucalli is common as a hedge plant, especially near the coast.

Bridelia retusa. Rather common.

Phyllanthus emblica. Occasional, more common towards Monaragala.

Flueggea leucopyrus. Very common in land that has been cleared.

Hemicyclia sepiaria. Exceedingly abundant. Its fruits are much relished by the Veddas, and, I might also add, by bears and monkeys. [262]

Mischodon zeylanicus occurs sparingly by the rivers, but is not generally distributed.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of [342] these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

● 262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schleichera trijuga, Nephelium longana, respectively.*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as *na* leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [325] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "These fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in 222 families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 252 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 757 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 262 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all 164 were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit [757] and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: 000 those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kuhula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botua-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
[281 open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats.
362] Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[84] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda,
[171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *henda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukkan* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapu*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukkan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothurupathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena*; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house"; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned:

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain: it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good!

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes: *Gona-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

5; Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291 When Kauwa was young his people wore threshed *riti** bark suspended
[287] from the waist by a *riti* strip. A Vedda belle would sometimes trick
824 herself out in such adornments as a *riti* collar sewn at the back with
nuga† fibre, anklets of red ixora blooms, lotus petals in ear lobes and as
301 garlands round neck and loins, and circlets of strung wild jasmine round
the hair knot. Difficult, though it be, to reconcile this picture with
the wretched specimens one meets to-day, it must be admitted that
Kauwa had no imagination to run loose. An old song tells of Vedda
maidens whose heads were adorned with peacock plumes.

844 Vedda man and wife usually walk the forest together, and accouche-
ments often occur away from home and female assistance; the man then
845 does duty for midwife by placing the woman with her back to a rock
and two stones to her feet. For nine days after child-birth he feeds her
262 only on *gonala* yams and the flesh of monitors.

*Antiaris toxicaria.
† *Ficus altissima*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

787 To ignore such warnings would be to court failure or even disaster. When a *kotaka* (large gekko) quaintly cries "krok, krok," a Vedda will seriously lean towards it and ask, "Shall we shoot a monkey to-morrow?" "Krok," says the *kotaka*, and the questioner's face falls, for here no answer is good news. Then there is that subtle thing the *kille*, an evil
778 influence possessed by certain kinds of meat when eaten under circum-
262 stances too involved to explain. The flesh of pigs, peafowl, langurs and a species of fish (*urang*, *monerang*, *wandoorang*, *magurang*) are said to have this property; but here it would seem that the rhyming of the names has something to do with their evil association.

776 There is an interesting little spirit, belief in which (as with many of the other superstitions already mentioned) is as universal among the Sinhalese as the Veddas. *Bolhili*, *Vilirany*, or *Kunnu-yakkini** (dirty she-devil) is its name. It is said to have a nasty nack of grasping one's leg in the dark, and so making it wither to the thinness of an *illuk*-blade. The incarnation of a woman who died in child-birth it is thought to be, and comes moaning at night in the form of a light. The story is best told in the words of a solemnly sworn eye-witness:—Kalu Banda (the narrator) and his sister Balahamy were occupying a watch-hut in a *kurrukhan* field one dark night when they heard a moaning as of one in pain—"*andoa, andoa, oo oo oo.*" Kalu Banda, suspecting what it was, told his sister not to speak—for the *villirany* is shy of women and vanishes at the sound of their voice. He then charmed a little oil, and placing it some distance away, called out, "If you have a stomach-ache, come, rub some oil, and go away." A shadow appeared at which Kalu Banda
[825] fired. On going to the spot, what should he find but a green blood-sucker, with a red head! This is said to be the invariable discovery when the *bodili* is killed. The same is said of the devil bird; but here apparently the rule has exceptions; for I have met several people who shot at devil birds, and had a bird to show.

825 The identity of the devil-bird—*ulama* or *ulalena*——is still a matter of doubt; and it is a pity that those who have had the rare fortune to shoot this bird have not thought it worth their while to send it up for identification. Much of the mystery surrounding it is due to the fact that it cries only at night and has wide and sporadic circuits. That it has some sort of a crest, I think, there can be no doubt; also that it is a large bird mottled in its breast feathers like a jungle-hen. These particulars all my reliable informants (who shot the bird as it cried at night) have independently confirmed. It is supposed to be the brown wood owl (*Surnium indrani*) by some, the *Huhua nepalensis* by others. The theory that different birds are capable of uttering the devil-bird's cry, is, I think, quite untenable. Its note is too invariable and distinctive for that.

825 The cry of the *ulama*, like that of the owl (*bakumuna*) and *hanga*, is
787 said to be a portent, varying according to its direction. Should it come from the west, it forbodes rain; from the east, good luck; from the north, the visit of a relative or friend; from the south, a death. One of these birds hovered about our camp one night uttering its blood-curdling calls, now from this direction, now from that, baffling the ingenuity of
825 its interpreters! Its "hoo-oo" is most eerily human; but it has an even worse note, a gurgling chuckle, strongly suggestive of a person

*This is perhaps none other than the Ceylon loris.

λ [a species of lizard.— Ms. Ed.]

5: Spittel · D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

177 535

attributed to Sinhalese influence, especially the substitution of the mortar for the tripod, the drum for the slapping of hands and thighs, and the introduction of the coconut scraper and betel leaves.

The *hirlhorahs* (milk-chatty)* dance has for its object the co-operation of certain ancestral spirits (*Nae Yakhu*) in hunting enterprises. The occasion for it is a period of repeated ill luck, which is attributed to the disfavour of these spirits, whose names are, *Kande Yakha*, the great hunter, his brother *Bilinde Yakha* and their wives *Kudu Hora* (nest thief) and *Pol Hora* (coconut thief) respectively; also *Hath-kudu Hora* (seven-nests thief), elder brother of the two she demons. Significant signs in the ceremony are the fine bubbles that form when the coconut milk is handled, and the manner in which the coconut divides; if the halves are equal the omen is good, in unequal, bad.

535 786 [776] [787]

In a clearing was placed a mortar and on it a bowl containing a coconut with two arrows laid across the brim. Kaurala, the dancer, took care to eat no meat that morning. Having smeared his head with lime-juice and his body with saffron, he would have worn a white cloth borrowed for the purpose, had we not dissuaded him from covering his picturesque nudity, much to the disapproval of the other Veddas who feared the anger of the spirits invoked.

[262]

The dance began quietly enough. Taking up the coconut and an arrow, the performer clasped them together in his hands which he placed now on the shoulder, now on the head, now well before him, as he walked round the mortar chanting a supplication to *Kande Yakha*. Soon he began hopping alternately on each heel, making half-turns with the body so characteristic of Vedda dances, and sweeping his arms semi-circularly. Gradually the monotonous song loudened to the drum-beats, and more and more vigorous became the contortions of the dancer, whose shaggy hair covered his face and whose body streamed with sweat. So he danced for perhaps a half hour, when suddenly he became as one possessed. *Kande Yakha* had "covered" him. Shouting the fearful name he staggered to the mortar and, bending over the bowl, split the coconut in halves. He stood by panting, while the coconut was scraped, the milk prepared, and seven betel leaves were arranged around the sides of the bowl, which was then replaced on the mortar with a single arrow across it. The other arrow, with a betel leaf transfixed in its point, was now in the hands of the dancer who holding it at both ends resumed his movements. *Bilinde Yakha*, the spirit next invoked, soon possessed him. The dance was then continued to each of the other spirits, male and female, in turn. By each of these he was successively possessed. With each possession the strange, wild-eyed figure before us, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, shouted the name of the mastering demon,† and threw lifeless hands on the shoulders of one or other of the onlookers as if for support. Eventually, when the frenzy was at its height, he had just breath enough to gasp out the inspired message that the spirits were propitious and success was assured‡. With his forearm he indicated the length of the quarry's horns and, pointing to the heavens, the favourable time for starting. Then, taking up the two arrows and the bowl containing the two halves of the coconut, the milk and the betel leaves, he danced

*Coconut milk is the juice obtained by squeezing out with water the scraped kernel of the coconut.

†*Pana hiyanawa.*

‡*Hooy galgewara magalak alla thenawa.*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

267 224 There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

252 [482] One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter 262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 824 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a [251 252] little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle like meat.

222 Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galseembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, [261] *katuala*, *hirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galseembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 752 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapotho*, *anguluo*, *lulo*, *kuluhanao*, *kanupatho*, *anilo* (eels), *maguro*, *kungo*, *keheliyo*, *pelky*, *walihondo*, *sethalu*, *badapathalo*, *walihairiyo*, *piniweliyo*, *kovalayo*, *galpanduruo*.

† *Kuhurumang-gedde*, *halu-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

HIVES

There are five varieties of honey bee in Ceylon :—The large *bambara* (*Apis dorsata*) that builds huge combs of very pure wax on bare hill sides and the large branches of lofty trees ; the *mee massa* (*Apis indica*) sweetest honey bee of all, whose combs are to be found in hollow trees, rock-clefts and within ant-hills ; the *dandual massa* (*Apis florea*), the smallest honey-bee in the world, that hives on rocks and boughs ; the *kanava massa* (Rosin or Dammar bee) a docile, stingless, friendly little creature whose long black combs within tree crevices yield a delicious, if heady, honey ; the *kotha massa*, an even smaller species, whose puny comb is hardly worth the taking. 222 136

Kanava and *kotha* combs are available all the year round ; they are the *pathinchiharayas* or stayers. If the Vedda is hungry it is for one of these he goes at a pinch. The *bambara* and *mee massa*, the most abundant honey makers, are seasonal in their habits ; and June and July are the great honey months ; the fruit season synchronising with this, marks these months as the festive time of the jungle ; then the Veddas leave their homes for caves and stream beds, take their fill, and have a surplus for barter. 222 [439]

On the flavours of honey the Veddas are connoisseurs. They can tell by tasting a comb the flower or medley of flowers that contributed to its making. That honey is relished most which prevails when the *mora*, *veera* and *galseembela* are in bloom. [151 262]

Honey gathering is the master art of the Vedda. Supreme as he is in other jungle crafts, he is supremest in this. As he travels through the forest he is alive to the faintest hum, and no hive, however concealed, escapes him. His adroitness in tracking a bee to its lair is well described in a delightfully euphonious song they have (beginning, *Thomba, thomba Gomba me-na-na*), that tells of a Vedda Thutha who goes on the honey quest with his brothers Gomba and Naga. Thutha leads in the trail of a particular bee ; and as he goes he sings to his brothers, indicating various trees in which bees are busy ; but not decoyed by these, and with his eye steadily on the bee he first sighted, he follows it, till eventually it guides him to its hive within the skull of an elephant—*kolanathe gatche* (tree without leaves) as he quaintly describes. [533]

The taking of any hive, other than that of the rock *bambara*, is a very simple thing for the Vedda. All he does is to climb the tree, steady himself at the hole containing the comb, and blow into it to drive the bees away. Then with his axe he enlarges the opening sufficiently to enable him to introduce a hand and secure the cache, stopping every now and then to blow inside or to slap an offending bee. He eats the comb at his perch, grubs and all, throwing down fragments to those below.

The *bambara* comb is quite a different proposition. These great bees build high on the precipitous sides of rocks ; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only. A dangling cane at Westminster Abbey gave us some idea of the daring of the enterprise. To reach the combs ladders of vines are lowered from the summit of the rock ; and down these the collector descends ; as this does not bring him within arm's length of the hives, he has usually to rely on the use of a long stake. Sometimes [417 481]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

and terrified they stood around the border. Then did the Saviour cause the pleasant Giridipa (Highlands) to come here near to them, and when they had settled there, he made it return to its former place. Then did the Saviour fold his rug of skin; the devas assembled, and in their assembly the Master preached them the doctrine. The conversion of many kotis of living beings took place and countless were those who came into the precepts of duty. The prince of the devas craved of him something to worship. The Conqueror, who had pure and blue black locks, passing his hand over his head, bestowed on him a handful of hairs. And he, receiving this in a splendid golden urn, when he had laid the hairs on a heap of many coloured gems, seven cubits round, piled up at the place where the Master had sat, covered them over with the thupa of sapphire and worshipped them.

"When Sambuddha had died, the thera Sarabhu, by his miraculous power, received, even from the funeral pyre, the collar bone of the Conqueror and brought it to Lanka and laid it in that same cetiya.

"The king Dutthagamini, dwelling there while he made war upon the Damilas (Tamils) built a mantle cetiya over it eighty cubits high. Thus was the Mahiyangana-thupa completed."

Barely four miles from Alutnuwara is the beautiful tank of Horabora Wewa whose vast waters have been cunningly trapped by a great earth work or bund, amidst a natural barrier of surrounding hills. As one sits here of an evening and looks across with field-glasses to the wilder opposite shore, small herds of deer may be seen feeding on the grassy edge between forest and lake; and in the drought, herds of elephants come to the water. White cranes fly overhead to roost on the bordering trees at dusk. Placed as it is in the heart of the Vedda country, this tank has long been associated with the Veddas. To-day only a few very destitute families of half-Veddas are to be found at Malgoda on the borders of the tank, living in the crudest of shelters, and feeding for the most part on the seeds of lotus pods (*olu*).

By an ancient sluice cut out of stone,* the tank-water is conducted along a channel to a wide stretch of paddy fields, now mostly in disuse owing to the paucity of the population. This brimming waterway, its grassy banks studded with beautiful trees, affords many a delightful picture, especially where the lotus thrives with its large, snow-white blossoms and no less beautiful leaves be-diamonded with sparkling droplets of water. Here halcyons fish all day. Up to recent years the tank itself was covered with lotus; but now, for some reason or other, there is none; and when no breeze stirs the glassy waters at midday, they reflect an ever changing panorama of dazzling clouds only broken where a darter or cormorant gambols.

It is not surprising that so beautiful a tank should have inspired a fine poem, of which I have attempted a poor translation that does scant justice to the euphonious idioms, the long vowel cadences, the alliterations, and rhymes of the Sinhalese original.

*Tradition has it that two giants (*yodhayas*) sat here on opposite sides of a crack in the great rock, and each, seizing that part on which he was seated with his hands, and thrusting with his foot against the other, wrenched the rocks apart, making an outlet for the water!

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukhan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukhan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukhan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of [342] these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164 *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146 children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee relhee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schleichera trijuga, Nephelium longana, respectively.*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kuhula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botua-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
[281 362] open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[84] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda,
[171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VIII

MAGIC

789 In the chapters upon religion we have described those ceremonies and observances of the Veddas which depend for their efficacy upon the successful appeal to some extra-human personal influence. In this section we shall discuss a number of actions which we consider magical, that is, actions which are expected to produce the required result automatically by virtue of their own intrinsic qualities.

One of the first things we noted during our stay in the Vedda country was the very slight part which magic played in the life of the Veddas. The more we saw of the people the more convinced we became of this. It seems to us that among the uncontaminated Veddas of two or three generations ago magical practices were almost entirely absent, and even at the present day the few remaining Veddas who have not been much exposed to foreign influence have scarcely any customs that are truly magical.

789 266 We include in this chapter the custom which formerly existed of eating a small piece of human liver in times of great stress, for even if this custom be not considered magical in the strict sense, it is clearly based on principles which lie at the root of many magical beliefs.

789 Since it is important to make thoroughly clear the absence of many forms of magic, we shall consider the condition of the different communities with regard to some of the most commonly occurring forms.

Magic directed against the Individual.

754 This is completely absent except among the village Veddas, which is all the more surprising in view of the extraordinary

[p. 190]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

success in honey gathering, the shaman asked us for two strings of beads. These beads he placed over betel leaves upon two arrows thrust in the centre of the dancing ground which were surrounded by betel leaves offered to the *yaka*. These beads were said to represent the rough rope of creeper with which the green twigs forming the smoker were secured and the rope by which the smoker was lowered to the comb.

When it is remembered that Veddas do not tattoo or paint themselves, and have never been seen wearing any kind of seeds as ornaments, it seems reasonable to assume that where beads are sought after by the Veddas they are valued for their supposed magical properties.

In conclusion we may give the only perfectly clear instance of a Vedda wearing an amulet with which we are acquainted. The shaman of Bandaraduwa wore on his wrist a small silver cylinder such as is commonly used to contain a written charm. The cylinder was empty and had never contained a charm, but the shaman told us that he wore it in order to be cured of an illness from which he had suffered formerly, and that presently he would give the cylinder to some pilgrim proceeding to Kataragam in order that he might deposit it in the temple there.

The Eating of Human Liver.

Every group of Veddas except the most sophisticated village Veddas believe that it was formerly the custom for a man to carry in his betel pouch a small piece of dry human liver. But the majority of our informants were not clear as to the exact reason for doing this, though they were all agreed that it had something to do with raising a man's valour and making him strong to bear trouble. It was essential that the liver should be taken from a man killed by the individual who proposed to carry a portion of the dried liver in his pouch. When a man had been killed the slayer would open his belly and take out a small portion of his liver which he would dry in the sun in a secret place. This custom appears to have ceased about three generations ago, but the following instance, said to have occurred about fifty years ago, was given us at Bandaraduwa.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
266

The headman of a small group of Kovil Vanamai Veddas killed a Sinhalese simply because he required a piece of human liver to keep in his betel pouch. In spite of this example the Bandaraduwa people could not tell us exactly how it was used, and it was only at Sitala Wanniya that it was ascertained that the purpose of the dried liver was to make men strong and confident to avenge insults. A man would bite off a piece of the dried liver and chew it, saying to himself: "I have killed this man; why should I not be strong and confident and kill this other one who has insulted me?" As far as we could understand a Vedda might thus work himself up into a condition of berseker fury, but this was only done after very serious insult, as when a man's wife had been carried off or been unfaithful, or when his bow and arrows had been stolen or an attempt made to take his land or caves[1].

[1] It was doubtless an exaggerated account of this practice that led Gillings to accuse the Veddas of cannibalism (*Journ. Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, 1853).

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 for the simple scrape of the ground. After some time when the circle had become quite broken the three dancers grunted loudly "Oh-h-h," and held their arrows up to the sky toward which they waved them before suddenly falling flat on their backs. They were lifted up and supported by a companion, and they then approached the Sinhalese headman who was present and promised him and one of us a white buffalo each for the next day. This was done in a manner we afterwards recognised to have been an excellent imitation of the actions of one possessed by the *yaku*, though it is certain that this dance was not a real possession dance, while the condition of the pulse in the dancers, surprisingly quiet in view of the violent exercise they had taken, showed that the falling down was not due to exhaustion. In other figures no arrow was planted in the ground and the dance did not begin with a circular movement; in some of these figures the point of the arrow which is in the right hand may be lowered almost to the ground, and the obliquely inclined arrow swept forward and backward perhaps in imitation of a shaman possessed by Kande Yaka tracking the sambar in the manner described in the account of the *kirikoraha*.

The Kirikoraha Ceremony.

796 The pantomimic ceremonial dance by which the favour of the spirits (*yaku*) of the hunting hero Kande Wanniya and his brother Bilindi is secured is called *kirikoraha*. It must be noted that this term, literally translated, signifies "milk bowl," and though the presentation to the *yaku* of a *kirikoraha*, i.e. a pot containing coconut milk, is essential in several other ceremonies they were not called *kirikoraha*. The "milk" consists of the fluid which can be squeezed from the shredded meat of the [272] coconut and is mixed with water. If the coconut juice be not diluted excessively the fluid so produced has a very pleasant flavour, and in appearance is not unlike milk[1]. Whenever "milk" is spoken of as offered to the *yaku* this fluid is meant: the "water" of the coconut is not valued, and though it may be used in preparing the milk instead of water (as was the case at

[1] This is the usual method throughout Ceylon of making the coconut milk so largely used as a flavouring agent.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Munronia pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
824 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

● 273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 662

The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802

The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantako*. 437 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 582 584 583 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of 614 554 [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the huts in the Morane chena settlement at Henebedda. It was shown us with pride by Handuna who said he was keeping it for his twelve year old son. He told us that in the old days the hollow branches, the homes of colonies of these bees, were frequently kept in the rock-shelters. 231

The ladder with the help of which *bambara* honey is collected consists of a greatly elongated loop of cane, apparently derived from a species of *Calamus*, across which rungs of creeper are stretched. In Plate LV (p. 290) there can be seen the bottom of the ladder some fifty feet long, used for training the young, hung from the top of the cliff across the face of the rock mass at Sitala Wanniya. In spite of the fact that honey is usually gathered at night the Veddas do not travel or hunt at night and know only two stars by name. One of these is a star or more probably a planet which often appears close to the moon and is called *pantaru* which, we were told, is the name by which the Sinhalese know it. The other named star appears soon after sunset, always in the same place and before the other stars, and is almost certainly Venus; this is called *irabada tarua*, i.e. "side of sun star." Although the Veddas hunt in the dusk of the dawn the idea that anyone would roam about at night seemed absolutely ludicrous to them (Sitala Wanniya), they roared with laughter at it, "why should one go into the jungle? it would be too dark to see to shoot, besides bears are about, absurd idea," they laughed again, in fact it was quite ten minutes before Kaira had forgotten the joke. 222 417 821 [484] 621 522

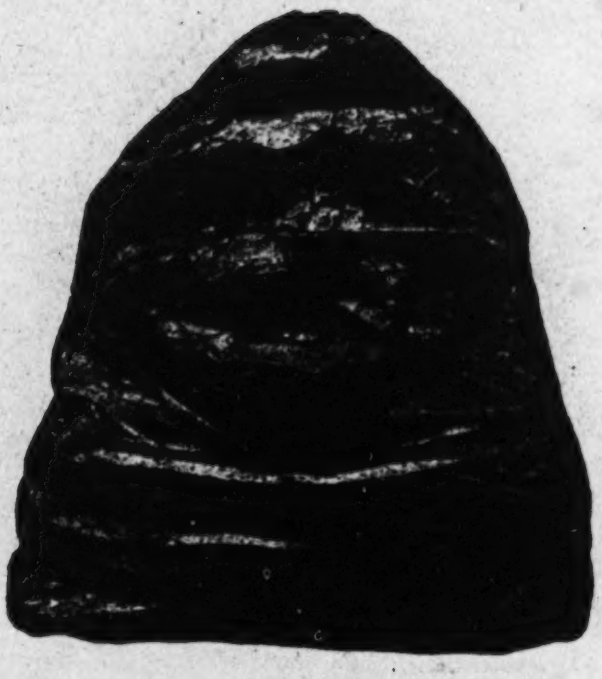
MASTICATORIES.

All Veddas chew eagerly, but as they can rarely obtain a supply of areca nuts they commonly use instead of these the bark of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) and the *dawata* tree (*Carallia integerrima*). Concerning the other plants that they use as masticatories Nevill says, "They occasionally chew the leaves of several aromatic herbs, particularly *Anisochilus suffruticosus*, a sort of sage that grows on rocks. The areca does not grow wild in the Eastern Province, but Veddas are very fond of the seeds of the lakada bush, *Gardenia carinata*, a 261 276

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXVII

415
281
●276



Betel pouch made of monkey skin (Hanabadda)

[facing p. 330]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

261 beautiful species of Gardenia with fragant flowers and crimped
276 laurel-like leaves. These seeds or nuts are astringent and to me resemble exactly in taste those of the areca palm. They are only an occasional luxury however. The bark which he chews is almost a necessity to a Vedda, the leaves or seeds a mere luxury[1]."

[825] It is not always that the Veddas can obtain lime, which they make by burning the shells of a land snail *wantaeko* (*Cyclo-*
276 *phorus involvulus*). The shells are laid on red hot pieces of charcoal, more glowing embers are heaped around and upon them, and the whole is fanned with a tuft of green leaves for a few minutes, when the embers surrounding the shells are raked away and the shells allowed to cool before being crushed and dropped into the vessel in which the lime is carried. This is
[415] often a tin match box or it may be a brass covered cartridge case. Specially made lime spatulae do not exist, but one Vedda of Henebedda had a long broad nail with which he removed the lime from his tin match box.

The betel pouch is usually a roughly sewn bag of trade
276 cloth, but the Henebedda Veddas also make pouches of monkey
415 skin, one of which is shown in Plate LXVII. We omitted to inquire how the hair was removed, but probably it was singed off, the whole skin being subsequently scraped.

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. I. p. 191.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

539 *Wattu ḷhunen ḷaṇa nōyeyi*
539 *Wassen ḷiṇuṇu ḷaṇa nōyeyi*
Kuḍā ḷeṭa nattīn ḷaṇa yannōyi
Kuḍā ḷeṭa nattīn ḷaṇa yannōyi.

For (want) of gruel or food, the life will not depart (i.e. man will not die); owing to cold or wind, the life will not depart; owing to rain or dew, the life will not depart. If there be no wife, the life will depart.

VI. *Tānan taṇḍen tānānē*
Man sohda baḍuwak dekn gattīm
Man sohda baḍuwak dekn gattīm
Mohada mohada bola kiri nānē
Mohada mohada bola kiri nānē
Ēhenu kīyena baḍuwak nowcyi madaka gattē bola nānē
Aru ḷallē talāwē tibānu
Dānkuḍikkiya bōla dak gattīm.

Tānan taṇḍen tānānē.

I have seen a fine thing and taken it. What is it, what is it, oh good *nānē*? *Nāna*, the thing which I saw and picked up is not one that I will mention readily. You *nāna*, what I saw and picked up is the smoking pipe which was on that distant high ground (lit. back high-ground).

[276] The Sinhalese do not smoke pipes, and the Veddas do not smoke at all; on questioning our informants we were told that this song was only two or three generations old and referred to the finding of a pipe dropped by a white sportsman.

The next song recorded at Bandaraduwa alludes to the suicide of two Vedda women and has been referred to already on pages 322 and 323. Only the first part of the song, containing no direct reference to the final tragedy, was taken down.

VII. *Akkīnam akkīnam yanḍā wārēnan*
Aṭi dennāgē wanuṭlā enḍāmo nāti
Bālanḍa yanḍowa wārē naṅgā
Naṅgā nan naṅgā aṭi dennāgē wanuṭlā
Duwagena ennan bālanḍā wārē naṅgā nan naṅgā
Akkī nam akkī nam maṭa bāsuru bārī nam bārī nam
Naṅgā nam naṅgā nam wārē nam wārē nam
Aṭi dennāgē wanuṭlā wellikanḍiyēn duwagen ennan
Bālanḍu wārēn.

Elder sister, elder sister, come to go. Our husbands have not returned; come younger sister, let us go to look for them. Younger sister, younger sister, the husbands of us two are coming running. Younger sister, younger

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

142 The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

291 Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable. A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments.† Indeed, almost the only difference [304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have [301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

515 Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

302 Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait, 114 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smok- [276] ing is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

181 When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*artiaris innoria*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.); the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411] carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412 were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [164] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and [146] framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even 177 their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee reihee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

504 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schleichera trijuga, Nephelium longana,* respectively.

3. SOME VEDDA ARTS AND A DANCE

EDIBLE LIME

321 276 [237] THE Vedda method of making from snail-shells an edible lime, the concomitant of a betel or bark chew, is interesting. Four varieties of snail afford it :—The large, white, land snails (*wantako* or *godang bello*) ; the small, black, river snails (*alang bello* or *gadu bello*), found in dry stream beds ; the bivalved *ethal bello* ; and the convoluted *kankuro* or *lanu bello*.

The *wantako* give the best lime. Six to twelve of their shells are dropped into a small fire, and a layer of dry twigs is laid over them. The flame is now vigorously fanned with a leafy sprig, to prevent the shells getting charred. When the overlying layer of twigs is reduced to embers, and the shells glow white, they are gently picked off with a stick, taken on the palm and placed in a large leaf (*kenda* or *halmilla*). A little water is then added or, in its absence, saliva ! The leaf is quickly folded over the shells which now disintegrate and " ripen." They are then smashed up with the fingers, and the chunam is distributed.

When the small *gadu bello* are used, the process is slightly different : the burnt shells, moistened and bundled in a leaf as before, are replaced on the embers quietened down with a sprinkling of water. The chunam from these is coarser and more gritty than that from the *wantako*.

FIRE MAKING

372 Fire is obtained by jungle folk in a variety of ways. When gun-powder is to hand there is a choice of two methods : (*a*) A little powder is placed on a stone and closely surrounded with small fragments of cloth or tree cotton. It is then ignited, and the rag set on fire, by striking it sharply with an axe-head previously warmed by rubbing on a rock. (*b*) When, in addition to powder, a cap is available, the powder is put into a small square of rag with the upturned cap in its centre. Into the cap the point of a knife is inserted, and the rag is closed over and clapsed firmly against the blade. The striking of this on a stone explodes the cap, ignites the powder, and lights the rag.

These methods being too wasteful for routine use, the commonest mode of fire-making in the jungles is by means of a C-shape iron strike-a-light (*gini-katuwa*) and a piece of chert or crystalline quartz (*irimana gal*), against which is a piece of *kitul* cotton or rag to take the spark when the two are struck together.

The most primitive, and essentially Vedda, art of making fire is by the attrition of two sticks. Although I had hitherto travelled much in Ceylon forests, always making inquiries about this mode of obtaining [184] fire, it was not until I came to Bingoda that I was able to see it done, and that with astonishing ease. In Henebedde and Bintenne the art was dead ; indeed some of the Veddas had never even heard of it !

The light *velang* stick of which arrows are made is the wood *par excellence* for fire making. Elephants being fond of the tree, the dry

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

757
752
832
276
824

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kokomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *kansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *neeagalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-kadurugedde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *kirinthea*.

276

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *kansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat.

832
539

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams.

342
[178]
[574]

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho,*" he shouts. "*Kiribala, karia, karia, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho.*" A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them.

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps 226 were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *nahapata*, *pusilpata* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Munronia pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
824 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 It is almost superfluous to remark that the Rhamnaceæ are abundantly represented by various forms of *Zizyphus*, both as an abominable thorny climbing bush, or in the more elegant *Z. jujuba*. *Scutia indica* is plentiful near damp spots, while *Ventilago maderaspatana* is most abundant.

Vitis quadrangularis is, perhaps, the most common example of the Ampilideæ, while *Leea sambucina* is specially noticeable in the vicinity of large streams.

The Sapindaceæ afford plentiful examples in *Allophylus cobbe*, *Sapindus emarginatus*, or soap-nut, *Nephelium longana* (*Mora*, Sinhalese), *Schleichera trijuga* (*Kon*, Sinhalese), and *Glenica zeylanica*, all of which are about equally distributed.

[824 In waste ground the creeping *Cardiospermum halicacabum* ● 278] is plentiful; its use as a tonic appears to have been known to the Veddas.

I also observed *Dodonæa viscosa* in a few isolated places, particularly near Wattegama, but to my surprise its use as an embrocation was apparently unknown.

Of the Anacardiaceæ, if we except cultivated species, few occur. The wild mango (*Mangifera zeylanica*) is to be found near or in the Heda-oya valley, but not in great profusion. *Odina wordier* is to some extent cultivated, as it is frequently to be found preserved where there are fields. *Nothopegia colebrookiana* is seemingly unknown to the people, though I found it frequently. *Spondias mangifera* I believe to have been introduced.

Passing to the Calycifloræ, the small order of Connaraceæ finds as its best representative the widely distributed *Connarus monocarpus*, that appears to thrive equally well in the wet [824] and dry zones. I found it in abundance in some of the driest situations. It is said to be of use for buffalo ropes.

Of the Leguminosæ, space considerations oblige me to make but the briefest reference to the better known examples in a list form :—

Crotalaria retusa. In open waste places.
C. striata. Occasional, in dry fields.
Indigofera pauciflora. In abandoned fields.
I. hirsuta. In waste places and road sides.
Æschynomene aspera. In damp places or puddles.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

415
●281

Plate LXV

Deerskin vessel (mulaidanna) used for collecting honey

[facing p. 328a]

Plate LXVII

415
281
276

Betel pouch made of monkey skin (Hambrubbi)

[facing p. 330]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kukula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *kotus-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by
[281 his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
362] open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[84] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda,
[171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *henda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

5: Spitzel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the
[103] sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, bandicoots, lizards and
[136] poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated.
621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though
[262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They
[287] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that
[281] ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide,
415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin,
[534] stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as
224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for
222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among
461 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothuru-pathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

224
292
534
535

The dancers of Bowala. (Page 49)

Wooden a weighted frame used for trapping animals. (Page 49)

281
287
415

Bag made of threaded rib bark and monkey skin pouch. (Page 49)

[Facing p. 49]

323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a [531 177] rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made [172] pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

Tools and Weapons.

411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by [437] barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes 411 or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *kobbevel* 322 (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained, it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of [283 314] a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the tinbiri tree (Diospyros embryopteris).

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

element as they are in the midst of a civilized crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear. 181 [481]

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back. 411 [412]

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡ [147] [283]

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made," and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not 439

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonoomadala (*sterospermum chelonoides*), the kekala (*cyathocalyx zeylanicus*), a creeper called kobbówel, or the pandéro tree. [814]

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zeylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the areloowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 to catch the hum of bees, which so instantaneously struck his ear. Their forest life naturally quickens their powers both of seeing and hearing, and renders them, in these respects, far superior to those whose more civilized lives do not compel them to rely on those faculties for their daily food.

They take honey in the manner common to the Singhalese. The bee-hunter enlarges with his small axe the hole in the tree at which the bee enters, and putting his mouth to the aperture, blows into it. This has generally the effect of making the bees fly out; or, at least, of making them vacate the comb, and retire into the innermost recesses of the hollow tree, when the honey can be taken with the hand. If this do not succeed, however, a second puff, after the bee-hunter has chewed some aromatic substance, has the desired effect.

Taking the honey of the bambera (*apis Indica*), a large and
222 very venomous bee, is a much more serious affair. This bee hives
283 on very lofty trees, or in clefts of precipitous rocks. If on a
481 tree, the hunter ties tendrils to it, and armed with a bundle of blazing faggots, climbs to the vicinity of the comb and smokes the bees out, being often severely stung during the operation. If in a cleft of rock, he will, if he cannot otherwise approach it, lower himself with ropes made of creepers, and take the honey by the same process.

To the Veddahs, honey is not only favourite food, but valuable
439 as an object of barter, for the Kandyans prize it greatly for medicinal purposes. They use it, too, as Knox tells us, for pre-
251 serving flesh. "They cut a hollow tree and put honey in it, and then fill it with flesh, and stop it with clay, which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want."* And when they are short of food, they mix honey with decayed wood, and so eat it. It
261 satisfies their craving more readily than plain honey. Davy properly describes the practice, as "not so much for nourishment as to distend the empty stomach and to allay the distressing feelings of emptiness and the pains of hunger." It is curious that Tennent should have entirely omitted all allusion to this remarkable custom. "Romba" is the term used by the Veddahs, for this decayed wood, and the practice I have described may have given rise to the epithet, which Knox applies to the "wild sort" called "Ramba Veddahs," who, he says, "never shew themselves" —but no "sort" is so called now, nor is the name remembered.†

---

* Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63.

† Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63. The wood so used is chiefly that of the
[824] criminia creeper (*zizyphus œnophlia*, Mill.), the ettamba—wild mango (*mangifera Indica*, Quin.), the weera (*hemicyclia sepiaria*, W. and A.), the rêna, the nooga, a species of fig; any wood, indeed, not poisonous, is used. They reject the wood of the kaduru (*cerbera odallum*, Gaertn.), the goda

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
● [283 824] (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards
762 the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to
515 name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

5: Spitzel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

322 is taken, barked, and straightened by being passed rapidly a few times
411 through a flame, and then bent over the knee or between the hands. It is shaved down to uniform thickness with an arecanut-cutter or arrow blade, and cut to suitable length, roughly gauged by holding it along the outstretched arm from the nearer nipple to the end of the middle finger, giving it an average measure of two and a half feet, or slightly less. An arrow belonging to the great bow I have mentioned, measured three and a half feet. The nock or notch is a quarter of an inch deep and cut square.

411 The arrow is feathered with the wing plumes of the owl, devil-bird,
237 jungle-cock, or large crane (*mana koka*); the owl's, besides being the
284 best, are easily picked up along dry stream beds, on the trees bordering which the birds usually roost. A feather is split unequally down the rachis, only the larger segment being used. Four such segments, about two inches long, are arranged equidistantly round the shaft, an inch and a quarter from the end, and bound neatly down with *aralu* fire, the mouth helping in the process. The first turns are merely taken round that part of the shaft, which is immediately below the feathers, then round the bared lower ends of the rachis, and then carried along, at spaced intervals, between the carefully separated barbs. Should a strand not prove long enough, it is finished off by having its end tucked in between rachis and shaft, and another is similarly begun. Finally the ruffled barbs are straightened out between the thumb and fingers moistened with saliva. A few turns of fibre just below the notch serve to give grip to the drawing fingers.

411 The arrow-head is made of flattened iron obtained from local black-
smiths. It is three to five inches long, of lanceolate shape in imitation of the *na* leaf, and sharp at the edges; serving as much as a cutting implement as an arrow. By a tang it is let into the end of the shaft to which it is firmly secured with fibre. All the strung parts of the arrow,
[824] as well as the bow-string, are finally dressed with the sticky milk of *kiri-wel* to prevent untwisting. Both bow and arrow, being very liable to the ravages of boring insects, are always kept hung over the smoke when not in use.

The method of stringing the bow is by placing one end of it, to which the string is knotted, on the ground, and then pressing on its centre either with the bent knee or by a foot thrust. A correctly strung bow should measure at its centre a span between string and belly of bow; this is rather more than the "fist-mele" (clenched fist with thumb upright) the rough estimate of European stringing.

The arrow release favoured by the Veddas is that in which the cord is drawn with the first joints of the index and middle fingers, the arrow being usually placed on the left of the bow. The style of archery is often peculiar: the arrow fitted to the bow is raised head high; the right elbow is now swung up in an awkward flourish above the head, and then brought slowly down to alignment with the eye, as the string is drawn out to its fullest extent and the arrow delivered.

DANCING

177 The ceremonial dances of the Veddas have been minutely described
and illustrated by Seligmann. The dance we are about to describe
535 seems to have been performed before him in its greatest purity at Hene-bedde. The differences between his description and ours must be

222 the hives are beyond the reach even of this; and then, though the honey itself may not be secured, the wax may, by being dislodged with long bamboos and collected at the foot of the hill; *iti bambara* (wax hives) such combs are called. There are others, so safe under prominent brows, that they are absolutely untakeable; *yakhini baliya* (she-demon's portion) is the name of them.

[417] When the rock is not too high, the ladder is made long enough to reach the ground, where it can be held slantwise close up against the face of the rock, bringing the gatherer within easier access of the hive. But where the hill is too lofty for this, as usually happens, the ladder hangs free, and the gatherer may even have to swing to and fro to enable him to get at the combs. Nor is this all; the *bambaras*, several of which may kill a man, have to be reckoned with; they can only be dispersed by heavy smoking; and, what is worse, when several hives are clustered together in a colony, the work has to be done on a pitch dark night.

Imagine then the picture of the man smothered in smoke, assailed by angry bees, swinging in the darkness two hundred feet or more above the stony earth, with neck and knee hitched to the ladder so as to leave the arms free to manipulate torch and prong. Is it a wonder that every Vedda is not a *kapunkaraya* or cutter, but only the boldest of them; and that he, when he descends to his work, does so without thought in his heart of life or father or mother?*

222 417 234 We will now describe the scene as it actually takes place:—On Panihela were five large combs the Veddas meant to have one night. That morning they assembled on the rock. Their first business was to collect the canes and vines that go to the making of the ladder (*yothala*). Two canes, some twenty or thirty feet long and about an inch in diameter, were cut, dragged to the top of the hill, and lined out. Knotting the end of one to a tree they split it in half. One man, standing at the end, held these apart; while two others stood in between, constructing strong rungs at intervals of two feet with *kiriwel* creepers, which they first looped round the two halves of the cane and then bound together with a running twist. A ladder of any length may thus be constructed; for, should a single cane not be long enough, its ends are looped and interlocked with similar loops in another length of split cane. The ladder is finished off by overlapping and binding together the free ends in the form of an U. This is the type of ladder employed in the perilous descents; where the drop is easier they do not go to all this trouble, but merely split the end of the cane for a yard or so and tie a stick across; standing on this the man is lowered.

372 222 The ladder having been completed, the *hullas* or torches and the *matha* or forked stake are yet to make. The torches, four of which are required, are designed to give a maximum of smoke, and are therefore constructed by enclosing dry *mana* grass, leaves and bark within a sheath of green leafy twigs. The *matha* or *masleya* is a stake six feet long, made of the light *velang* or *walumala*; it is pointed at one end and forked at the other by being split cross-wise into four pointed prongs which are kept apart by two pieces of stick wedged in cross-wise and tied. Both *matha* and *hulas* have long loose loops attached to them by which they are slung to the arms when not in use.

* "*Pana epa hiyath wala bahinay; amma thatha epa hiyala.*"

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—
142 both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable.
291 A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments.† Indeed, almost the only difference
[304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have
[301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with
515 their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait,
302 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their
114 crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking
[27½] gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smoking is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they
181 huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Biti tree" (*antiaris innoria*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 [103] to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and [136] poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrakkan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose [262] and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287] fashion bags of beaten *rili* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that [22] ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and [534] manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they 224 scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *kabbakes* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kotburu-pathalu* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

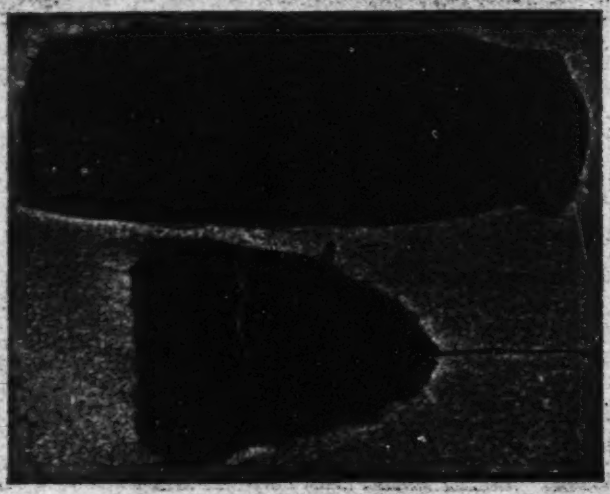
5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224
292
534
535

The dancers of Bovale. (Page 49)

Hebbaly, a weighted frame-work for trapping animals. (Page 48)

281
287
415



Bag made of threshed rill bark and monkey skin pouch. (Page 48)

[Facing p. 49]

291 When Kauwa was young his people wore threshed *riti** bark suspended
[287] from the waist by a *riti* strip. A Vedda belle would sometimes trick
824] herself out in such adornments as a *riti* collar sewn at the back with
nuga† fibre, anklets of red ixora blooms, lotus petals in ear lobes and as
301 garlands round neck and loins, and circlets of strung wild jasmine round the hair knot. Difficult, though it be, to reconcile this picture with the wretched specimens one meets to-day, it must be admitted that Kauwa had no imagination to run loose. An old song tells of Vedda maidens whose heads were adorned with peacock plumes.

844 Vedda man and wife usually walk the forest together, and accouche-
ments often occur away from home and female assistance; the man then
84[does duty for midwife by placing the woman with her back to a rock
and two stones to her feet. For nine days after child-birth he feeds her
262 only on *gonala* yams and the flesh of monitors.

*Antiaris toxicaria.
† *Ficus altissima*

N2
291
342
516

Plate II

Danegeld: Veddas on leaf-cut rock

[facing p.16a]

142
291
302
411

Plate III

Group of Vodds of Hanabadda and Bingala

[facing p.16 b].

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *maruge* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapana.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalle*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

342
361

Fig. 1. A chena settlement of the Henebedda Veddas

516
302
291

Fig. 2. Henebedda Veddas of the Namadewa clan inhabiting the chena settlement

[facing p. 36]

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Veddas AXS

would show him his chena but that he did not wish the white people to know anything about it. Further talk with these people showed that it was impossible to obtain reliable information from them, they had been utterly spoilt as the result of being frequently interviewed by travellers. 609 123

The Veddas have long been regarded as a curiosity in Ceylon and excite almost as much interest as the ruined cities, hence Europeans go to the nearest Rest House on the main road and have the Dunigala Veddas brought to them. Naturally the Veddas felt uncomfortable and shy at first, but when they found that they had only to look gruff and grunt replies in order to receive presents they were quite clever enough to keep up the pose. In this they were aided by the always agreeable villagers ever ready to give the white man exactly what he wanted. The white man appeared to be immensely anxious to see a true Vedda, a wild man of the woods, clad only in a scanty loin cloth, carrying his bow and arrows on which he depended for his subsistence, simple and untrained, indeed, little removed from the very animals he hunted. What more easy than to produce him? The Nilgala headman sends word when strangers are expected, then the Veddas repair to their very striking hut on the rock dome and often post a look-out on a big rock about half way up, for on our second visit the leading man of our party who was carrying the camera stated that he saw a Vedda bolting from this rock as we came up. These folk, who when we saw them wore their Vedda loin cloths and were smeared with ashes, are reported to wear ordinary Sinhalese clothes when not in their professional pose, and Mr Bibile, who has himself seen one or more of them in Kandy, points out that the imposture is kept up for two main reasons; firstly, they fear that their collection might be stopped (evidently an echo of the chena difficulty of the Eastern Province), or that they might be taxed if they did not appear to be poor fellows living on hardly won jungle produce; secondly, their pose of poverty interests strangers and procures them visitors, whose generosity is the greater the more primitive their mode of life appears to be. [291]

As a matter of fact the Dunigala Veddas like those of Henebedda (with whom we became really friendly) keep cattle 231

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

231 for the Sinhalese of Potulliyadde, receiving every fifth calf that is born. The community has, or recently had, ten or more head of cattle of their own and have sold bulls to the brother-in-law of our *tavalam*[1] leader for as much as 30 Rs., indeed, our *tavalam* leader stated that he had himself visited the Danigala chena and had also seen the cattle. On this occasion Kalra and his sons 291 wore a coloured cloth as the Sinhalese do and their women wore a *kambaya* and coloured breast handkerchief. Mr Bibile was 621 able to confirm some of these statements from his own know- 177 ledge and on making investigations among the local villagers 609 discovered that there was a whole community living on the chena settlement, some of whom had married Sinhalese. Indeed it appeared that not only have members of this community learnt to play the part of professional primitive man, but there has even been specialisation, for as far as we could learn, the men we met at the look-out hut are those who always receive visitors or come to Bibile when sent for, while the others whom we did not see do not pose as wild Veddas. Probably the part they now play had only recently crystallised into a professional rôle, but it must be remembered that so long ago as 1863 Bailey discussing these Veddas, or their fathers, says "they were brought in from the forests to be 'looked at'" and he adds, "I never saw that contempt for money which Tennant supposes is still existing'."

101 **Kovil Vanamai.** In the Eastern Province in the neighbourhood of Devulani tank the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are found, this term being applied to a number of groups of Veddas living in this neighbourhood. The name Kovil Vanamai means temple [346] precincts and seems to have arisen from there being one or more temples in this part of the country, while some of these shrines are traditionally associated with Veddas, apparently with old settled coast and village Veddas, for we have no reason to think that the ancestors of the folk we saw at Bandaraduwa, or the other wilder Veddas of fifty years ago, were in any way guardians of the temples or dependent on their 511 bounty. Although at the present day the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are represented by scattered groups, for the most part

[1] A *tavalam* is a train of pack bulls.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XIII

142
●291
854

Women and girls of Sitala Wanniya

[facing p. 44]

Plate XIV

142
144
441
291

Fig. 1. Men of mixed Sinhalese and Vedda blood from the neighbourhood of Maha Oya.

142
291
854

Fig 2. Women of Ommi

[facing p.46]

Plate XVI

142
291
[854]

Fig. 1. Men of Yakuro

Fig. 2. Veddas of Ulpota

[Facing p. 56]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

"It is probable good-looking women have often been kept back by others who had not equal confidence in me[1]."

Veddas are affectionate and indulgent parents, never refusing a small child anything it wants and giving it always of the best. We have frequently seen men save for their children food which had been given to them and which they considered specially good, such as bananas or coconuts. The babies are generally happy, but should they cry their wishes are immediately gratified by either parent. We saw a naked boy of about two and a half years strut proudly up and down outside Pihilegodagalge with his father's axe hung on his shoulder, he was extremely happy and all went well until he threatened one of the dogs with the axe, then his mother was obliged to interfere and the child tried to hit her with it; the father seeing this got up and tried to coax the child into giving up the axe, but the boy was now excited and would not give it up, at last he flung it at his father and hit his leg. The man was obviously annoyed and threw the axe from him into the jungle, but he did not attempt to scold or punish the child who was now howling with rage, indeed, after a little while some food was given him to pacify him.

Another time a woman who had been cutting yams with a knife put this down, when her baby snatched it up, and although she was obliged to watch lest he hurt himself, she allowed him to play with the knife. Yet when a child is old enough to wear a little rag in the way of clothing, possibly from six to eight years old, he is expected to behave himself properly and strange to say he does so. One day it was raining heavily, and we were all sitting in the rock shelter at Pihilegodagalge; at the further end of the cave we noticed a lad of seven or nine years old having a heated argument with his mother, suddenly he turned round and went out into the rain, when he returned he had controlled his temper; later we remarked on this and were told that the lad was considered old enough to behave as a man; a boy of this age would not hit his mother as a little child might do and yet be excused. It may here be mentioned that children of both sexes go naked until about six or seven years old, though perhaps the general age for the assumption of

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 190.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clothing is younger in the case of girls than boys. The boy assumes a piece of rag attached to a string in the same manner as men, while girls wear a piece of stuff fastened round their hips like a sarong. A child's first cloth is put on by its mother without any ceremony. The only toys seen were bows and arrows, and these are possessed by every male child. We never saw a little girl play with a bow and arrow, but mothers make them for the baby boys while these are still crawling about. Such toys of course are small and roughly made, but bigger boys of five years old and upwards make quite neat little bows, and shoot with them tolerably well; they do not feather their arrows. Other children were seen playing with clay and sticks; and girls frequently play with broken pots with which they pretend to cook.

As women take the children with them when they go out to dig for yams little girls soon learn to do this, and boys would begin to be taken out hunting when about ten years old. It was difficult to find out whether the fathers' or mothers' brothers took the greater part in training the boys and it seemed that a lad eager to go out hunting would be taken by any grown man, who in the very small community is usually a relative. Lads would be encouraged by their elders to shoot at a mark with their bows and arrows, and later they would stalk small birds and shoot fish[1].

When a child tells a lie he may be told "Go away, I do not believe what you say," but it appeared that even young children were usually truthful. One thing is taught the lads systematically, that is the method of collecting honey from the combs of the rock bee. Whenever the caves are conveniently situated a ladder of creepers is suspended from a tree in the jungle above and hangs over the end of the face of rock which forms the cave. On this the youths play at "honey getting." At Pihilegodagalge the lads were quite willing to demonstrate to us how it was done, and the elder men showed clearly that this

[1] Nevill, in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. 1, 1886, p. 189), says ".....a pellet bow is used occasionally by small boys, and birds are often shot with it, though the aim seems very uncertain." Pellet bows were seen at Henebedda, they are used regularly by the Sinhalese in the neighbourhood, and we do not doubt that the practice was introduced by them.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

was a game which they encouraged. A lad of about thirteen collected some green leaves and tied them together with creeper, then taking an arrow, a toy *masliya*, and a broken gourd tied with creeper, which hung over his arm, for a *mahudema*, he set fire to the leaves and climbed the ladder[1]. While lowering the smoker and letting the smoke blow into the crevice in the rock where the comb was supposed to be, he pretended to cut round its sides with an arrow and thrust at it with his *masliya* (figure 3), from which he transferred the honey into the gourd. As he descended from the ladder he beat his chest and sides as though driving off the bees, and directly he reached the ground rushed into the jungle to escape from them, all the smaller children imitating him with great glee. Obviously this was a well-known and favourite game, for even the elders took part in it, throwing their cloths over their heads and running into the jungle.

At Henebedda (which we visited before Pihilegodagalge) there were no children present when we spoke about honey getting, but four young men were eager to show us how it was done and acted the scene with great spirit. They took from our camp a piece of white and a piece of brown paper, and fastened them with some wax to the roof of their cave, then as there was no tree above the cave around which to fasten a creeper, one man crouched on the top of the rock and held the ends of the ladder in his hands, another stood above and lowered a smoker of green leaves while a third climbed the ladder and collected the honey from the white paper and the grubs from the brown. Afterwards the collector divided the spoil equally and amid much laughter they all sat down and pretended to eat, one actually going through the pantomime of washing his hands after the meal. They eat the grubs as well as the honey.

As regards clothing, pedlars have brought them cloth for so long that no Vedda living knows what was done when they could not buy it, but it is generally stated that they made bark

[1] The *mahudema* is the vessel made of deerskin in which honey should be collected and the *masliya* the wooden four-pronged implement with which the comb is broken up and transferred to the *mahudema*. For figures of *mahudema* and *masliya*, see Plate LXV and figure 3 (p. 93) respectively.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cloth of the *riti* (*Antiaris innuaria*) of which material the Sinhalese still make rice bags. Men wear a rag of "white" cotton about 9 inches wide passed between their legs, and held in place by each end being passed over a waist string. This cotton material they prefer to anything else for two reasons, firstly, it very soon becomes a dull brown, and hence is less obvious when hunting than a coloured cloth would be, secondly, it is thin machine-made material from which they can easily tear narrow strips for tinder, when they make fire. The women wear coloured cotton cloth of the kind that is woven at Batticaloa, it is a strong material and is not easily torn. A single width forms the length of their skirt from waist to knee and is fastened round their waists like a sarong. Thus, the men's preference for "white" and the women's for coloured cloth is purely economical, depending on the kind of material it has been the pedlar's habit to bring. These pedlars visit the wilder Veddas once a year after the honey collecting season; they never approach the caves, but when within about a quarter of a mile of them they shout till a Vedda comes to them, then they expose their wares and the Vedda returns to the cave to fetch as many pots and gourds of honey and as much dried flesh as he is willing to exchange. The "silent trade," mentioned by Knox[1], is now a legend among the Sinhalese of which no tradition lingers among the Veddas. We have Bailey's evidence that it had ceased before 1863, and the old Kandyan we met (see p. 31) remembered it only as a tradition in the days of the rebellion in 1818. "They are not new, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough

Fig. 5. Toy machya × $\frac{1}{10}$ (about).

[1] Cf. p. 5.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

boar wounded by the companions of Bandura, as is related in the Bambura Yaka dance.

The Henebedda Veddas washed before performing or assisting at the *kirikoraha* seen by us, and every Vedda who invoked the *yaku*, either let down his hair before beginning to dance or while dancing, in the latter instance presumably as he felt "possession" coming upon him. Many Veddas put on the *hangala* before dancing, this being a length of white cloth worn round the waist as is shown in many of the photographs reproduced in this chapter. Presumably this was not worn for the arrow dance, which is especially performed by unsuccessful hunters without any special preparation. We do not think that a leaf girdle was ever worn as a ceremonial garment when dancing. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya said that at some time, which he put more than three generations ago, there were Veddas, whom he called *Attukola Veddo*, who lived so remote from the Sinhalese that they had no cloth and so always wore leaf girdles, but he was quite confident that no Veddas who had cloth ever wore such girdles especially to invoke the *yaku*. This agrees with Nevill's conclusions[1] and does not conflict with the experience of the Sarasins.[2]

The Roman numbers in parentheses after references to invocations in the accounts of the ceremonies described in this chapter refer to the invocations given in Chapter X.

The Arrow Dance.

This, the simplest of the Vedda dances, has been described at length by the Drs Sarasin who saw it danced by "Veddas of the Nilgala district[3]." We have already quoted Bailey's account of the arrow dance as he found it danced by the ancestors of these Veddas two generations ago, and Monsieur Emile

[1] "I have especially questioned the best informed Vaeddas whether leaves were worn, either at ceremonies or otherwise. They all say yes, they were worn once, when cotton cloth was hard and dear to get, by those who lived where there were no Bal trees. They were only worn by the poorest, and from necessity, not choice. The leaves chosen were those of shrubs, the branches of which ended in rather pendulous sprays of foliage, and these were tucked under the waist string as a sort of apron." (*Op. cit.* p. 188.)

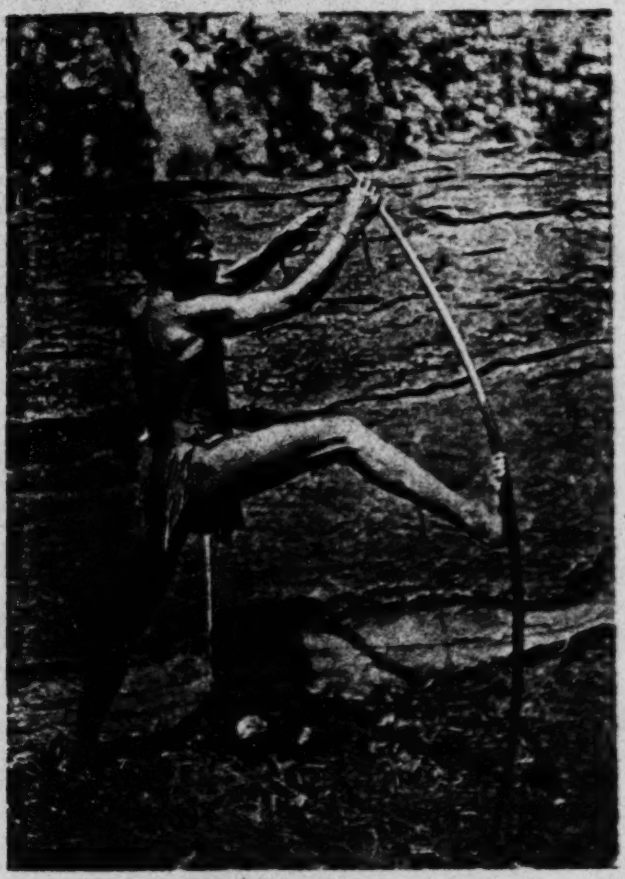
[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 387—389.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 512—514.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXIII

411
142
291
516



Handuna of Henebedda stringing his bow

[facing p. 326 a]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
173 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *warige*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

142 The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

241 The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
342 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

415 They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
534 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

361 The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
505 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

142
291

Fig. 1. Coast Veddas.

[534
482
516]

Fig. 2. Coast Veddas of Vakarai

[facing p. 332a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXX

535
796
291

Fig. 1. Site of dance at Vakarai, showing *kudaruwa* and pole

Fig. 2. Dancing round the *kudaruwa*

[facing p. 338a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXXI

535
1796
291

The end of the dance at Vakarai

[facing p. 338 b]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—
142 both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable.
291 A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments.† Indeed, almost the only difference
[304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have
[301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with
515 their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait,
302 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their
114 crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking
[276] gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smoking is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they
181 huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*artiaris innaria*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

But the Veddahs have not yet arrived at such a pitch of civilization. Divorce is unknown among them. They are kind and constant to their wives, and few of their Kandyan neighbours could say as I have heard a Veddah say, "Death alone separates husband and wife." The idea of such constancy was quite too much for one of the bystanders, an intelligent Kandyan chief, on one occasion when I was talking on these subjects to some Veddahs. "Oh, sir," he exclaimed, apologetically, "they are just like Wanderoos."* He was perfectly scandalized at the utter barbarism of living with only one wife, and never parting till separated by death.† V 586

Tennent says they have no marriage rites; this is true; but I am surprised that no one should have told him of what very nearly approaches a marriage ceremony, and one which is curious in itself, and so far as I know, unlike any custom among other barbarous tribes. The bachelor Veddah, who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgment to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest "delicacies of the season", for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguana, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a thin cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and V 585 [584] V 291 585

* The Wanderoo is a large monkey common throughout the island, one of the three species of Presbytes, probably the P. Ursinus.

† I have spoken of polygamy and indiscriminate divorce among the Kandyans in the present tense. I should have used the past, for in 1859 they were abolished by law. It fell to the lot of the late Sir Henry Ward, whose name will be gratefully cherished in Ceylon as long as Ceylon exists, and whose loss is daily becoming more felt and deplored, that this remarkable change in the habits of an Oriental people should have taken place during his rule—a change, originating with the Kandyans themselves, which has given them marriage laws as pure as our own, an extraordinary proof of increasing civilization. In May 1858, a large deputation of influential chiefs waited on Sir Henry Ward, at the Pavilion, in Kandy, to seek the aid of Government to remove what they felt to be a stigma on their race and character, by abolishing polygamy and making the marriage tie a binding obligation. This was followed by a petition, signed by 8,000 chiefs and headmen on behalf of the Kandyan people, repeating their earnest prayer. The result was the enactment of an ordinance "To amend the laws of marriage in the Kandyan country," which will do more to raise the social character of the Kandyans than any other measure can do. They have reason to be proud of having spontaneously wrought this great change, and they fully appreciate Her Majesty's interest in its success, which she graciously desired should be specially made known to them. S 586 595 177

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 585 291

bind it round him. Many a more civilised wife would rejoice if she could forge new fetters for her husband as binding as these. The utility of the string is simply to keep in its place the scanty rag which constitutes the Veddah costume.* Married or single he must wear one; but when he is married he substitutes for his bachelor's string one of the lady's twisting, and besides its use, it is emblematic of the marriage tie; for as he never parts with it, so he clings to his wife through life.†

V 3 582 835

I have spoken of the monogamy and conjugal fidelity of the Veddahs as favourably contrasting with the opposite practices among the Kandyans. But there was an ancient custom amongst them which has scarcely yet become extinct, a custom most revolting to every civilised mind. It is that which sanctions the marriage of a man with his younger sister. To marry an elder sister or aunt would, in their estimation, be incestuous, a connection in every respect as revolting to them as it would be to us—as much out of the question and inadmissible as the marriage with the younger sister was proper and natural. It was, in fact, the proper marriage, as much so as the marriage between the father's sister's son and the mother's brother's daughter is the most proper that a Kandyan can contract.‡

V 582 835

How far this practice has become obsolete it is hard to say. Amongst the Veddahs of Bintenne it has certainly ceased, and they now regard it with disgust.§ Still it has not very long died out, for many amongst them have seen the children of such marriages, and even cited some by name to me. But I question if it has yet disappeared from amongst the wilder Veddahs of Nilgala. For some time I believed that it was invariably practised there, and

---

* It is, in fact, what the Singhalese call the Diya lancowa, the "water-string," *i. e.*, the string which supports the rag of cloth which natives wear when bathing, and which is "full dress" among the Veddahs.

† The following anecdote is an apt illustration of the value set by a Kandyan on the marriage tie. One of the civil officers of the fort was travelling through his district, explaining the provisions of the new Kandyan marriage ordinance, when a native said to him—"I don't like that ordinance at all." "Why?" he asked. "Why, you tell us we are not to send away our wives, if we like. Now, suppose I bought a piece of rice land, *and afterwards found my wife did not know how to weed?*"

‡ "Every Bedouin has a right to marry his father's brother's daughter before she is given to a stranger; and hence "cousin" (bint' amm), in polite phrase, signifies "wife." Burton's *El Medinah Meccah*, vol. iii. A Kandyan would regard such a marriage incestuous, for such first cousins are considered sisters. The term applied to such a female cousin as is mentioned in the text as the proper bride for a Kandyan is "nana," which in Veddah dialect is the word for "wife." The corresponding word "moora" is the Veddah term for "husband."

V 3 [601]

§ Mr. Birch informs me that the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district "indignantly deny marrying their sisters."

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognise a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178 other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of warugo or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same warugo.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to throw some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
224 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

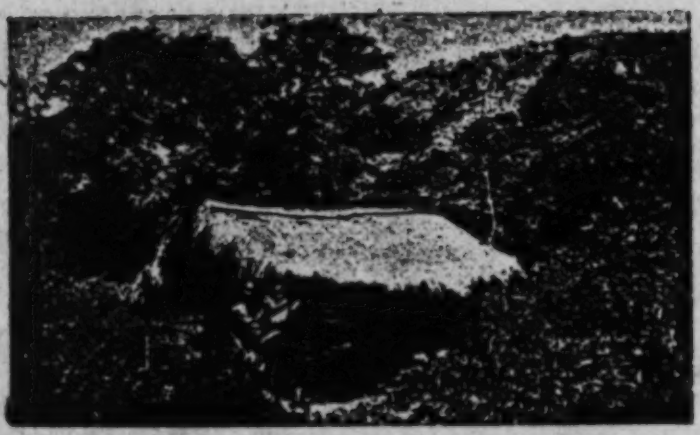
Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342



Poromola's lonely home

291
411

Vedda bowman of Dambana

[facing p. vi]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342

A Vedda home of the Ulpotta. (Page 8)

142
291
412

Veddas or Gunner's Quoin. The two to the left (Vela and Sinna) are the most typical. (Page 8)

[facing p. 8]

5: Spittel Ꝑ-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
301
415
516

"Their homes, the shelter of the trees." (Page 9)

142
291
622

Naida and his family. (Page 9)

[facing p. 9]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
411
271
[412
482
622]

The hunt of the Hennebedda Veddas—Porutola and Handuna (Page 16)

Handuna strings his bow (Page 16)

[FACING p. 16]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854

Handuna's household. (Page 18)

142
291
224
411
482

Hennebedde Veddas (Page 16)

The iguana hunter. (Page 17)

[facing p. 17]

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854

"Sedate, wistful children." (Page 36)

[facing p. 36]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1960) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
301

Kondan of Dambana (Page 37)

[facing p. 37]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
301

A Vedda girl of Dolagalwella (Page 35)

312

Yakkure tank (Page 39)

[facing p. 38]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133

Destota falls. (Page 30)

291
412
415

Sinna, a Vedda of Gunner's Quoin. (Page 42)

[facing p. 39]

291 When Kauwa was young his people wore threshed *riti** bark suspended
[287 from the waist by a *riti* strip. A Vedda belle would sometimes trick
824] herself out in such adornments as a *riti* collar sewn at the back with
nuga† fibre, anklets of red ixora blooms, lotus petals in ear lobes and as
301 garlands round neck and loins, and circlets of strung wild jasmine round the hair knot. Difficult, though it be, to reconcile this picture with the wretched specimens one meets to-day, it must be admitted that Kauwa had no imagination to run loose. An old song tells of Vedda maidens whose heads were adorned with peacock plumes.

844 Vedda man and wife usually walk the forest together, and accouche-
ments often occur away from home and female assistance; the man then
846 does duty for midwife by placing the woman with her back to a rock
and two stones to her feet. For nine days after child-birth he feeds her
260 only on *gonala* yams and the flesh of monitors.

*Antiaris toxicaria.
† *Ficus altissima*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
342

"Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold." (Page 53)

[facing p. 58]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

411

Kaurata and his wife. (Page 55)

291
516
854

A Galmede home. (Page 60)

[Facing p. 59]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VI

VEDDAS OF BINGODA

I. BINGODA HOMES

Innumerable years had flown,
Since first the chisel in her hand
Necessity, the sculptor, took,
And in her spacious meaning planned
These forms, and that eternal look.

L. BINYON

197 CONCEDE me three points and I shall attempt to show that there exist
[101] in Ceylon to-day Veddas worthy of the name. Language, apparel and weapons are the concessions I ask.

Let us begin by confessing, that the Veddas we shall tell of have no pure language of their own, but merely a patois, in which Sinhalese words predominate and Vedda words are few ; their clothing is not the traditional
291 leaf or threshed *riti* bark, but fragments of foul rag affording, if anything, less cover ; the weapons they favour are guns (of a type almost as
411 dangerous to user as to quarry) and not bows and arrows which they employ only in sore necessity.

Vital issues, you will say, which should deprive this people of their name. But language, dress and arms may change without materially altering, for a time at least, ancient customs and primeval instincts.

101 The word Vedda originally meant hunter ; and a people supreme in jungle-craft, always capable of gleaning from the unfriendly forests a sufficiency for their needs and utterly incompetent to husband even the primitive agriculture of the *chena*, has surely a claim to the name.

224 It must not be supposed that every Vedda possesses a gun ; far from it ;
[411] occasionally there may be a single weapon to a whole clan. The usual thing is for the Sinhalese or Moors to lend their guns to these superb
[427] trackers, who never waste a shot and seldom return without their quarry, a large share of which goes by agreement to the owner of the gun.

114 Of my first accidental meeting with these Veddas amid the hills of Galmede, I have already told. Barely four months had elapsed before I found myself renewing their acquaintance ; this time with set purpose.

Arriving at the forest village of Mullegama, sacred to Buddhists, and abounding in lime groves and Moors, I was fortunate enough to run up against my friend Kaurala of Kottelinde, who, so difficult of acquisition before, now became our willing guide.

131 Bingoda, the home of our Veddas, is some three miles from Mullegama, and lies on the Dhungolla Oya, a tributary of the Magalavatan Aar which connects Bingoda with Galmede, ten miles away—all in the circuit of

142
291

Sadhu Sunda, Guna and their families. [Page 64]

[facing p. 64]

201
301
[582]
516

[illegible] (Page 64)

Kalu and his wife. (Page 64)

[facing p.65]

Sr Spittel D-S (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Valda AX5

516
291

Little Hawthorn. (Page 65)

[Facing p. 66]

5; Spinel B-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *hanana* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
● 291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
[283 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded
824 to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *more* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
224

An ape for dinner. (Page 82)

342

Alu-gaige, a Vedda cave. (Page 84)

[Facing p. 86]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
516
854

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

142
291
351

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

[Facing p. 94]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
411
415
482

The finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. (Page 95)

[facing p. 95]

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OBI Indonesia
Vedda AX5

142
30R
516
291
411
137

Fig. 16. Veddas from the Nilgala District (Ceylon) *Photo R. Martin.*

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Yelda AX5

Fig. 17. Veddas of the Nilgala Region

Photo Fr. Sarasin.

342
137
291
516
411
854

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1].

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe.

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated.

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*.

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarals*.

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 *Aleurites triloba* is to be found in a few village gardens towards the west, but is nowhere cultivated in much quantity. It is an introduction.

Dimorphocalyx glabellus. Exceedingly common, except near the sea shore.

Mallotus albus. Tolerably plentiful, especially in the west.

Macaranga tomentosa. Occasional. There is reason to suppose this has been to some extent introduced merely for the sake of the large peltate leaves, that afford a useful substitute for plates. By tracing a group of these trees I was able to find one of the most important of the caves on the east flank of "Westminster Abbey."

Chætocarpus castanocarpus. Occasional.

Sapium insigne. Common, especially near rocks.

Holopteles integrifolia, representing the Urticaceæ, is very common up to within a short distance of the coast. It occurs right up the Kumbukkan valley to the foot of the Uva hills, after which it becomes scarce.

Trema orientalis I found to be locally plentiful, but more so towards the hills.

Streblus asper. Very common, and with much variation in the size of the leaf.

Ficus benghalensis (the Banyan of Europeans) is very abundant right down to the coast. It appears in all the old established villages, which leads one to the idea that it was introduced. I have, however, found it in localities where it may have been introduced by birds transporting the seed from the (?) cultivated trees, as the fruits are readily devoured by Barbets and Pigeons.

F. retusa. Very common.

F. arnottiana. Occasional, especially in rocky places.

F. tsjakela. Occasional, and appears to be singularly partial to old ruins.

F. hispida. Not uncommon near rivers and in damp forests.

F. religiosa. Common near any temple. At Kumana I found some enormous examples, as also at Wattegama.

[824 292] *Antiaris toxicaria*. Rare. I am informed, as stated early in this Paper, that the Veddas use it for making "loin cloths" to be worn on ceremonial occasions.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224
292
534
535

The dancers of Bowah. (Page 49)

Hibbale, a weighted frame-work for trapping animals. (Page 48)

281
287
415

Bag made of twisted rib bark and monkey skin pouch. (Page 48)

[Facing p. 49]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796
213

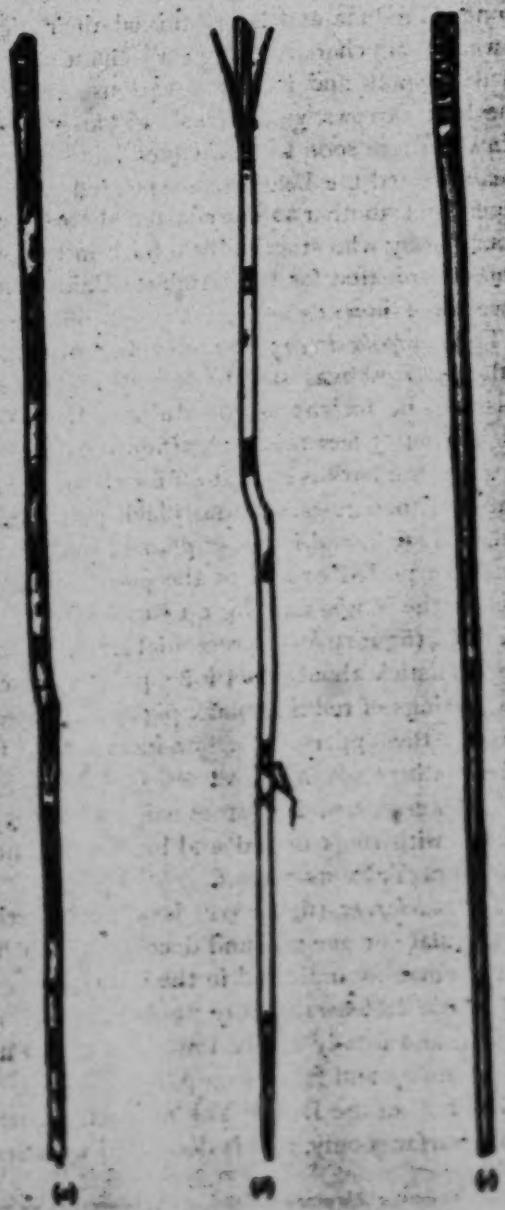


Fig. 9. Some of the objects used in the Bambaran Yaka ceremony.
(a) *Mudgala* Aliya × $\frac{1}{10}$. (b) *Ulu* × $\frac{1}{10}$. (c) *Mudgala* × $\frac{1}{10}$.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

away. Then he fell back, Handuna took the *tadiye*, and the dance ended. 535 796

All the properties of Bambura Yaka and his attendants were replaced on the *massa* and some water was sprinkled over them, this we were told being water for them to drink, for as no man eats without drinking afterwards, so the *yaka* require water to drink after food has been offered to them.

Handuna repeated charms over them, saying, "We have given you food and treated you well; if we have made any mistakes excuse us and do no harm to our families or ourselves." The whole ceremony was remarkable for the general feeling of cheerfulness and goodfellowship, jokes were frequently made, and obviously the Veddas had nothing to fear from the *yaka* in the ordinary course of events.

The Bambura Yaka Ceremony at Uniche. The dance to Bambura Yaka performed by Wannaku of Uniche differed only very slightly from that performed at Sitala Wanniya, yet in order to show these differences it will be necessary to describe the dance in detail. Wannaku, who visited us at Maha Oya in the Eastern Province, told us that Bambura Yaka was sometimes called Ala Yaka, i.e. Yam Yaka, as he helped men to find yams.

A *massa* was built and leaves laid on it over which a white cloth[1] was laid, and on this yams, a coconut, and a pumpkin were placed, while some of the properties of the Bambura Yaka ceremony leaned against the *massa*. These objects consisted of a roughly made bow decorated with bars of red and black (figure 10 *a*), two ordinary arrows and two long sticks which represented the special arrows of the *yaka*. They are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1, leaning against the *massa*; a ring of bark is left at the top of each stick, and this is split to represent the feathers of an arrow, the peeled portion of both sticks being decorated with bars of red and yellow pigment. The upper ends of these sticks are pared down so as to represent two flattened surfaces as is shown in figure 10 *b*, which is drawn 535 796 293

[1] Among the Sinhalese and Tamils it is customary not only to hang a wedding cloth but even to cover the walls, table and chairs with cloths when receiving an honoured guest.

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796
[293]

Fig. 10. Ceremonial bow and arrows of Bambura Yaka. ⅓ fr.

to a scale of about one-tenth. Below the *mazza*, suspended by a creeper, is the *wedewala*, which is merely a bundle of leaves filled with sand to represent the wild boar.

Wannaku, the shaman, put on a *kangala*, and salaamed to the *mazza*, and then sang a curious invocation (No. XXVIII), while a lad beat the drum. Wannaku now exhibited all the *yaka* properties, dancing with each in turn. Wannaku did not tell us the story of Bambura Yaka, and as our many questions did not elicit it we may presume that he did not know it, so we did not find out whether all the properties belonged to Bambura Yaka or whether, as at Sitala Wanniya, which we visited afterwards, some belonged to his attendants.

After a short time Wannaku bent his head over the *mazza*, shouted, let down his hair, and became possessed. He picked up each of the big *yaka* arrows in turn and danced with them shouting, and thus showing that he was pleased with them. Up to this time he had not danced round the *mazza*, only in front of it, that is, facing east towards Inginiyagala, the home of Bambura.

The shaman next took up the bow and arrow and danced wildly in all directions, pulling at the bowstring to see if it were strong enough, although he did not let fly. Being at last satisfied with his weapon he aimed at the *wedewala* and shot, and although he hit it he only wounded the "boar," so the shaman continued to dance as though following the animal, but although he occasionally pulled hard on

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 we provided the rice and coconut necessary for the ceremony.
796 This food is always eaten by the community after the *yaku* have inspected it.

The *yaku* invoked to ensure safety during pregnancy and
843 childbirth are three in number and are called Pata (bark) Yaku.
796 No story could be discovered concerning them, nor could any
796 reason be elicited for the name Pata (bark) or the large quantity of bast which is used in the dance. This can be taken from any tree in the jungle, and is torn into strips about half-an-inch broad. It may, however, be suggested that these particular *yaku* require the *inner* bark of trees as a resting-place just as the *yaku* invoked to come to the *kolomadeuna* or *alutyakagama* come first to the leaves used in making these structures, and then may or may not enter the person of the shaman, while they may take refuge again in the leaves after they leave the shaman. In the instances cited the leafy structures were beaten with sticks after the ceremony to drive the *yaku* away; this ritual was not observed in the Pata Yaku ceremony, but it must be remembered that only three *yaku* were invoked and the shaman may have been thoroughly satisfied that they had gone away from the place, while, on the other hand, in the two other ceremonies we were told that hosts of attendant *yaku* rested amid the leaves, and that the more important spirits alone entered the persons of the dancers.

The properties used in the Pata Yaku ceremony held for
843 Mari at Sitala Wanniya were as follows: three stout posts,
796 which were thrust into the ground in a line; the tallest was about 2 ft 6 in. high and the shortest somewhat less than 2 ft, the upper ends of all being forked and large quantities of strips of bast lashed to them. These bast covered stakes are called
[293] the *nomahaliya*, *madamahaliya* and *kaiakawa*, i.e. the high, middle and young post respectively, and each one belongs to one of the Pata Yaku. The *wilahaliya* or *kade* (umbrella), which belongs to all the Pata Yaku, is a similar bunch of bast strips tied to a rather longer stick which is not driven into the ground. The *aamanda* is a stout stick about 18 inches long, to which bunches of bast are tied at each end and doubled back so as to present somewhat the appearance of a dumbbell. All these

There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were obtained in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *nadati*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in fathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the water of pools with the bark of *dunda*, *mahapata*, *punifiate* (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *tinduri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukurumana* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords. 361

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter. 301 304

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of coconut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]." 415 [531]

Village Veddas of Tamankaduwa.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of intermarriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils. 144 621

Elahatallya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-bred. Their mode of life is similar to that prevalent at Dambani and Belagahaladeniya, i.e. they are occupied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their marriage and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaka. 105 621

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve mud huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1901. [113]

789
539

Go and drop behind the body of the monitor lizard;
Pierce it, dear cousin.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle (or edge) of the back.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle of the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the neck.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the stomach.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and fix (yourself) in the middle of the armpit.

"In order to rhyme all the lines ought to end in a long a.

"*Ettama* is an evident mistake for *etanama*.

"*Tomma* is for *tumba*, a Vaedi word for tail, the Sinhalese is *tuba*.

"*Accom* and *accera* are for *assan*, abl. of *assa*, angle or corner.

"*Loeffen* is a word I have not previously met with. The only probable derivation with which I am acquainted is the Tamil *iraffa*, Sin. *reffe*, double, two-fold.

"*Mosli* means younger brother.

"*Kiri hurá*, lit. milk cousin, simply means dear cousin."

Love Charms.

822 Love magic or charms to compel love do not seem to exist among the wilder Veddas, though in the Bintenne we were told that women may charm the waist strings they give to their husbands, in order to ensure their fidelity.

Amulets.

301 Before discussing the existence of these it is necessary to determine to what extent the Veddas now wear, or formerly wore, ornaments.

Disregarding the stories current among the Sinhalese that the Veddas formerly had valuable jewellery and pots of pure gold—legends of which the Veddas themselves are quite

[Cerata — see p. xx. — Analyst]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ignorant—the evidence for the use of jewellery or personal ornaments worn for their own sake is limited to the former wearing of ear ornaments by the Vedda women. Bailey states that the women "have their ears pierced and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory[1]," and this was confirmed by our old Sinhalese informant, whose evidence as to the former condition of the Veddas has been given in Chapter II. It seems that men did not wear ear ornaments, although we met some village Veddas (Dambani) who wore earrings, and a few men in other communities were seen with pierced ears. This point of view is confirmed by Nevill who wrote, "Men occasionally wore a few large beads on their waist string, if they could afford it, but no other jewels," and he describes the women's ear ornaments as "ear-jewels, the size of a man's thumb made of ivory, white horn, or bone, and carved or etched...worn through the lobe of the ear[2]."

At the present time among the wilder Veddas neither men nor women wear beads or ornaments of any kind, though the women are pleased to accept beads as presents.

It is otherwise among the more sophisticated Veddas of the Bintenne. At Omuni all the women and girls wore beads, and though they could not account for their origin, we were able to ascertain that they had been in their possession at least five generations. They descended usually from grandmother to granddaughter, some strings being given to each girl-child at birth, the rest being usually given when the girl married, or on the death of the grandmother. These beads are of glass, mostly red though some are green and a few white. They have been identified by Mr C. H. Read as 17th century Venetian beads, and were doubtless a present from some notable who required assistance from the Veddas as he passed through their country.

This summarises all we have been able to learn concerning the use of personal ornaments among the Veddas, and though Nevill states, presumably of the Veddas of the Bintenne, that they "delight to deck their hair with bright or fragrant flowers," we were unable to find any trace of this practice occurring

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 284. [2] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

301 among the wilder Veddas at the present day. It therefore appears that although beads are worn as ornaments by the members of certain communities in the Bintenne there is no [184] evidence for their use as such among the Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road.

301 751 We may next consider certain facts which seem to indicate that beads may be sometimes treated as amulets, or at least as having magical power. At Bandaraduwa where there has been a great deal of Sinhalese influence, one woman wore a piece of knotted string round her throat which had been charmed and put on by a Sinhalese to cure her of some ailment. When we gave her a string of beads she was very pleased and immediately broke the old charmed string and put the beads round her neck in place of it.

At Bendiyagalge all the women were particularly anxious for us to give beads to their children and immediately put these round their necks, but those given to themselves were not usually put on in our presence. In both these cases there is only the suggestion that beads were regarded as anything more than ornaments, and this also holds good as regards the beads of bear's bone worn by Kaira of Bingoda already recorded, but in the following cases the relation of beads to the *yaku* is perfectly clear. The women of Unuwatura Bubula, though they possessed beads of the same kind as those worn by the 301 women of Omuni, were afraid to wear them, and gave them 791 to the shaman to keep and use in *yaku* ceremonies. In this village we found that women would not accept red beads as presents because "they were afraid," though they readily took the white beads offered them, and the shaman when dancing to the Alut Yakini wore cross shoulder straps of old beads, and similar beads were kept for Indigollae Yaka.

301 There is equally strong evidence of the definite association of beads with the *yaku* in other communities, though the reason 782 for this association could not be determined. At Sitala Waniya a band of bast was placed upon the offering to the Rahu Yaku, and our informants said that they would have used beads instead of the bast had they possessed them. At the same place when preparing for the dance to Dola Yaka, who gives

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

success in honey gathering, the shaman asked us for two strings of beads. These beads he placed over betel leaves upon two arrows thrust in the centre of the dancing ground which were surrounded by betel leaves offered to the *yaka*. These beads were said to represent the rough rope of creeper with which the green twigs forming the smoker were secured and the rope by which the smoker was lowered to the comb. 301 782

When it is remembered that Veddas do not tattoo or paint themselves, and have never been seen wearing any kind of seeds as ornaments, it seems reasonable to assume that where beads are sought after by the Veddas they are valued for their supposed magical properties. 304 302 301

In conclusion we may give the only perfectly clear instance of a Vedda wearing an amulet with which we are acquainted. The shaman of Bandaraduwa wore on his wrist a small silver cylinder such as is commonly used to contain a written charm. The cylinder was empty and had never contained a charm, but the shaman told us that he wore it in order to be cured of an illness from which he had suffered formerly, and that presently he would give the cylinder to some pilgrim proceeding to Katagagam in order that he might deposit it in the temple there. 751

The Eating of Human Liver.

Every group of Veddas except the most sophisticated village Veddas believe that it was formerly the custom for a man to carry in his betel pouch a small piece of dry human liver. But the majority of our informants were not clear as to the exact reason for doing this, though they were all agreed that it had something to do with raising a man's valour and making him strong to bear trouble. It was essential that the liver should be taken from a man killed by the individual who proposed to carry a portion of the dried liver in his pouch. When a man had been killed the slayer would open his belly and take out a small portion of his liver which he would dry in the sun in a secret place. This custom appears to have ceased about three generations ago, but the following instance, said to have occurred about fifty years ago, was given us at Bandaraduwa. 789 266

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—
142 both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable.
291 A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments.† Indeed, almost the only difference
[304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have
[301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with
515 their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait,
302 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their
114 crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smok-
[276] ing is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they
181 huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*antiaris innoxia*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 422 [685]

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days. 648 685 [754]

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in goal, he might carry back with him some little civilization to his own people. 648

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist. [301]

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguano, and pengolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, 262

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Samba deer (*rusa Aristotelis*). [136]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

δ: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
301
415
516

"Their homes, the shelter of the trees." (Page 9)

142
291
622

Naida and his family. (Page 9)

[facing p. 9]

8; Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

on summer days, it flamed through the Island making it its permanent home, while in India, the land of its birth, it dwindled away.

We had undertaken this trip with the object of visiting Mambiyagalla where we learned the wildest Veddas of the Eastern province lived; but on coming to Ommna we found that that place, only twelve miles away, was quite unknown to the present folk of Ommna, a pathless barrier of dense jungle intervening. We made the best of a bad job; and, abandoning our original project, struck west for Dolagalwella.

At evening we camped by a desolate pool called *Hawan-hetana-mulla* (rush-cutting nook). There is barely a spot in these jungles, however bare, that has not its name, thanks to the nomadic Veddas. Here was a glade in which they hunted, or a pool at which they drank, there a hole in which an axe was found (*Pure-thate-walle*).

The only indications of the track we followed were the barely recognizable prunings, fifteen years old, of saplings. The forest was ideal for travel; in the shelter of the great trees the morning air was cool and refreshing. Coming to the Maduru Oya we walked a mile up-stream and climbed the moss-covered bank, soon to be lost in a wilderness of trees. A leader monkey yelled a warning to his clan, a surprised sambur belled startlingly close; but after that a silence prevailed unbroken by the song of a single bird. We spent the night by a rocky streamlet close-hugged by dense forest walls. Heavy clouds crept over us to the rumblings of thunder. The blurred crescent of the moon struggled for freedom. Our campfires crackled in the ghostly gloom, and quiet human voices pervaded the forest's deadly stillness save for the melody of the trickling water.

> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

Deserted Mahacila marked the limit of our westward journey. Here we struck at right angles the northern track to Yakkure, but, before taking it, deviated south to the village of Dolagalwella. For three days we had followed uncertain game trails, and seen no human beings besides those of our company. The path now began to show signs of use: there were chipped trees, polished stones on which axes had been whetted, and fire-places where monitors were roasted. Obviously we were nearing civilization! Indeed, here it was.

Scaling a strong stockade we found ourselves in a *chena*, some twelve acres in extent, in which nestled the half dozen huts of the closely related families of a Vedda patriarchy. The maize and *kurakkan* crops had been taken, and the place was now rank with a catch-crop of vegetables and fruit: beans, brinjals, melons, cassava, plantains and papaws. Chillies luxuriated; there was not a compound but had its vermilion heap, not a hut but had a section partitioned off with frame and fire-place for drying them during the rains; chillies were the current coin with which these folk traded with the pedlar Moors.

The males of the settlement were away in quest of food, and only the women and children remained. No folk on earth, perhaps, are shier than Vedda women; in the presence of the stranger they are dumb. Some of them were relatively fair-complexioned, presumably from Kandyan admixture; all wore an abundance of bead ornaments, finger

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the halloo all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1965 AX5 Vedda AX5

with men astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalastic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next [191] morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 142 301 412

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen floated away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing 136 825

S: Spinal D-S (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
301

Remains of Bandicoot (Page 37)

[facing p. 37]

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
301

A Vedda girl of Dolagalwella (Page 35)

312

Yakkure tank. (Page 39)

[Facing p. 38]

13 causeway over an abysmal ravine. We had not the stomach to tempt those ways.

Below us stretched a vast forest studded with the tree-clad hills of Omuna, Henanagalla and many another; and over the red-topped *kongs* we caught the glimpse of the Mahaweli as it cleft the wilderness of trees.

173 To this retreat once came an ascetic who lived alone, lost in meditation, for months. His evening chant could be heard at Horiwila three miles away. The bears that came to drink at the pools in the caves did him no harm. In a hidden vault, so the story goes, he found a gold-lettered slab and a phial of oil. He made the wisdom of the script his own, and drank the oil; then descended the rock, and ever after went about as one obsessed.

115 Sinna's droll talk relieved the irksomeness of our descent. Indicating [301] a wild jasmine, he told us they were the flowers Vedda women strung on creeper-stems for the adornment of their hair. He was for leaving us at the foot of the hill and continuing his search for food for his waiting family. But we took him to camp, fed him abundantly on rice and venison and gave him a heavy hamper besides. It was pleasant to picture the rare joy of his home-coming.

At Manampitiya old Kanapan-*vidane* met us with two limes which he graciously presented to us. This charming Tamil custom is often the prelude to a villainous request. Kanapan gave us cordial welcome, eyed solicitously our unkempt figures, and chided us in a kindly, paternal way for undertaking so 'terrible' a journey. "Why wander in the wilderness when you can play about the highways in your car?" he said. His conversation, though varied kept reverting to one theme—the delinquencies of the village school-master, now away on a holiday. Kanapan had a penchant for denunciation; on a previous occasion it was the tyranny of an apothecary, now it concerned the amours of a pedagogue.

"Is that the sort of man to teach young children?" he concluded disgustedly. "A man who breaks up quiet homes. The woman does not even care for him; he bewitched her with charmed food. A respectable home wrecked by a worthless fellow!" and he spat with scorn.

Perhaps it was the full bottle of whisky standing tantalisingly on the table that induced him to confide in us that the village tavern had now been closed for over two years, during which time he had not touched a drink; he had almost forgotten the taste of liquor he said wistfully.

"Then you are a total abstainer now?" I ventured.

"What's to be done, sir, I have to be," he sighed.

"I suppose you wouldn't have a drink now if one were given you?" I asked.

"How can I refuse when a gentleman offers," said he, taking the wind out of my sails. "With your favour, sir, I will. Cha," he continued with sudden affection, "I feared you had been to the war and got killed. How glad I am to see you again, sir."

We poured him a bumper which he swallowed neat, placing the empty cup within easy reach beside him. He reverted to the school-master;

When Kauwa was young his people wore threshed *riti** bark suspended from the waist by a *riti* strip. A Vedda belle would sometimes trick herself out in such adornments as a *riti* collar sewn at the back with *naga*† fibre, anklets of red ixora blooms, lotus petals in ear lobes and as garlands round neck and loins, and circlets of strung wild jasmine round the hair knot. Difficult, though it be, to reconcile this picture with the wretched specimens one meets to-day, it must be admitted that Kauwa had no imagination to run loose. An old song tells of Vedda maidens whose heads were adorned with peacock plumes.

Vedda man and wife usually walk the forest together, and accouchements often occur away from home and female assistance; the man then does duty for midwife by placing the woman with her back to a rock and two stones to her feet. For nine days after child-birth he feeds her only on *genala* yams and the flesh of monitors.

*Antiaris toxicaria.
† *Ficus altissima*

201
301
[512]
516

Rhabdomyolysis. (Page 65)

Rigor and his wife. (Page 65)

[facing p.65]

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously. 131

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow [101 361] stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was [159] the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne.

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found [321] the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were apparently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep [626 152] the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very jealous of their women.

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each 576 hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted [411] us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine.

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for 342 Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukkan* [241] and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community.

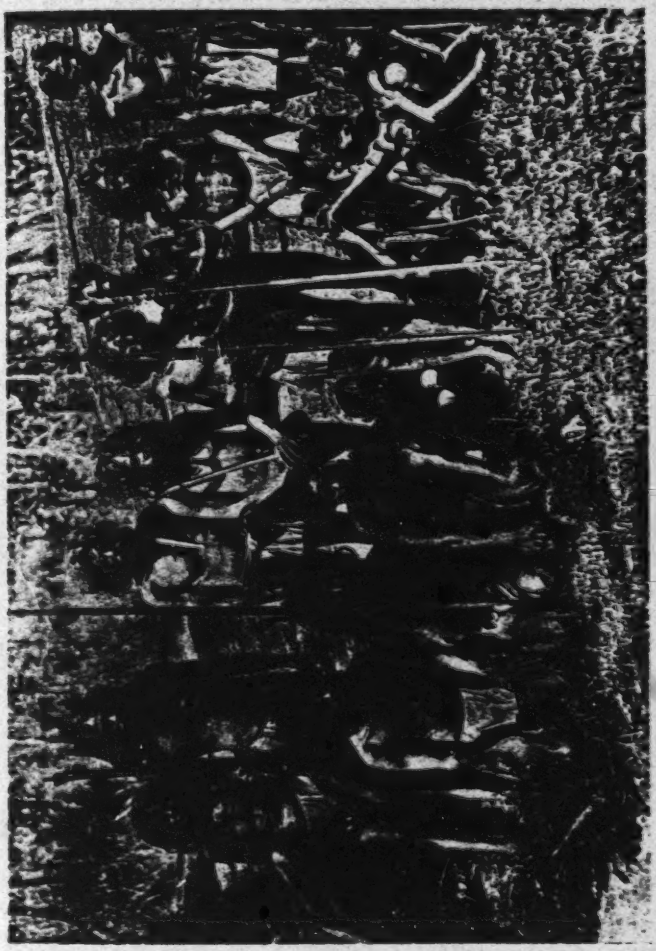
The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the 101 same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered 361 about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit!

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never 161 before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by 177 their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting.

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, 224 better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from

142
291
302
411

Plate III



Group of Veddas of Henebedda and Bingoda

[facing p.16 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
302

Plate V

Sita Wanniya of Henebedda

[facing p. 16d]

Plate X

342
361

Fig. 1. A chena settlement of the Henebedda Veddas

516
302
291

Fig. 2. Henebedda Veddas of the Namadewa clan inhabiting the chena settlement

[facing p. 36]

583 431 said "For portions with their Daughters in marriage they give hunting Dogs." Among the village Veddas of Bintenne we heard that an axe or cutty was sometimes given, though the Arachi of Bellipola, who has been much in contact with the Danbaai Veddas, stated that these sometimes presented had to their sons-in-law.

In one settlement of village Veddas, Bulugahalandena, we were told that the bridegroom takes a first present to the bride's father and leaves his bow and arrow in his hut until his second visit with further presents some four days later. At the same place the waist string is sometimes charmed to ensure constancy. Among many of the village Veddas the custom of the gift of the waist string is dying out, and the bridegroom gives the bride a cloth as is the custom among the Sinhalese.

Another custom now dying out appears to be the gift from the bridegroom to the bride of a lock of hair, presented at the same time as the food to the girl's father.

We discovered at Bendiyagalge that it is a common practice *302 for women to wear false hair. Here we were told that it was merely worn in order to make the knot look important, but only by married women. It is improbable that the habit should have arisen among a people so careless of personal appearance as are the Veddas had it no other significance than adornment, for it must be remembered that these folk never brush or oil their hair, or even wash it; indeed, some consider the last operation extremely dangerous, so that the ornamental value of a very small wisp of hair may reasonably be doubted. Extra locks of hair are worn by Sinhalese women, and we have seen some hanging in the verandah of a mud hut in a small jungle village, but among them it is a very different matter. They are usually, and very rightly, proud of their masses of long glossy hair, which they comb and oil carefully. A naturally large knot is considered a beauty, especially when stabbed with a jewelled pin, and girls as well as married women will wear an extra lock to produce this effect, but that the custom should have been introduced from the Sinhalese with no other object than that of personal adornment, about which the Veddas seem to care so little[1], seems as improbable as does the

[1] The Vedda attitude towards ornament generally is treated on p. 105.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XXI

302
431
585

Locks of hair presented to brides at marriage

[Facing p. 98]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

hypothesis that it should have arisen among them solely for that object. 302

We believe that a lock of hair, either from his own head or from his sister's, was a customary present from the bridegroom to the bride, and therefore to be considered part of the wedding ceremony. The evidence obtained at Bendiyagalge, though not directly bearing out this point of view, supports the hypothesis when considered in conjunction with the information given us at Sitala Wanniya. The wife of old Poromala at Bendiyagalge wore a piece of hair which Poromala had given her. He had not cut it off his own head but had saved the hair which had come out when combing his hair with his hands, and Handi his wife considered this tail of hair as a valuable possession and said she would leave it to her eldest married daughter when she died. She told us that a woman would burn her lock of hair if she had no daughters. She also said that women would only wear hair from their husbands' heads and laughed at the idea of a man wearing an extra piece of hair, although the men usually wear their hair in the same way as the women. 302 431 585

At Sitala Wanniya each married man was questioned separately.

Handuna, the oldest man and our best informant, said that in former days a lock of hair was always given by the bridegroom to the bride, and if he did not offer it, the young girl might ask for it and insist upon having it. In that case the prospective bridegroom would have to cut it off his own head, if his sister happened to be away at the time or if he had no sister, for it was her duty to give one to her brother if she knew that he wanted it for a wedding gift. A man would always be loath to cut his hair, and there are special regulations against this for shamans, so if the girl is willing to accept him without his present, and he is unable to obtain it from his sister or *naena*, the gift will be allowed to lapse. This happened when both Handuna and Vela married. No man would give hair to anyone except his wife. Kaira gave his wife a lock of hair when he was married, and he obtained it in the following way. He said that when discussing the matter of his future marriage at home, and feeling sore at having no hair to give his bride, his younger 302 431 585 593

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

302 431 585 593 sister said, "Don't be sorry, I will give you a lock of my hair." She cut a lock from her own head, which he kept until his marriage when he gave it to his wife while she was still at her father's cave. Then he took her to his own cave where she made him a waist string on the second or third day after marriage. To his sister who was then unmarried he gave an axe out of gratitude. Nila cut a lock from his head to give his wife, as his sister was away at the time he was married, otherwise she would have given him one. Pema did not give his wife any hair as her mother had given her some.

302 431 585 184 Among the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula the custom of giving hair as a wedding gift was not known, yet the shaman's wife had a lock which her mother had given her. She assured us that only married women might wear it.

586 Anything like a formal divorce is unknown, but we heard of one instance occurring three generations ago, in which a woman who had gone to live with her husband left him and returned to her parents. The daughter of a Bingoda man, whose nickname Kupunkarea is still remembered, was given to a boy nicknamed Kankuna "Sore Eyes." As he was lazy and took no trouble to support his wife, so that she was frequently obliged to go to her parents for food, they kept her with them. Kankuna was very angry, but he did not threaten violence or attempt to bring back his wife by force. Later she was given to a Vedda of Bandaraduwa and after his death she went to live with a Sinhalese. It was said that she was an unusually pretty girl.

595 It is quite certain that polyandry never existed among uncontaminated Veddas, but at Henebedda we met with one case that must, we think, be called by this name. Before relating this we may, however, call attention to the fact that polyandry is a tolerably common practice among the Sinhalese peasants of the Vedirata, as it is among the less educated classes in other parts of the island[1].

[1] Cf. *Papers on the Custom of Polyandry as practised in Ceylon*, Government Record Office, Colombo, in which Mr R. W. Ievers, speaking of the Kegalla district, says:—"Having been for six years in charge of a Kandyan district (Kegalla), and having to deal with land cases involving rights of inheritance, and having, as Registrar of Kandyan Marriages, to hear divorce cases, I have found that the custom of polyandry was almost universal; and that in the case of a marriage registered under

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

success in honey gathering, the shaman asked us for two strings of beads. These beads he placed over betel leaves upon two arrows thrust in the centre of the dancing ground which were surrounded by betel leaves offered to the *yaka*. These beads were said to represent the rough rope of creeper with which the green twigs forming the smoker were secured and the rope by which the smoker was lowered to the comb.

When it is remembered that Veddas do not tattoo or paint themselves, and have never been seen wearing any kind of seeds as ornaments, it seems reasonable to assume that where beads are sought after by the Veddas they are valued for their supposed magical properties.

In conclusion we may give the only perfectly clear instance of a Vedda wearing an amulet with which we are acquainted. The shaman of Bandaraduwa wore on his wrist a small silver cylinder such as is commonly used to contain a written charm. The cylinder was empty and had never contained a charm, but the shaman told us that he wore it in order to be cured of an illness from which he had suffered formerly, and that presently he would give the cylinder to some pilgrim proceeding to Kataragam in order that he might deposit it in the temple there.

The Eating of Human Liver.

Every group of Veddas except the most sophisticated village Veddas believe that it was formerly the custom for a man to carry in his betel pouch a small piece of dry human liver. But the majority of our informants were not clear as to the exact reason for doing this, though they were all agreed that it had something to do with raising a man's valour and making him strong to bear trouble. It was essential that the liver should be taken from a man killed by the individual who proposed to carry a portion of the dried liver in his pouch. When a man had been killed the slayer would open his belly and take out a small portion of his liver which he would dry in the sun in a secret place. This custom appears to have ceased about three generations ago, but the following instance, said to have occurred about fifty years ago, was given us at Bandaraduwa.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—
142 both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable.
291 A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments.† Indeed, almost the only difference
[304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have
[301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with
515 their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait,
● 302 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their
114 crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking
[276] gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smoking is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they
181 huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*antiaris innoxia*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 effectual so long as there were no influences to weaken it, but when once a preponderating force came to surround these clans, their chance of survival was small, and to prevent individual extinction amalgamation presented the path of minimum resistance.

The effect of this amalgamation was to break down the primitive methods, and concurrently to infuse new blood, and with it to stay, or lessen, the forces that were weakening an already over-inbred stock.

101 161 If we refer to certain statistics, as recently as 1840 we find that a rough enumeration of the so-called Rock-Veddas disclosed that only thirty families in Bintenna then existed.

Since then the increase of civilized races pressed with yearly greater insistence, till we are forced to conclude that the primitive Vedda is now no more, or nearly so.

142 In my Paper read at the meeting of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society on September 19, 1914, I have described the features of the Vedda family I found at Setawa, but I venture here to repeat it for easy reference.

The man Dissan Hamy is about 5 ft. 10 in. in height, thin, small round the chest, with rather short arms, slender legs, with hardly any calf development. He does not know his age. His head is small, with small dark-brown beady eyes [302] set far back in their sockets. His hair is short, not tied in a knot, staring, and frizzy. His younger brother is shorter in stature, but with the same character of hair on the head. The elder has short, scanty, and bristly moustaches, but in both brothers there is a marked scarcity of hair on the face and body. Dissan Hamy's two sisters are both of normal height, and dress like the other women of the country. They are about 5 ft. 3 in. in height, with slender limbs. Both women are mothers, and both indicated the small breast development that appears to be characteristic of women residing [302 354] in the arid parts of the country I explored. In both women the hair is short and frizzy. Their infants had shaved heads.

I remarked that the skin of Dissan Hamy's body is darker than that of the other members of the family. The nose is strongly formed, with thin dilated nostrils. The mouth is rather wide, with lips of no unusual thickness.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedds AX5

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree
that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of
the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of
brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pine-
apple.

The height was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the
superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then
the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There,
crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadina-
gala; to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thanagoda* (breast
mounds) and behind them *Thanakirigoda* (breast milk mound) with
wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks
driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the
summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach
of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale:
A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a
ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing
daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by
just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within
reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it.
When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep
into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards
it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge
collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year.
On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor
fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife
who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena kalangkal-*
angoa popehorai," which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 535
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were
hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with
slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose
and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that
these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted
by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with
great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that [534]
studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch
perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For
a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step
dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they out-
distance us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

A [the hill called Westmuster Abbey. – Analyst]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 302 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarm- 755 ing blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a 252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the G picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company 101 of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the 105 jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a 361 medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

000 A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the V Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That [132] evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

000 DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

115 Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of
101 fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a
[132] child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied
four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago
161 he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena* ; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

431 His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a
534 mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

342 Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house" ; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark ; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that ; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats ; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the
[372] entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for
302 food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

115 Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone ; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned :

262 Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas ;
825 but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain : it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good !

262 Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes :
252 *Góna-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat
251 and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

142
302

Fig. 14. Vedda of the Nilgala Region (Ceylon)

Photo Fr. Sarasin.

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia

Vedda AX5

142
302

Fig. 15. Vedda Woman of the Nilgala Region

Photo Fr. Sarasin.

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5
142
●302
516
291
411
137

Fig. 16. Veddas from the Nilgala District (Ceylon) *Photo R. Martin.*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 226 water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *nahapata*, *pussipahi* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp, within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords. 361

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter. 301 304

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of coconut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]." 415 [531]

Village Veddas of Tamankaduwa.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of intermarriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils. 144 621

Elakotaliya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-bred. Their mode of life is similar to that prevalent at Dambani and Bulugahaladena, i.e. they are occupied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their *waruge* and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaku. 105 621

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve mud huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1901. [113]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ignorant—the evidence for the use of jewellery or personal ornaments worn for their own sake is limited to the former wearing of ear ornaments by the Vedda women. Bailey states that the women "have their ears pierced and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory[1]," and this was confirmed by our old Sinhalese informant, whose evidence as to the former condition of the Veddas has been given in Chapter II. It seems that men did not wear ear ornaments, although we met some village Veddas (Dambani) who wore earrings, and a few men in other communities were seen with pierced ears. This point of view is confirmed by Nevill who wrote, "Men occasionally wore a few large beads on their waist string, if they could afford it, but no other jewels," and he describes the women's ear ornaments as "ear-jewels, the size of a man's thumb made of ivory, white horn, or bone, and carved or etched...worn through the lobe of the ear[2]."

301 [304]

At the present time among the wilder Veddas neither men nor women wear beads or ornaments of any kind, though the women are pleased to accept beads as presents.

It is otherwise among the more sophisticated Veddas of the Bintenne. At Omuni all the women and girls wore beads, and though they could not account for their origin, we were able to ascertain that they had been in their possession at least five generations. They descended usually from grandmother to granddaughter, some strings being given to each girl-child at birth, the rest being usually given when the girl married, or on the death of the grandmother. These beads are of glass, mostly red though some are green and a few white. They have been identified by Mr C. H. Read as 17th century Venetian beads, and were doubtless a present from some notable who required assistance from the Veddas as he passed through their country.

[428]

This summarises all we have been able to learn concerning the use of personal ornaments among the Veddas, and though Nevill states, presumably of the Veddas of the Bintenne, that they "delight to deck their hair with bright or fragrant flowers," we were unable to find any trace of this practice occurring

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 284. [2] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

success in honey gathering, the shaman asked us for two strings of beads. These beads he placed over betel leaves upon two arrows thrust in the centre of the dancing ground which were surrounded by betel leaves offered to the *yaka*. These beads were said to represent the rough rope of creeper with which the green twigs forming the smoker were secured and the rope by which the smoker was lowered to the comb. 301 782

When it is remembered that Veddas do not tattoo or paint themselves, and have never been seen wearing any kind of seeds as ornaments, it seems reasonable to assume that where beads are sought after by the Veddas they are valued for their supposed magical properties. 304 302 301

In conclusion we may give the only perfectly clear instance of a Vedda wearing an amulet with which we are acquainted. The shaman of Bandaraduwa wore on his wrist a small silver cylinder such as is commonly used to contain a written charm. The cylinder was empty and had never contained a charm, but the shaman told us that he wore it in order to be cured of an illness from which he had suffered formerly, and that presently he would give the cylinder to some pilgrim proceeding to Kataragam in order that he might deposit it in the temple there. 751

The Eating of Human Liver.

Every group of Veddas except the most sophisticated village Veddas believe that it was formerly the custom for a man to carry in his betel pouch a small piece of dry human liver. But the majority of our informants were not clear as to the exact reason for doing this, though they were all agreed that it had something to do with raising a man's valour and making him strong to bear trouble. It was essential that the liver should be taken from a man killed by the individual who proposed to carry a portion of the dried liver in his pouch. When a man had been killed the slayer would open his belly and take out a small portion of his liver which he would dry in the sun in a secret place. This custom appears to have ceased about three generations ago, but the following instance, said to have occurred about fifty years ago, was given us at Bandaraduwa. 789 266

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—
142 both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable.
291 A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments† . Indeed, almost the only difference
[304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have
[301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with
515 their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait,
302 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their
114 crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smok-
[276] ing is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they
181 huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*antiaris innoxia*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

423 But what irony is all this talk of chiefs and clans and possessions, where
656 only a mere handful of spiritless people is concerned. The Veddas alone recognise their boundaries, Government does not. Quite rightly they are not permitted to fell their forests without sanction, or to give their lands away; for what would be easier than to cozen such simple folk. These Veddas may cultivate *chenas* with permission from Government but without tax; a privilege they are impotent to avail themselves of, and are still hunters enough to disregard, whether under encouragement or compulsion. "What lands have the Veddas now?" lamented Kaurala "Our rightful lands! Why should we be deprived of them? The earth of our land is honey to us". And in those words he spoke the doom of his race.

Let us leave the last of the Veddas alone, and not try to fashion them to our ways; for that would kill them the sooner. Let them die out, scattered in their lonely jungles, the hunters they have always been. A few decades hence and the Vedda will be but a name.

651 Not every Vedda is exempt from taxation. I believe those in the Eastern Province are taxed, while those of Uva are not. Why this distinction, it is hard to understand; except for the plea that nowadays it is difficult to say who is a Vedda and who not. But, in cases of doubt, the conditions of life that characterise a particular community should be the criterion that influences the decision, favourably or otherwise. It does seem hard that these poor people, who never handle a single cent from one year's end to another, and have barely a rag with which to cover their nakedness, should have to pay a tax of two rupees with the richest in the land! In default of payment, a penalty of some ten days' work on the roads is imposed; an equitable provision on the face of it; but what of the family with the bread-winner thus engaged? After all, these people only live from day to day; and even sickness very often means starvation.

241 As for *chena* cultivation,* there can be little doubt that it is the one form
● 311 of agriculture, best suited to the primitive folk of the arid forests; but a serious attempt should be made to better the wasteful methods now in
656 vogue. I remember once travelling through a Province where a progressive, but misguided policy—as applied to these parts—prevailed: *chena* licences had been with-held that year with a view to enforcing paddy cultivation; (in such forests! and among such folk!). The result was disastrous. It was heart-rending to see the starved, emaciated villagers Sinhalese and Veddas alike, digging out wild, unsavoury yams from
261 the baked ground. They would have given their lives for a little *kurrukhan* or maize, which was nowhere to be had.

Chenas represent a very primitive and wasteful form of agriculture. In June of each year an area of jungle is leased by several families. The trees are felled, and burnt two weeks later. The land is then cleared, except for a residue of charred trunks. Temporary huts are suitably disposed, and the whole surrounded by a fence-work of burnt logs, so strong that it must be proof against elephants, so tall that it must top the sambur's leap, so close that it must keep out the hare. By August this work is completed.

In September the crops are sown;—Maize or *irindu* which takes 4 months, and manioc which takes a year to mature; vegetables such as pumpkins, melons and beans (*puhul*, *wattaha*, *ihimbiri*, *kahiri*, *lesma*); yams such as *kuhul-alla*, *wal-alla*, *walapol*, *kodol*. In October and November, *kurrukhan*, chillies, green-gram, and perhaps a little paddy is planted.

During February, March, and April the *kurrukhan* and maize crops are harvested—or rather what is left of them when the elephants and drought have had their say

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

In their inhospitable forests, the most wild and arid in the Island, where food is scarce and only attained with great hardship, the Vedda is king. His lifelong apprenticeship to the harsh conditions fits him superbly to the mercile a task. He knows season and place and is sensitive to the slightest clue. How ill-fitted for this life are we of the towns who would starve by a tree with a honey-comb or with a succulent yam under foot. They make us feel like children, in that environment, these admirable Crichtons of the jungle, and our urban refinements as dross compared with their simple skill and hardihood. 311

It is truly a delight to travel with the Vedda and watch his ways. Moving silently, speaking no word except to "hum" an animal call to attract each other's attention, they allow nothing to escape them, and read the ground like a book, indicating spoor where you see nothing. Becoming sceptical of such claims I thought I would test the skill of Suthu Banda, also known as Poromola. Telling him to turn his face away, I tip-toed lightly on the bed of leaf that carpeted our path, and asked him to indicate my foot-prints. 151 224

"Here they are, and here," he said without a moment's hesitation. "Why, it's easy; don't you see the leaves turned?" (I certainly did not, demonstrate as hard as he might). "What is the difficulty for us to see a human foot-print here," he continued, "who have to follow a mouse-deer's trail on ground that shows less than this."

We had halted by a tree of great height and enormous girth, branchless for quite forty feet from the ground—as awkward a proposition for a climber as one could wish. I asked Suthu Banda whether he could climb it. "Why not," he said; and, without so much as putting down the axe hitched to his shoulder, he mounted the rock beside which the tree stood, and looked up a second or two. Then, shinning up an adjacent sapling that shot high, swung on to the slender extremity of the big tree's lowermost branch that sagged under his weight, and moved along with a carelessness painful to watch. He was soon among boughs no bigger than a man's wrist, and from the dizzy height wished to know whether we wanted him to go higher! None of your artificial aids, such as loops, for the Vedda; he is a veritable quadrumana, with feet as prehensile as hands. 481

They have a sure method of killing sambur. In the rainy months, and also, more rarely, in the drought, these animals climb to the tops of solitary hills. The Vedda, always watchful for the opportunity, is quick to detect this by the spoor. Cautiously attaining the summit, one or two of them guard with guns the only path by which the sambur must 224

Yams, chillies and melons survive a few months longer. After one to one and a half years the *chena* is abandoned as worthless, and a fresh acreage leased; for *hurrukhan* especially, is reputed to take such heavy toll of the soil, that this must be allowed to lie fallow for some ten or twelve years before being fit for recultivation! A terrible consumption of forest land results, unless controlled; harmless enough where a few families exist in vast forests; but sadly devastating in places at all populous. [241]

Irrigation, as these people know it, is solely what heaven bestows. Water may lie to hand but is not seriously utilized. A drought brings ruin, and scatters the folk far in quest of food. It is time a more economic system of agriculture was introduced to the Vanni, and the people taught, by the institution of model *chenas*, at least the value of forest leaf mould as a manure, and the advantages of some simple system of irrigation from available streams or wells, such as the Tamils of Jaffna and the Moors of the Eastern Province exploit so well.

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as as leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [325] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in 222 families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 252 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 757 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 262 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, 164 his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit [757] and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: 000 those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
301

A Vedda girl of Dolagalwella (Page 33)

312

Yakkure tank. (Page 30)

[facing p. 38]

342 eggs of gekkoes very like candle droppings. A few of the caves have drip ledges (evidence of Sinhalese occupation) which serve to keep them dry: those without this feature are all adrip during the rains and their floors are mossy. Rocky out-crops, large loose stones and, perhaps a white-ant hill or two, divide up the floor space into sections in which the various Vedda families lie grouped, each in its allotted span. Here and there the stony floor is cupped where maize has been pounded, or worn [372] smooth where *kurrukhan* has been rubbed to flour with the flat polished stones that lie about. A fire-place or two, a cooking frame, and dry leaves (*pana*, *pinney dea*, or *helanea*), the bedding of these people, complete the picture.

Let us take the more important of the caves as we pass them on our way from Bingoda to Newaragala. Like our houses they are all named.

Matigaha galge is a deep roomy grotto formed by a superincumbent rock mass supported slantwise on large flanking boulders. Partially obstructing its entrance, and just within cover of its roof, is a steep rounded stone which one family would occupy silhouetted against a [312] tree-intersected sky. Its only source of water is the Magalavatan Aar a quarter mile away. This disadvantage, and its nearness to the Bingoda homes, accounts for its present disuse. Suthu Banda was born here. Kaurala who had not seen it since his childhood could not help a word of regret on seeing it now after the long years: "Ah!" he sighed. "Is this the old home. No one to inhabit it now,"

Galthale galge (Rock-slab cave) owes its name to a slab of rock within it, beneath which one must crawl to gain a gloomy inner compartment. A reedy pool below, and the cyfax, cactus and vines about its mouth give it a touch of wild picturesqueness.

Alu galge (Ash cave), which lies at the base of Newaragala, is less a cave than a passage under an immense boulder spanning two lateral outcrops. It is so well concealed by large stones guarding its mouth that one would not suspect its presence even when standing within a few feet of it. The floor slopes up steeply towards a narrowing exit, and is so bestrewn with rocks as to afford no convenient resting place. Yet, in a cranny here or a basin there, the Veddas contrive to make themselves comfortable, as the withered leaves that have served them as mats testify. A small tripodal frame shows where flesh has been [312] roasted. There is no lack of water here; for not only does a perennial spring lie at its entrance, the resort of innumerable bears during the drought, but in the rainy season a rivulet flows right through the cave.

This cave is a favourite of the Veddas who come here when the jak 222 trees, which grow on the slopes of Newaragala, are in fruit. Then, spending a few days, they feast to surfeiting on the tender fruit, and with their [261] characteristic improvidence carry none away. It was here that Kaurala stayed when he "skinned" Nuwaragala—which was his own beautiful way of saying he had stripped it clean of hives. How secret are the ways of Veddas may be judged from the fact that here was a cave frequented by them without its being known to the Sinhalese who lived six miles away. And we who had once spent a night on Newaragala were ignorant that here below us was a cave used by the very Veddas we yearned to know.

261 But of all the caves I have seen *Dhik galge* was the best. I have already described this cave; it remains for me to add a few vital touches. In

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

and terrified they stood around the border. Then did the Saviour cause the pleasant Giridipa (Highlands) to come here near to them, and when they had settled there, he made it return to its former place. Then did the Saviour fold his rug of skin; the devas assembled, and in their assembly the Master preached them the doctrine. The conversion of many kotis of living beings took place and countless were those who came into the precepts of duty. The prince of the devas craved of him something to worship. The Conqueror, who had pure and blue black locks, passing his hand over his head, bestowed on him a handful of hairs. And he, receiving this in a splendid golden urn, when he had laid the hairs on a heap of many coloured gems, seven cubits round, piled up at the place where the Master had sat, covered them over with the thupa of sapphire and worshipped them.

"When Sambuddha had died, the thera Sarabhu, by his miraculous power, received, even from the funeral pyre, the collar bone of the Conqueror and brought it to Lanka and laid it in that same cetiya.

"The king Dutthagamini, dwelling there while he made war upon the Damilas (Tamils) built a mantle cetiya over it eighty cubits high. Thus was the Mahiyangana-thupa completed."

Barely four miles from Alutnuwara is the beautiful tank of Horabora Wewa whose vast waters have been cunningly trapped by a great earth work or bund, amidst a natural barrier of surrounding hills. As one sits here of an evening and looks across with field-glasses to the wilder opposite shore, small herds of deer may be seen feeding on the grassy edge between forest and lake; and in the drought, herds of elephants come to the water. White cranes fly overhead to roost on the bordering trees at dusk. Placed as it is in the heart of the Vedda country, this tank has long been associated with the Veddas. To-day only a few very destitute families of half-Veddas are to be found at Malgoda on the borders of the tank, living in the crudest of shelters, and feeding for the most part on the seeds of lotus pods (*olu*).

By an ancient sluice cut out of stone,* the tank-water is conducted along a channel to a wide stretch of paddy fields, now mostly in disuse owing to the paucity of the population. This brimming waterway, its grassy banks studded with beautiful trees, affords many a delightful picture, especially where the lotus thrives with its large, snow-white blossoms and no less beautiful leaves be-diamonded with sparkling droplets of water. Here halcyons fish all day. Up to recent years the tank itself was covered with lotus; but now, for some reason or other, there is none; and when no breeze stirs the glassy waters at midday, they reflect an ever changing panorama of dazzling clouds only broken where a darter or cormorant gambols.

It is not surprising that so beautiful a tank should have inspired a fine poem, of which I have attempted a poor translation that does scant justice to the euphonious idioms, the long vowel cadences, the alliterations, and rhymes of the Sinhalese original.

*Tradition has it that two giants (*yodhayas*) sat here on opposite sides of a crack in the great rock, and each, seizing that part on which he was seated with his hands, and thrusting with his foot against the other, wrenched the rocks apart, making an outlet for the water!

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224 a bear-bite, came one afternoon with two dogs and suggested a monitor hunt.

After having walked aimlessly through the jungle for the better part of an hour, we got impatient, and asked the Veddas what manner of hunt was this, and of what breed were their useless mongrels? They replied, and with justice, that the jungle was none of their choosing, and that there were no *goas* about for their dogs to scent them, as any one could see from the lack of traces. Once within the jungle, we had expected the dogs to shake off their lethargy and nose about at every scent. Not so these beasts, they hung on the heels of their masters, the least enthusiastic of the company. However, our remarks put the men on their mettle and, walking ahead, they tried to set their dogs to; one of them actually whistling and snapping his fingers after the manner of us in towns!

We had given up all hope of even seeing a monitor when suddenly there was a rustle in front of us, and a Vedda and his dog shot forward. We followed to find the Vedda gazing helplessly at a hole high up in the trunk of a tall tree, and his cur, its enthusiasm already wilted, lying contentedly with closed eyes, as if nothing was further from his thoughts than lizards in general and this one in particular.

224 The tree up which the reptile had sought refuge was quite four feet in diameter. The Vedda was not long in doubt as to how he should act. ●313 Walking round the tree he tapped it with the head of his axe, and, finding it reasonably hollow, what should he do but proceed to fell it with that toy axe of his the cutting edge of which was no more than one and a half inches! So astonished were we at this that we settled down to a smoke, and watched.

After almost two hours of arduous toil, the great tree groaned and bore slowly down through thwarting lianas and the boughs of its huddled neighbours. It hesitated in its fall and then, despite ominous cracklings, remained poised aslant. A half hour more, and a supporting tree of no small girth was sacrificed with many an obscene curse; then another, and another tree; and finally the giant fell.

But what of the monitor? There was not the least sign of him. The dogs, roused to expectation by the falling tree, had already resumed their repose. The Veddas, to their chagrin, discovered by tapping the trunk that its whole length was hollow. They hewed an opening into it some feet away from the entrance hole; and then with long sticks vainly tried to poke the reptile out. Two more windows were made, and much more progging done before, with the onset of dark, the project was abandoned as hopeless. "Why not have smoked the animal out?" you will ask; we did suggest it, only to learn that, while it would answer for the pangolin, it was useless for the monitor which tenacious creature will rather die suffocated in its lair than emerge to fall a victim to axe or canine jaw. That little beast certainly had the laugh of us!

This incident demonstrates well how wasteful of forest vegetation Veddas are. Often one sees great trees—even satin or ebony—felled across the path, only to find on inspecting them that they were sacrificed for a parrot's nest or a honey-comb! Be the crime what it may in the eyes of the law, it required a demonstration such as this to inspire us with respect for the toy-like axe the Vedda carries on his shoulder, and the stamina of his stringy arm.

[pp. 97-110 not processed]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a [531 177] rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made [172] pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

Tools and Weapons.

411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by [437] barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

411 No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *kobbevel* 322 (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained, it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of [283 a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind ●314] that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the timbal tree (Diospyros embryopteris).

3. SOME VEDDA ARTS AND A DANCE

EDIBLE LIME

321 296 [237] THE Vedda method of making from snail-shells an edible lime, the concomitant of a betel or bark chew, is interesting. Four varieties of snail afford it: The large, white, land snails (*wantako* or *godang bello*); the small, black, river snails (*alang bello* or *gadu bello*), found in dry stream beds; the bivalved *ethal bello*; and the convoluted *kankuro* or *lanu bello*.

The *wantako* give the best lime. Six to twelve of their shells are dropped into a small fire, and a layer of dry twigs is laid over them. The flame is now vigorously fanned with a leafy sprig, to prevent the shells getting charred. When the overlying layer of twigs is reduced to embers, and the shells glow white, they are gently picked off with a stick, taken on the palm and placed in a large leaf (*kenda* or *halmilla*). A little water is then added or, in its absence, saliva! The leaf is quickly folded over the shells which now disintegrate and "ripen." They are then smashed up with the fingers, and the chunam is distributed.

When the small *gadu bello* are used, the process is slightly different: the burnt shells, moistened and bundled in a leaf as before, are replaced on the embers quietened down with a sprinkling of water. The chunam from these is coarser and more gritty than that from the *wantako*.

FIRE MAKING

372 Fire is obtained by jungle folk in a variety of ways. When gun-powder is to hand there is a choice of two methods: (*a*) A little powder is placed on a stone and closely surrounded with small fragments of cloth or tree cotton. It is then ignited, and the rag set on fire, by striking it sharply with an axe-head previously warmed by rubbing on a rock. (*b*) When, in addition to powder, a cap is available, the powder is put into a small square of rag with the upturned cap in its centre. Into the cap the point of a knife is inserted, and the rag is closed over and clapsed firmly against the blade. The striking of this on a stone explodes the cap, ignites the powder, and lights the rag.

These methods being too wasteful for routine use, the commonest mode of fire-making in the jungles is by means of a C-shape iron strike-a-light (*gini-katuwa*) and a piece of chert or crystalline quartz (*irimana gal*), against which is a piece of *kitul* cotton or rag to take the spark when the two are struck together.

The most primitive, and essentially Vedda, art of making fire is by the attrition of two sticks. Although I had hitherto travelled much in Ceylon forests, always making inquiries about this mode of obtaining [184] fire, it was not until I came to Bingoda that I was able to see it done, and that with astonishing ease. In Henebedde and Bintenne the art was dead; indeed some of the Veddas had never even heard of it!

The light *velang* stick of which arrows are made is the wood *par excellence* for fire making. Elephants being fond of the tree, the dry

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a [531 177] rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made [172] pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

Tools and Weapons.

411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by [437] barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes 411 or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *kobbewal* ● 322 (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained, it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of [283 314] a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the tinbirai tree (Diospyros embryopteris).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

resin obtained from the *timbiri* tree (*Dioclyrus umbrypteris*). 411
The shaft of the arrow is commonly made of the wood of the 322
welan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*). The arrow is still the almost universal cutting tool, as we had good opportunity of ascertaining at Henebedda. There was no knife in the community, and we noticed the skill with which a deer was skinned 412 252
and cut up with an arrow. The Veddas certainly desired no better tool, and when we pressed a butcher's knife on one of them in order to see how he would handle the unaccustomed tool, it was interesting to note how slowly he worked and how poor the result was compared with that he obtained with an arrow, which he held just above the blade somewhat as a European holds a penholder. No less astonishing was the skill employed in removing the skull cap with a few strokes of the axe, not only was the brain lifted out and cooked entire, but it was removed so neatly and cleanly that the result was more suggestive of an anatomical preparation than a piece of butcher's work.

The Veddas we met were all bad or indifferent shots, and 411
we have no doubt that game is seldom shot at a distance much beyond fifteen or twenty yards, the marvellous stalking of the Veddas enabling them to approach within this distance. The bow, to which the string is securely fastened at one end, is carefully unstrung when not in use. To string it, this end is placed upon the ground, the upper end of the shaft and the string being held in the hands, the sole of one foot is then placed against the middle of the shaft which is steadied, we might almost say gripped, between the great toe and the second toe. Much of the weight of the body is thrown against the middle of the shaft while the hands pull down the upper end to which the string is quickly secured, as is shown in Plate LXIII. Plate LXIV shows the position of the hands and arms immediately before the arrow is released. The bowman is Handuna of Henebedda, who is left-handed and who in spite of being the [145]
father of a large family remains the only left-handed individual in the community. The length of a bow collected at Henebedda was 172 cm., while four arrows also obtained at Henebedda varied from 88 to 105 cm. in length.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1926) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

sticks are easily obtainable from broken branches scattered everywhere. Gama, who was entrusted with the demonstration, chose two twigs, one the thickness of the index finger and about a foot and a half long, the other as thick as the little finger and about ten inches long. Having barked these, he whittled down the centre of the larger stick, and, in the flat surface thus produced, scooped out a shallow cavity, at one border of which he contrived a V-shaped extension. A piece of cloth about two inches square was placed on the ground under the centre of the stick which was held firmly down, cavity uppermost, by the toes of the operator, aided by the hands of an assistant. The smaller stick was then placed vertically over the other—its point, rendered bluntly conical, engaging in the cavity—and briskly rotated between the open palms. The firm downward pressure with which these movements were accompanied, caused the palms to descend the length of the stick from time to time. As often as this happened, the hands were quickly disengaged and re-applied as before to the upper part, and the twirling manoeuvre repeated. This had been done but twice when smoke was seen. Soon a small heap of charred dust like coffee-grounds accumulated round the hole, to escape down the V-shaped gutter on to the cloth. The smoke increased; there was a smell of charred wood. Suddenly a spark was thrown on to the black dust and the rag caught fire. A few dry leaves were collected and set alight. Within two minutes of the commencement of the operation there was a lively fire. When the smoke is observed to come from the accumulated dust, apart from that at the point of contact between the two sticks, it is a sign that the object is achieved. The rag is then rolled to enclose the dust—cigarette-fashion—and blown into at one end, so that it soon smokes heavily and catches fire. 372

It is strange that an art so simple in adept hands (not by any means so in those of a novice) should have been allowed to fall into disuse in wild Ceylon. I have seen refinements of this method; a coconut-shell, flat stone, or skull of a small animal for instance, being used by an assistant to press down the vertical stick, and a twist of bark to rotate it but they were less effectual than the simple procedure I have described. [178]

ARCHERY

322 411

The present day Veddas, we have seen, are poor bowmen; they have, however, not yet quite lost the art of fashioning superb bows and arrows.

The bow is made from the *mahakahala-gaha* or the *hobawela*; the stone bow (*gal-dhumna*) from the *gatawela-gaha*; the bow string from the inner sheath of the bark of *aralu-wel*.* [824]

The size of the bow is proportioned to the archer's strength. I have seen one six and a half feet long and as thick as a child's wrist; and, judging from its drawing power, no hand but a giant's could have wielded it. The usual length of a bow is from five and a half feet to five feet ten inches. It is made of a single stave, thick at the centre, without contrivance to give grip, flattened along the back, and tapering towards the horns which, without being notched, are tightly encircled by a few turns of cord to prevent the string slipping.

The arrow is made from the *es* or *wlang*† tree, the wood of which when dry is of remarkable lightness. A straight twig the girth of the finger

*Terminalia chebula.
†Pterospermum suberifolium.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

322 is taken, barked, and straightened by being passed rapidly a few times
411 through a flame, and then bent over the knee or between the hands. It is shaved down to uniform thickness with an arecanut-cutter or arrow blade, and cut to suitable length, roughly gauged by holding it along the outstretched arm from the nearer nipple to the end of the middle finger, giving it an average measure of two and a half feet, or slightly less. An arrow belonging to the great bow I have mentioned, measured three and a half feet. The nock or notch is a quarter of an inch deep and cut square.

411 The arrow is feathered with the wing plumes of the owl, devil-bird,
237 jungle-cock, or large crane (*mana koka*); the owl's, besides being the
284 best, are easily picked up along dry stream beds, on the trees bordering which the birds usually roost. A feather is split unequally down the rachis, only the larger segment being used. Four such segments, about two inches long, are arranged equidistantly round the shaft, an inch and a quarter from the end, and bound neatly down with *aralu* fire, the mouth helping in the process. The first turns are merely taken round that part of the shaft, which is immediately below the feathers, then round the bared lower ends of the rachis, and then carried along, at spaced intervals, between the carefully separated barbs. Should a strand not prove long enough, it is finished off by having its end tucked in between rachis and shaft, and another is similarly begun. Finally the ruffled barbs are straightened out between the thumb and fingers moistened with saliva. A few turns of fibre just below the notch serve to give grip to the drawing fingers.

411 The arrow-head is made of flattened iron obtained from local black-
smiths. It is three to five inches long, of lanceolate shape in imitation of the *na* leaf, and sharp at the edges; serving as much as a cutting implement as an arrow. By a tang it is let into the end of the shaft to which it is firmly secured with fibre. All the strung parts of the arrow,
[824] as well as the bow-string, are finally dressed with the sticky milk of *kiri-wel* to prevent untwisting. Both bow and arrow, being very liable to the ravages of boring insects, are always kept hung over the smoke when not in use.

The method of stringing the bow is by placing one end of it, to which the string is knotted, on the ground, and then pressing on its centre either with the bent knee or by a foot thrust. A correctly strung bow should measure at its centre a span between string and belly of bow; this is rather more than the "fist-mele" (clenched fist with thumb upright) the rough estimate of European stringing.

The arrow release favoured by the Veddas is that in which the cord is drawn with the first joints of the index and middle fingers, the arrow being usually placed on the left of the bow. The style of archery is often peculiar: the arrow fitted to the bow is raised head high; the right elbow is now swung up in an awkward flourish above the head, and then brought slowly down to alignment with the eye, as the string is drawn out to its fullest extent and the arrow delivered.

DANCING

177 The ceremonial dances of the Veddas have been minutely described
and illustrated by Seligmann. The dance we are about to describe
536 seems to have been performed before him in its greatest purity at Henebedde. The differences between his description and ours must be

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

773

at Aralu Talawa about two miles east of Peria Pillumalai in the Eastern Province on the Badulla-Batticaloa road. Now these Veddas possessed elephants and cattle, so that when two Moormen pedlars came and saw the Veddas living well and in comfort, they thought how good it would be to kill them and take their goods. The Moormen asked the Veddas to barter honey with them, and Moormen and Veddas went to the hill now called Yakagala, for there were *bambara* colonies among its rocks. The Veddas went down ladders of creepers to the combs, but before they could take the honey the ladders were cut by the Moormen and the Veddas were dashed to pieces. The Moormen came back to the settlement and when the Veddas' wives questioned them as to the whereabouts of their husbands the Moormen said they were bathing in a stream close by. The women did not believe this and, suspecting foul play, went to look for their husbands and found the bodies at the foot of the precipice. They went back to their houses, let loose the cattle and fired their houses, for they determined to kill themselves. The elder sister saw the Moormen running towards them, so standing on the edge of a precipice she called her young sister to her saying that her bangle was broken. As her younger sister stood near her she suddenly grasped her round the body and jumped over the cliff. The *yaku* of these women and of their husbands still remain in the neighbourhood of their old dwelling-place which because of them looks clean, as if folk still lived there. The rock bee still lives on this hill to which the Veddas resort to take honey.

POTTERY.

323

The Veddas make very rough pots. A lump of dark coloured clay is taken, patted into the desired shape, left to dry in the air, and then baked. The Henebedda Veddas who made the pots shown in Plate LXII said that these pots were placed on the fire and covered with pieces of dried wood so as to be submitted to heat on every side. The less sophisticated Veddas [184] of Sitala Wanniya stated that they simply placed the air dried pots on the fire, when they were soon baked hard.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

●323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a [531 177] rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made [172] pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

Tools and Weapons.

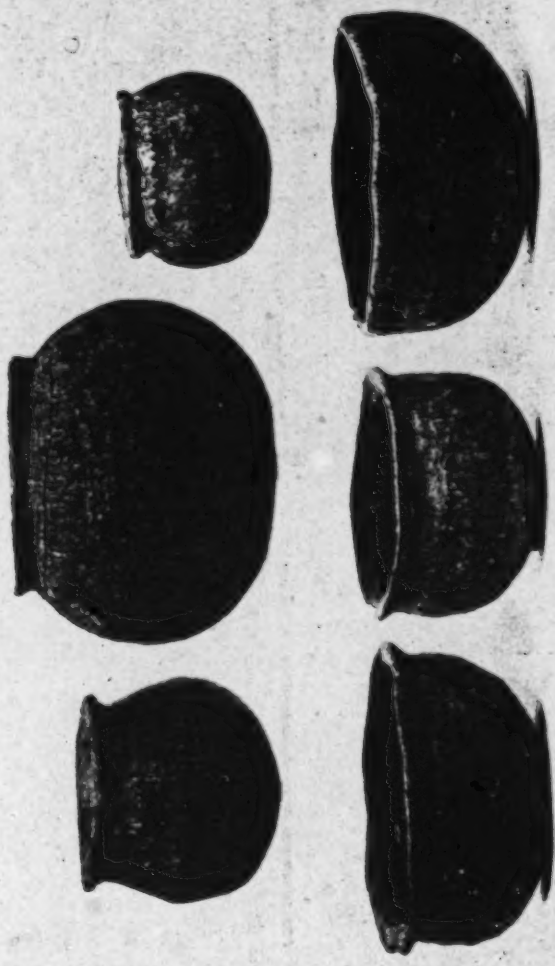
411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by [437] barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes 411 or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *kobbewal* 322 (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained, it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of [283 a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind 314] that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the tinbal tree (Diospyros embayopteris).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

323
415
531

Plate LXII



Vedda pots

[facing p. 324]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Not all the caves investigated yielded evidence of prehistoric habitation, but from a certain number were obtained quartz, chert and shell implements which put the matter beyond doubt and conclusively show that Ceylon formerly possessed a stone age. The greater part of the volume is taken up by an account of prehistoric quartz and chert artifacts, and the excellent reproductions given by the authors show that the quartz implements they discovered belong to the same type as those found by ourselves and described elsewhere[1].

But in addition the Sarasins found hammer stones, a few pieces of worked bone, and a series of shells of the large land snail (*Helix phoenix*), the curve of each shell being occupied by a circular hole large enough to allow of its sharp edge being used as a cutting tool[2].

Plate VIII shows a number of typical Vedda implements. All are of quartz except No. 2 which is of chert. Nos. 1 and 3 are worked on one side only, the unworked side being shown in order to illustrate the well-marked bulb of percussion which distinguishes many of the specimens. The general characteristics of these implements are so well shown in the plate that a description in detail is not necessary. Attention may, however, be called to figures 6, 8 and 9; the first of these shows a large part of the outer surface of the quartz pebble from which it was made. No. 8 belongs to a type of which numerous examples occur among European stone implements, this specimen is thicker than is usual and measures 15 mm. from one surface to the other. No. 9 can scarcely have been intended for anything but an arrow head, two views are given of this remarkable implement which comes from a cave on the Scarborough Estate at Maskeliya, and for a drawing of which I am indebted to Mr Pole. No. 2 is of chert and was found in the same cave; two views of this implement are given. The localities from which the other specimens were collected were as follows: No. 1 was found by Mr Pole at Maskeliya, No. 3 we picked up at Bandarawela, No. 4 was collected by Mr Green

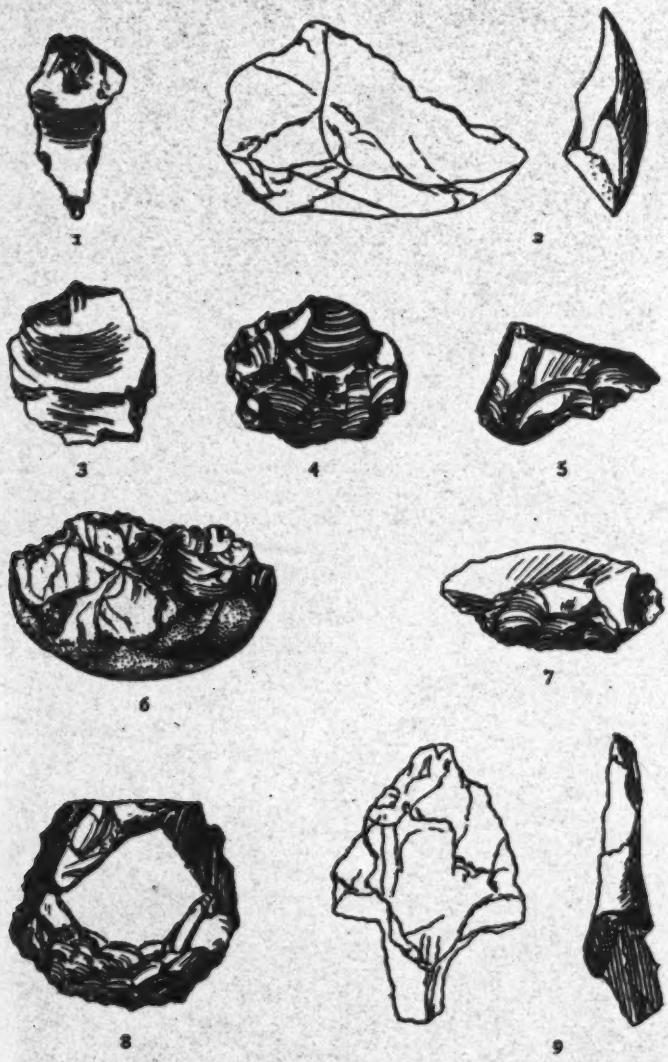
[1] C. G. Seligmann, "Quartz Implements from Ceylon," *Man*, 1908, 63.

[2] These shells in fact constitute a primitive plane or spokeshave and resemble those found in Queensland and some parts of South America at the present day.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate VIII

172
324



Quartz and chert implements

[Facing p. 20]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172
324

near Peradeniya, Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8 are in Mr Pole's collection and were found by him near Maskeliya.

The questions raised by the discovery of implements such as those figured are so many and interesting that no excuse is needed for considering some of the issues at length. The data are the caves excavated by the Sarasins in which prehistoric implements were found, and our own work in Ceylon including the partial excavation of the Bendiyagalge caves which are described and figured in Chapter IV.

In the first place if we accept the suggestion that Veddas, the ancestors of those still existing, are responsible for these implements, their distribution will give valuable information as to the former extent of the Vedda country. It may be said at once that the distribution of these implements, as far as it is at present known, agrees with our historic knowledge of the extent of the Vedda domain, and adds to it the heights of Uva up to about 4000 feet (Bandarawela), the country around Kandy, and the hill country to the south (Gampola) and in the neighbourhood of Adam's Peak (Maskeliya)[1]. And since they have been found in the neighbourhood of Matale they add an interesting confirmation to what Mr Parker has said on p. 9 concerning the former occurrence of Veddas in this part of the country. Within the last few months the range of these implements has been extended south to the neighbourhood of Ratnapura, where a number of excellent specimens were found by the late James Parsons, who wrote to us concerning them as follows: "I dug out a cave in Sabaragamuwa in a ravine to the north-east of Ratnapura which was most interesting. I have full notes of the cave—briefly it is sufficiently high above the stream for it to have been impossible for it to enter the cave in

[1] We consulted the late James Parsons, Director of the Mineral Survey, concerning the geological formation of the rounded grassy hills near Bandarawela called *patanas*, upon which we had independently collected many quartz artifacts. He informed us that the capping of these hills usually consists of more or less disintegrated granular quartz rock, but that this did not seem to contain nearly enough clear quartz to produce the flakes even as a "survival of the fittest" in the process of disintegration. Parsons did however find several water-worn pebbles, all broken, but there were not enough to lead him to think they represented a capping gravel, although in the case of the Peradeniya locality there is no doubt that there is river gravel on the hill.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

172
324

geologically recent times. To a depth of 8 feet the cave is full of black earth containing many shells of the big tree snail mixed with the river shells, *bellan* (*Paludina ceylonica*), in such abundance that these shells are now occasionally collected and burnt for chunam. A shell is said to occur that is found only in the river at Ratnapura, but I did not succeed in finding it. The tradition is that the molluscs were used as food by 'an ancient Tamil people.' The shells are not calcined, but with them were a number of flakes of clear quartz—mostly made from pebbles, some of them the best I have seen and undoubtedly neolithic.... I do not think there can be any reasonable doubt about them. At a depth of five feet very rotten fragments of the top of a human skull and the region of the ear besides bits of long bones and some pieces of chert not obviously worked. At the entrance of the cave there is a sort of dyke thrown up, which is full of flakes some of which appear to be ground and polished."

Parsons' premature death renders it unlikely that a full account of this find will ever be published, but owing to the kindness of Mrs Parsons we have been able to examine a number of the implements excavated by her husband. These include a number of cores, worked flakes and scrapers, and one flake of chert showing a bulb of percussion, but none of the specimens that I have handled show any signs of polishing[1].

[1] Since the above was written we have received the following account of the cave from Mr W. D. Holland on whose property we understand the cave is situated. "The cave is situated about a mile from my bungalow on the N. bank of a small stream and some 10 to 15 feet above present water level. The cave has been formed by the weathering out of a soft core of rock from gneiss of the ordinary kind and may have been assisted by the action of the stream when running at a higher level. The cave is a fairly large one and would accommodate several families, say 15 or so individuals, and is quite dry inside. It appears to have been banked up in front, but this may have been caused by debris falling from the cliff above. The strike I believe coincides with the stream S.W. N.W. We dug a pit about 5 feet in diameter and about 7 or 8 feet deep, and came upon a lot of shells of the *belan* or water snail and some bones: a much shattered portion of the latter we thought to be a portion of a human skull, and Mr Parsons subsequently informed me by letter that this had been confirmed in Colombo....The quartz flakes were not found in the cave, but on the entrance bank where they had been exposed by the drip from the rock above washing the earth away and leaving them. The old inhabitants would naturally work at the entrance for the sake of light. I know only of this one cave in this neighbourhood. The stream flows S.W. to the Kalugangā (eventually), and

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

142
241
342
516

Plate II

Danigala Veddas on look-out rock

[facing p.16a]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 226 water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *nahapata*, *pusilpata* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 562 The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802 The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437 The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantako*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. 582 Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). 584 583 She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. 614 554 There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

Plate X

342
361

Fig. 1. A chena settlement of the Henebedda Veddas

516
302
291

Fig. 2. Henebedda Veddas of the Namadewa clan inhabiting the chena settlement

[facing p. 36]

Plate XI

●342
133

Fig. 1. Rough shelter on the Danigala rock dome

142
516

Fig. 2. Veddas of Bandarawela

[facing p. 38]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

231 custom of the country and also selling those they have bred themselves. However, all this was unknown to us when we first met the people, nor would it have been possible to guess their prosperous condition from the first sight of their settlement.
123 It was well known throughout the Vedirata that investigations were about to be made among the Veddas, and all the village headmen had been given instructions to render assistance. They therefore told the Veddas to expect us, and would have sent for them to come to the Public Works Department bungalow on our arrival had we not expressly stated that we preferred to visit the people in their homes. A very rough track led to the top of
361 the Danigala Hill, about 1200 feet high, where, on a rounded
342 shoulder of rock stood the skeleton hut of the Danigala Veddas shown in Plate II. This was built on the pattern of the ordinary village Vedda habitations but entirely lacked the slats of bark which make the sides moderately weather proof. By its side was an even rougher shelter consisting of a large bough with the smaller branches trimmed and overlaid with banana leaves. Kaira the patriarch or "senior" of the group sat outside the hut with three other men; there were also present three women, a boy of about 12, and two younger children, and although both of the latter had many teeth they suckled persistently. This hut and some of its occupants are shown in Plate II, the rough shelter by its side in Plate XI, figure 1.

609 Although Mr Bibile, whom all these people knew quite well,
123 was with us, they were quite apathetic, their attitude was clearly not the result of shyness, but simply due to the fact that they took no interest in our presence; the women continued to suckle their infants and the men squatted or lay upon the rocks and chewed in gloomy silence, and when addressed they grunted "yes" or "no." One of the infants who smiled and cooed and tried to gain our attention was the only member of the group who seemed to take the least notice of us. Kaira told us that the people we now saw represented all that remained of the Danigala Veddas. We noticed some bananas (which do not grow wild in Ceylon) on the further side of the ridge and we asked to see their plantation. A prompt denial of its existence was the result, though Kaira afterwards told Mr Bibile that he

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
361
417

Fig. 1. Vedda settlement at Unuwatura Bubula

142
342

Fig. 2. Village Veddas of Dambani

[Facing p. 48]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1981
AX5 Vedda AX5

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
431 the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 them was their unhuman apathy and utter lack of interest.... Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

511 "At the time of our visit there were but three men and seventeen women and children in Makulugulla; these were 342 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but [184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like 622] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any [356 shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

511 "The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by [352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the 359] Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry 364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were fond, but the place was free from smells, and really 361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER IV

FAMILY LIFE

THE family life of the wilder Veddas centres round the rock-shelters which are truly their homes, and even among those Veddas who practise chena cultivation, but have not formed permanent settlements, these rock-shelters play an important part, the movements of the community or family group from shelter to shelter being regulated according to season and available food supply. Our experience leads us to believe that the wilder Veddas so greatly prefer rock-shelters to huts that they seldom build the latter, preferring rather to face the inconvenience of travelling some distance daily in search of food, and even to camp for the night under some temporary shelter. Except in this particular Nevill's description of the movements of a Vedda family still holds good if it be remembered that he applies the term "Village Vaedda" to any Vedda who makes even the roughest chena. "The Forest Vaedda forms a home two or three times a year, as the season demands. Thus in the dry hot months when brooks and ponds dry up, the game collects in the low forests around the half dried river beds. He then takes his wife and children, aged parents or crippled relatives, and settles them in a hut close to a place where water can be got. From this he makes his hunting forays, and returns to it with his game. The rain sets in however, and the iguanas, deer, pigs, etc. are scattered over the country; the elk then seek rocky hills, and are followed by the Vaedda. The little household goods, the children, and family party, again are moved up to the high ground, avoiding the malaria that now hangs as a shroud over the forest-clad lowlands. Here, if possible, a cave is chosen for the home, and improved by a slight roof in front, if

342 221 [592]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
221

too exposed, and around this the food winner ranges.... Besides his high-ground residence, and his low-ground residence, if a tract of forest burst suddenly into flower that attracts vast swarms of bees, or into useful fruit, the family will make a little pic-nic party, and go there for a week or month, if it be too far from the home for daily visits. He cannot, however, be called 'nomadic,' any more than the European who has a town house, and country house, though the climate during the dry season calls for so trifling a shelter, that a permanent house is not required....

"The village Vaedda was originally, and indeed is still, distinguished as one who had added grain cultivation to hunting, honey collecting, and yam digging. When he moved into summer quarters, he set to work and felled a suitable lot of forest and burned it off, in the intervals of hunting. When the rain approached, he put up a hut that would keep his family dry, on this cleared space, and scattered grain seed over the charred surface. Leaving such food as they had stored for use then, in charge of his family, he would go off for days together to the high ground in search of elk, lodging as before in caves. When the weather cleared, and the grain ripened, they collected it, paid away small shares to other less provident clansmen, who had during the wet season sent the family little presents of flesh, while the father was away, and then away they went to another dry season division of their territory, where the mininnas and iguanas abounded. There is thus little difference between the forest and the village Vaedda, except that the latter makes his dry season home sufficiently substantial to keep out rain as well as dew, and that he leaves his family there, and does not take them to the high ground. He has never yet learned to make his clearing into a field or garden, or his six months' hut into a permanent home. We now come to the dwellings themselves. Where an overhanging rock can be found, it is of course sufficient. Otherwise any rock is chosen, and some sticks being laid sloping in front of it, it is roughly thatched with twigs, rushes, and large pieces of bark. A few elk hides, if not bought up by pedlars, will form a screen at one end. If it is only to exclude dew a very few branches or bits of bark suffice[1]."

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 185.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The protection from the weather offered by the majority of rock-shelters (for they are all so shallow that they scarcely deserve the name of caves) is somewhat scanty, and the drip

342

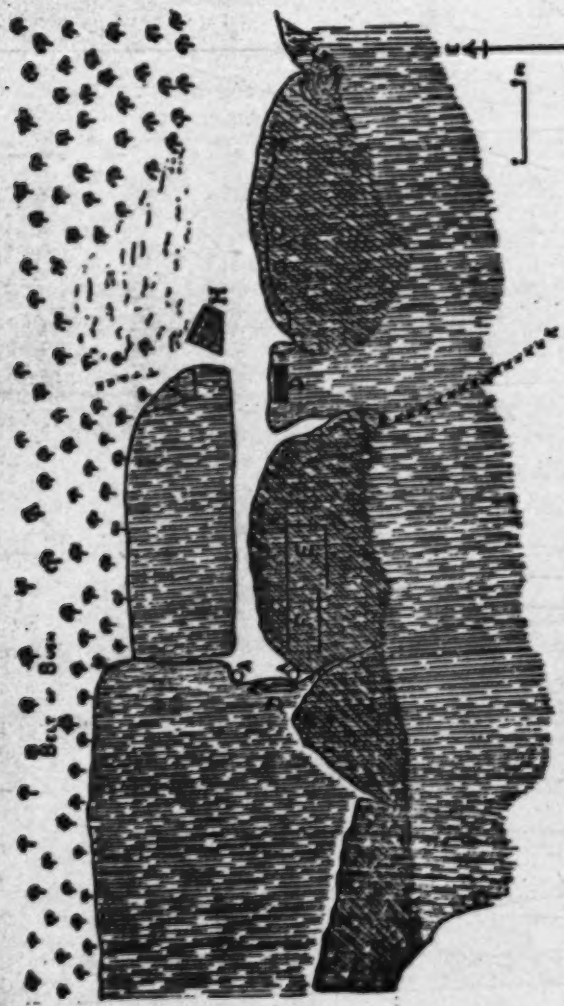


Fig. 1. Plan of caves at Bendiyagalge, the amount of overhang of the roof is roughly indicated by cross-hatching. A, circular holes cut in rock; B, drip ledge; C, termite heap; D, steps cut in rock; E, F, accurately worked and smoothed portions of cave floor; H, boulder upon which lines have been cut; J, face of boulder from which a portion has been detached.

ledges often cut in their rock walls show how fully this was realised by the Sinhalese who formerly lived in them. Nor are they in any sense capacious, as the plans of Pihilegodagalge

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342 (figure 2) and the Bendiyagalge caves (figure 1) show. In the former the shelter was constituted by the weathering back for about five feet of a horizontal stratum softer than the rest of the rock mass. The shelter thus formed was about five feet high at its front and three feet at its back, and from personal experience we can testify that it afforded comparatively good shelter from the wet. This can hardly have been the case with such caves as Bendiyagalge which appear to have been formed by the weathering of a stratum with a dip of about 45 degrees, or by the oblique tilting and subsequent weathering of a rock mass such as appears to have formed Uhapitagalge (Plate XVII, figure 2). Indeed we were told that such shelters as Punchiammagalge and Bendiyagalge sometimes became uncomfortably wet. Plate XVII, figure 1, is a view taken to show as much as possible of the rock mass in which the Bendiyagalge shelters are formed, and this figure and that of Uhapitagalge when examined in connection with the plan of Bendiyagalge will give a good idea of the possibilities of a Vedda rock-shelter as a home. As will be seen from Plate XVIII, figures 1 and 2 of Pihilegodagalge (Sitala Wanniya), no care is taken to keep the cave clean. At Bendiyagalge we noticed an unpleasant odour about the cave due to the lack of sanitary precautions taken by the members of the comparatively large community then living in these caves. Plate XIX, figure 1, shows the general appearance of these caves including the steps (Plate IX) hewn in the rock between the lower and upper caves and the worked edge of the upper cave forming a drip-ledge. Plate XIX, figure 2, is an early morning scene in the cave, and was taken soon after its occupants had awakened.

[364]

The love of the wilder Veddas for their rock-shelters, as well as their disregard for climatic conditions, is well illustrated by a remark made by Handuna the oldest and most influential man among the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, "It is pleasant for us to feel the rain beating on our shoulders, and good to go out and dig yams and come home wet and see the fire burning in the cave and sit round it."

152 Such a remark is in itself evidence of a cheerful disposition, and before going any further we must describe the Vedda

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342

Fig. 1. General view of the rock shelters at Bendiyagalge

Fig. 2. Uhapitagalge rock shelter

[facing p. 84a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
516
415

Fig. 1. Pihilegodagalge rock shelter

Fig. 2. Part of Pihilegodagalge rock shelter

[facing p.84 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XIX

342
516
411

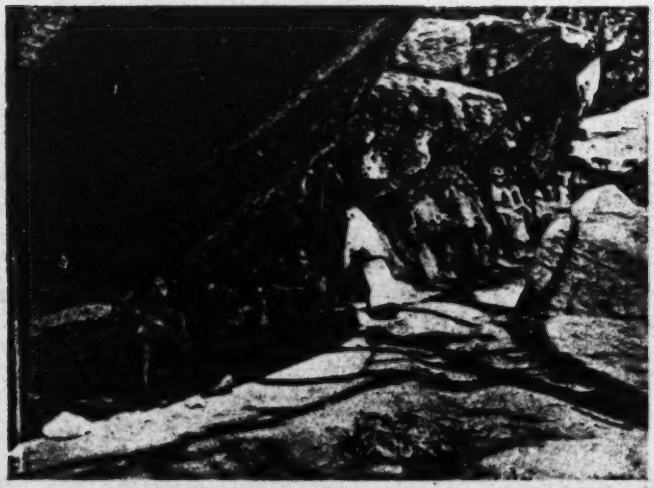


Fig. 1. Lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge

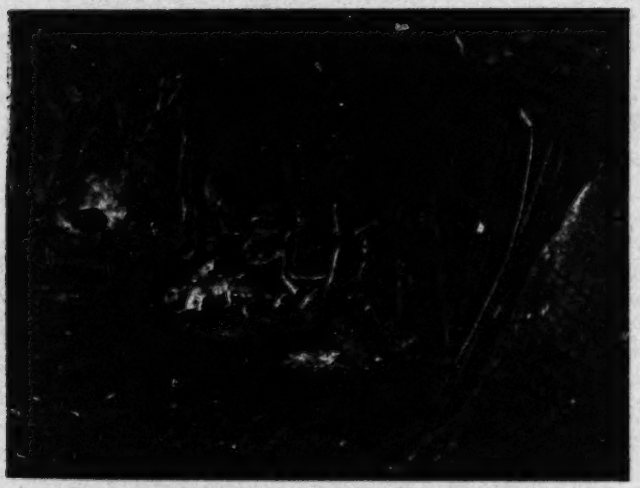


Fig. 2. Early morning scene in lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge

[facing p. 84c]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Things new to them which we showed.

152 them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by
[522] a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character, but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous, and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman, but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela, half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well as the other men. Kaira, *baena* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *baena* to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives, keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately, it did not seem that any food was private property. One other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely, that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own division, but always put them all together in a particular

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place.) The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251

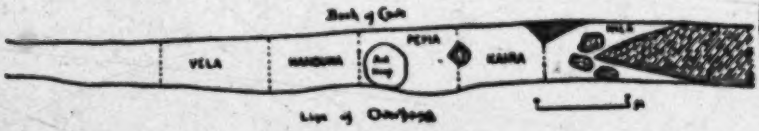


Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

[342] [423] 592

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [695] 837

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

423
[342]

Fig. 1. Portion of Pihilagodagaige belonging to Kaira

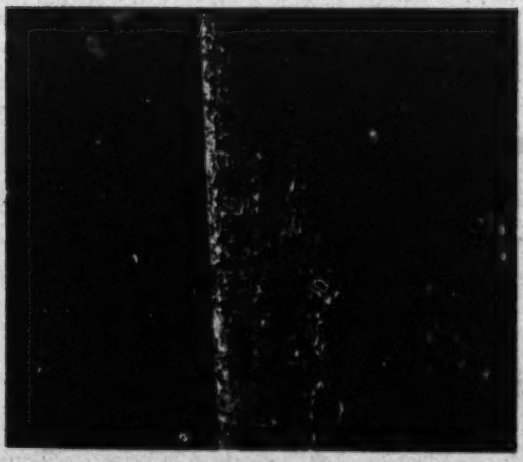


Fig. 2. Boundary mark cut by Handuna of Sitala Wannya

[facing p. 112]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
173 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *warugs*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
241 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins
342 and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
415 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from
534 that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiadi and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

342
415

Fig. 1. Settlement of Coast Veddas

[417]

Fig. 2. Settlement of Coast Veddas

[facing p. 332b]

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

caloa and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.*

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record as accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt.

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in *their* barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other.

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenna. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited.

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. [361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their [241] chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; [224] and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

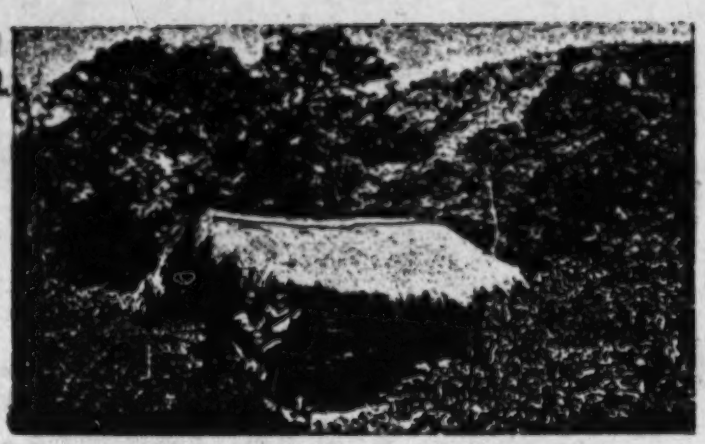
† This custom is called gang-gâté, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticalao boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342



Poromola's lonely home

291
411

Vedda bowman of Dambana

[facing p. vi]

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

342
516

Of no consequence except to each other (Page 5)

133

Gunner's Quoin across Manampitiya tank (Page 7)

[facing p. 3]

S: Spittel Ⅴ-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342

A Vedda home of the Ulpotta. (Page 8)

142
291
412

Veddas of Gunner's Quoin. The two to the left (Vela and Sinna) are the most typical. (Page 8)

[facing p. 8]

5; Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412 were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342 yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162 by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [163 *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [164 children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and [146 framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

804 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276 place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137 †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, *respectively*.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as as leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [825] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 222 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 252 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 757 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all 262 were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut 164 shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This [757] his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

The next noon we were on the river making easy passage with the current all in our favour, and travelling at ten times the speed we had laboured up. The boatmen who had spent the night on the bank looked as if they were afflicted with measles, so remorselessly had the mosquitoes handled them; and already one of them was shivering with malaria.

The heat of noon on the river was intense; and the splash of the oars or the sight of boys bathing at the draw-wells gave little appeasement. No bird had the heart to sing. As we passed, king-fishers flashed out of their cool retreats, coveys of stove-curlew ran up the shoals, and submerged wild buffaloes floundered up the bank. Clusters of yellow butterflies sipped moisture from the wet sand. A brahminy kite, its feet immersed in the shallows, whistled a warning to its mate, that answered from afar.

At Kandakadu, where we met the first Vedda and his child, we spent the night; and, having two hours daylight to spare, decided to visit his village, in spite of being advised against it at that hour, as elephants were plentiful. The place was disappointing as regards Veddas; for, instead of the crude huts we hoped to see, we found well built houses with cattle and fowls in plenty; and the inhabitants, though they called themselves Vedda, were Tamils to all appearance. Nevertheless, we saw here a sight we would not have missed. In a field in full view of the village, and bordering a pool where women went for water, were three elephants belly-deep in the tall grass feeding with the indifference of cattle. The forest between this village and the river veritably teemed with traces of elephants.

At the Verugal junction we were greeted by a fine old Arab in baggy breeches and skull-cap. His house, a stout three-storied structure, was designed to stand the stress of floods. When the lower floors were submerged he would remain islanded on the upper which had mud floors to permit of cooking. On the rich silt left in his garden when the waters ebbed, he planted tobacco and the luxuriant vegetables he was now selling our boatmen. A stern man was Mohamed Sultan as he was called. When one of our party cut more sugar-cane than he intended taking, he was brought to his senses quickly enough with a single sentence. The aggrieved one afterwards confided to me that Mohamed was once a notorious robber of Kiniyai where he lived killing and eating other people's cattle!

We rapidly drifted toward the end of our journey, having done in a day and half downstream what we had taken seven days upstream to accomplish. As we reached the river-mouth the mosquito hosts were abroad, a storm threatened, but the fishers of the estuary were unconcernedly hauling their nets to a song.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kukula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botua-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 231 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

● 342 [281 362] 231 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 [84] [171] Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indisposition. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda, half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fireplace at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 [824 264] 262 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half, the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various fragments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the goa-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Maraweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A 302 man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 755 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarming blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a 252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company G of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike 101 those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the 105 jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a 361 medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

ooo V [132] A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342
361

Deserted Bowals (Page 48)

[Facing p.48]

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena*; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house"; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned:

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain: it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good!

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes: *Góna-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
342

"Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold." (Page 55)

[facing p. 58]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 342 114 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aralchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 224 482 142 609 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

600 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

8: Spittel D-8 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kohomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *hansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *nreagalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-haduruggdde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *hirinthea*. 757 752 832 276 824

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered, amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *hansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat. 276

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams. 832 539

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*," he shouts. "*Kiribala, haria, haria, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*." A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them. 342 [178] [574]

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

342 eggs of gekkoes very like candle droppings. A few of the caves have drip ledges (evidence of Sinhalese occupation) which serve to keep them dry: those without this feature are all adrip during the rains and their floors are mossy. Rocky out-crops, large loose stones and, perhaps a white-ant hill or two, divide up the floor space into sections in which the various Vedda families lie grouped, each in its allotted span. Here and there the stony floor is cupped where maize has been pounded, or worn [372] smooth where *kurrukhan* has been rubbed to flour with the flat polished stones that lie about. A fire-place or two, a cooking frame, and dry leaves (*pana*, *pinney dea*, or *helanea*), the bedding of these people, complete the picture.

Let us take the more important of the caves as we pass them on our way from Bingoda to Newaragala. Like our houses they are all named.

Matigaha galge is a deep roomy grotto formed by a superincumbent rock mass supported slantwise on large flanking boulders. Partially obstructing its entrance, and just within cover of its roof, is a steep rounded stone which one family would occupy silhouetted against a [312] tree-intersected sky. Its only source of water is the Magalavatan Aar a quarter mile away. This disadvantage, and its nearness to the Bingoda homes, accounts for its present disuse. Suthu Banda was born here. Kaurala who had not seen it since his childhood could not help a word of regret on seeing it now after the long years: "Ah!" he sighed. "Is this the old home. No one to inhabit it now,"

Galihale galge (Rock-slab cave) owes its name to a slab of rock within it, beneath which one must crawl to gain a gloomy inner compartment. A reedy pool below, and the cyfax, cactus and vines about its mouth give it a touch of wild picturesqueness.

Alu galge (Ash cave), which lies at the base of Newaragala, is less a cave than a passage under an immense boulder spanning two lateral outcrops. It is so well concealed by large stones guarding its mouth that one would not suspect its presence even when standing within a few feet of it. The floor slopes up steeply towards a narrowing exit, and is so bestrewn with rocks as to afford no convenient resting place. Yet, in a cranny here or a basin there, the Veddas contrive to make themselves comfortable, as the withered leaves that have served them as mats testify. A small tripodal frame shows where flesh has been [312] roasted. There is no lack of water here; for not only does a perennial spring lie at its entrance, the resort of innumerable bears during the drought, but in the rainy season a rivulet flows right through the cave.

This cave is a favourite of the Veddas who come here when the jak 222 trees, which grow on the slopes of Newaragala, are in fruit. Then, spending a few days, they feast to surfeiting on the tender fruit, and with their [261] characteristic improvidence carry none away. It was here that Kaurala stayed when he "skinned" Nuwaragala—which was his own beautiful way of saying he had stripped it clean of hives. How secret are the ways of Veddas may be judged from the fact that here was a cave frequented by them without its being known to the Sinhalese who lived six miles away. And we who had once spent a night on Newaragala were ignorant that here below us was a cave used by the very Veddas we yearned to know.

261 But of all the caves I have seen *Dhik galge* was the best. I have already described this cave; it remains for me to add a few vital touches. In

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
224

An ape for dinner. (Page 82)

342

Alu-gaige, a Vedda cave. (Page 84)

[Facing p. 86]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

342
516
854

Veddas of Bulugahadena. (Page 93)

[411]

Veddas of Bulugahadena. (Page 93)

[Facing p. 93]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were 131
unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously.

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these 101
parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow [301]
stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved [157]
and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne.

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found [301]
the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were apparently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep [626]
the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very 152]
jealous of their women.

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each 576
hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to [411]
know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine.

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for 342
Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukkan* [241]
and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community.

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the 101
same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered 361
about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit!

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never 161
before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by 177
their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting.

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, 224
better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

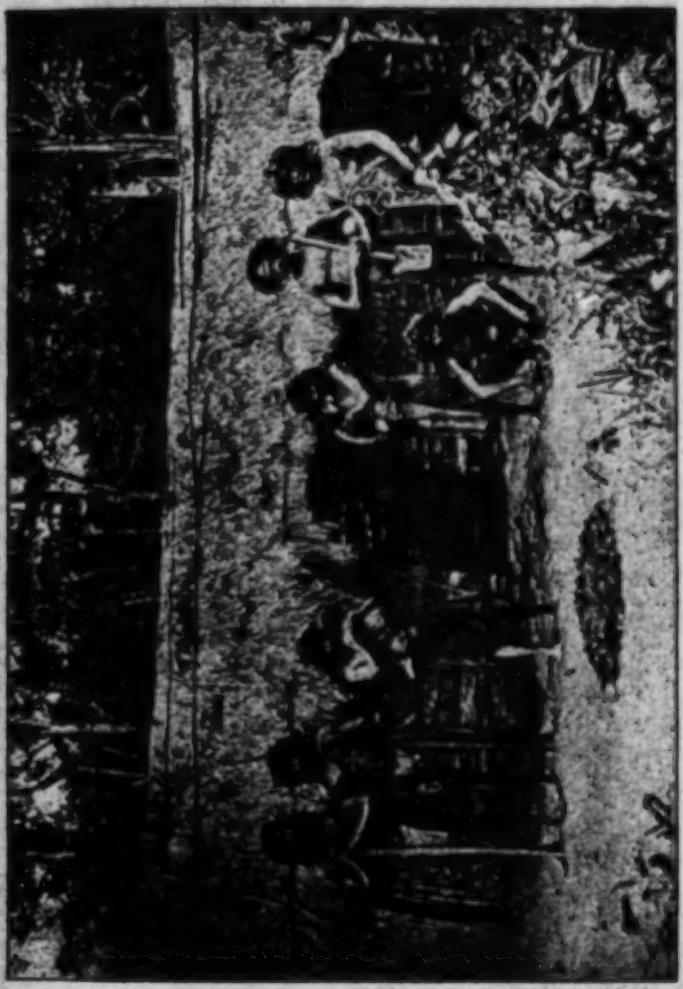


Photo Fr. Sarasin.

Fig. 17. Veddas of the Nilgala Region

342
137
291
516
411
854

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XX

343
841

Rough shelter built for isolation of women at Unuwatura Bubula

[facing p.94]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kuhulā*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botua-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 231 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 [281 362] 231 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 [84] [171] Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indisposition. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda, half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fireplace at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half, [824 264] the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various fragments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these 262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

231 for the Sinhalese of Potuliyadde, receiving every fifth calf that is born. The community has, or recently had, ten or more head of cattle of their own and have sold bulls to the brother-in-law of our *tavalam*[1] leader for as much as 30 Rs., indeed, our *tavalam* leader stated that he had himself visited the Danigala chena and
291 had also seen the cattle. On this occasion Kalra and his sons wore a coloured cloth as the Sinhalese do and their women wore a *kambaya* and coloured breast handkerchief. Mr Bibile was
621 able to confirm some of these statements from his own know-
177 ledge and on making investigations among the local villagers
609 discovered that there was a whole community living on the chena settlement, some of whom had married Sinhalese. Indeed it appeared that not only have members of this community learnt to play the part of professional primitive man, but there has even been specialisation, for as far as we could learn, the men we met at the look-out hut are those who always receive visitors or come to Bibile when sent for, while the others whom we did not see do not pose as wild Veddas. Probably the part they now play had only recently crystallised into a professional rôle, but it must be remembered that so long ago as 1863 Bailey discussing these Veddas, or their fathers, says "they were brought in from the forests to be 'looked at'" and he adds, "I never saw that contempt for money which Tennant supposes is still existing[2]."

101 **Kovil Vanamai.** In the Eastern Province in the neighbourhood of Devulani tank the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are found, this term being applied to a number of groups of Veddas living in this neighbourhood. The name Kovil Vanamai means temple
[346] precincts and seems to have arisen from there being one or more temples in this part of the country, while some of these shrines are traditionally associated with Veddas, apparently with old settled coast and village Veddas, for we have no reason to think that the ancestors of the folk we saw at Bandaraduwa, or the other wilder Veddas of fifty years ago, were in any way guardians of the temples or dependent on their
511 bounty. Although at the present day the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are represented by scattered groups, for the most part

[1] A *tavalam* is a train of pack bulls.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 283.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

number of these *yaku*, especially Irugal Bandar and the other Bandar, may have been introduced since Bailey's time. It is even possible that Tissahami may be responsible in part. 775

The reference to King Vijaya shows that Kalu Bandar has nothing to do with the primitive beliefs of the Veddas, for no Vedda knew anything of Vijaya or Kuweni.

Before describing the beliefs of the village Veddas, among whom the third stratum of thought is dominant, the condition of the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula (who have moved there from Mudugala) must be considered and compared with those of both the wilder and the village Veddas. Many of the *yaku* of the less sophisticated communities were known to them, and some invoked by the village Veddas were also called upon at Unuwatura Bubula. Although Kande Yaka was known and considered powerful to send game and cure sickness, apparently he was no longer Lord of the Dead, as he was not invoked at the *alutyakagama* (see p. 260) to which the *Nae Yaku* were called. A structure called a *bulatyahana* was built for him and a Hindu trident as well as an *aude* was held when he was invoked. Bilindi Yaka was known, but we have no note as to whether he was considered the brother of Kande Yaka or no. Bambura Yaka and his attendants known to the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya and Uniche were unknown here. Pata Yaka (Sitala Wanniya) had been heard of but had never been invoked. The Wanegatha Yaku were of considerable importance here, they were said to be the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had perished in their rock-shelter owing to a fall of rock. Indigollae Yaka (the attendant of Kande Yaka at Sitala Wanniya) was known here and considered extremely powerful; when really short of food, offerings are made to him and his wife Indigollae Yakini, and the shaman thrusts an *aude* into the roof of his hut and hangs on it a string of beads which are kept specially for this purpose, and then Indigollae Yaka sends game. We were told that no charm or invocation accompanied this action. 775 776 [346]

We did not realise at the time of our visit that Indigollae Yaka might be another name for Gale Yaka, but this appears not unlikely in view of information furnished by Mr Parker, and the fact that Gale Yaka was here invoked with the *Nae*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

755 the offering is placed. The dance is held at night and continues until morning when the whole community eat the offering, though only the men dance. We were shown a pot in a small cave near the settlement which was said to be kept there purposely, and which it was stated was used for boiling rice for the ceremony.

771 177 We may now consider the religious beliefs of certain communities in which the third stratum of belief already alluded to is dominant. Such communities are the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne and those of the Eastern Province and Tamankaduwa, among all of whom the *Nae Yaku* were known and reverenced, but the great Vedda heroes have all disappeared, their place having been taken by numerous Sinhalese gods and demons. Some of the village Veddas even build temples, rough bark or [346] mud huts like their own habitations in which the various symbols of the *deviyo* and *yaku* are kept and in which the shaman dances.

Such a temple was seen at Yakure dedicated to Gange Bandar Deyo, here also were two rough stones leaning against [378] a tree on the *bund* of Yakurewaewa which were held sacred to Gane Deyo (Ganesa).

At a place called Nadena, where there were said to be Veddas until a few years ago, on the road running inland from Patrippu in the Eastern Province, there is a temple containing an image of Ganesa and this is looked upon as a Vedda shrine. Other temples or shrines in the Eastern Province are traditionally associated with Veddas though none survive at the present day, except, we believe, at Portiv near Patrippu and at Mandur.

Village Veddas of the Bintenne.

775 115 At Dambani and the neighbouring settlements of Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the *Nae Yaku* are held to be of great importance. Reference has already been made on p. 50 to the difficulty of working with these village Veddas, and our information concerning the religious beliefs of the Dambani folk was obtained from the Arachi of Belligala; with regard to Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the little information we possess was obtained at first hand and carefully checked, and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered.

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding.

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *aude* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo.

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clear what opportunities existed for obtaining it. Deer and pig would be killed and eaten, and snakes were said to be killed without a scruple though one informant denied that he would kill a cobra. 262

Time did not allow of any systematic study of the religion of the Verdas, but it was clear that this had been much affected by Tamil influence while yet retaining some of the more obvious outward features of the Vedda cult of the dead. Unfortunately we had no opportunity of ascertaining definitely whether the Verdas have also retained the essence of the Vedda cult, i.e. the belief in the loving-kindness and the guiding influence of the spirits of their dead, though since the leader of the dance seen at Vakarai showed the classical signs of "possession," there seems to be every reason to hold this belief at least provisionally. The dance we saw rehearsed at Vakarai was said to be performed for sickness and in thanksgiving when a good harvest had been gathered. The dance took place at night, the men dancing in relays till daylight, the women squatting on the ground, but taking no part. No food is taken during the dance, but some is placed upon the "altar" *kudaram* (lit. cage or small shed, *T*) which is eaten by all in the morning. 771 177 575 796

The temple seen at Pellanchenai, of which a rough plan is given in fig. 14, was a building some 12 feet long by about 10 broad; it faced east and the roof was carried forward for a few feet beyond the front wall in which was a door. A stout pole (marked *P*), thought to be some 30 feet long and consisting of a young tree with the bark removed, stood in front of the temple about 30 feet from the entrance. To the north of the pole and about 8 feet from it was a hole in the ground *F*, really a small well containing water, while to the south of the pole and at a distance of about 12 feet from it there was a young tree before which a small platform *T* (*kudaram*) was built, on which a rough stone rested. Some distance beyond the pole and somewhat to the south of it stood a tree *H*, apparently quite dead, with a fringe of dried leaves and small twigs round its trunk, before which were the remains of a *kudaram*; to the south-west of the pole and roughly in the position of *Y* in the plan, a limb of a tree was planted in the soil. The branches 346

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

346 springing from the upper end of this limb had been removed with the exception of three which were left to support between them a rough earthenware pot. The remains of a *kudaram* also existed somewhat to the south-east of the doorway about the spot marked *X* on the plan. The post supporting the weight of that portion of the roof extending beyond the door had tied round it a fringe of dried shredded coconut leaves. Within the temple stood a *kudaram* (marked *K*) behind which in one corner of the temple was a model of a sailing boat about two feet long partly square-rigged and clearly meant to imitate a European ship. The temple was for the worship of Kapalpei, Ammal and

778
776

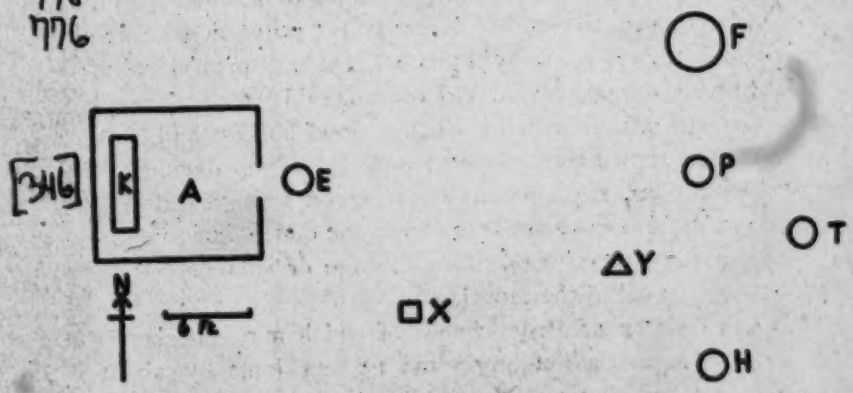


Fig. 14. Plan of Vedda temple and its surroundings.

Komara Devam. The name Kapalpei means ship-demon. We could only discover that he is regarded as the most powerful of the beings worshipped and that he is a foreigner who reached the country in a ship. Ammal is a Tamil Goddess who sends smallpox and skin disease[1].

776 We could at the time discover nothing concerning Komara Devam, though doubtless he is the same as Kumara Deva, an immigrant deity, whose characteristic weapon is a silver sword, who was one of the chief spirits invoked to remove sickness by

[1] Mr A. Barr Kumarakulasinghe tells me that there are temples to this Goddess at Jaffna, but that there are none in Batticaloa though possibly there may be some in the neighbourhood.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot 782
be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, 776
with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to pro- [346]
tect their votive offerings.

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medi- 755
cine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the 769
patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, [775]
so universal amongst Buddhists.

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it 771
can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often 174
repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded.

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilisation, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, [821]
although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Weddo-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapâna-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapâna-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddirates, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not 789
known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon,

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *hurrukhan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *hurrukhan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *hurrukhan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brush-wood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
516
854

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

142
291
351

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

[Facing p. 94]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 them was their unhuman apathy and utter lack of interest.... Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

"At the time of our visit there were but three men and 511 seventeen women and children in Makulugulla; these were 342 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but [184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like 622] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any [356 shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

"The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place 511 consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by [352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the 354] Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry 364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were fond, but the place was free from smells, and really 361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kukula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botus-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an [281 open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. 362] Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[84] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda, [171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half, [824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *henda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little finger

*Macaranga tomentosa.

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *hurrukhan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *hurrukhan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *hurrukhan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brushwood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *hurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *hurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *hurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a *living from her must have supple* thews and *great* endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brushwood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

511 there was their unknown apathy and utter lack of interest. Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

511 "At the time of our visit there were but three men and seventeen women and children in Makulugalla; these were 342 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but [184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like 622] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any [356 shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

511 "The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by [352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the 354 Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry 364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were fond, but the place was free from smells, and really 361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *kurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *kurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *kurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brushwood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

front of it is a much chipped *opulu* tree from which the Veddas every now and then renew their chew. Throughout the day the surrounding woods echo to the voices of food-gatherers or the blows of axes, as combs are cut out of hollow trees. At fiful intervals the *kolong koha* (stork-billed king-fisher), lord of the rocky stream, raises a clamorous cry, or the wood-pecker startlingly proclaims to the world that it sees the great she-demon (*maha yakkini*). As evening comes, the *kotaha* (gekko) that shares the cave, drawls in quaint imitation of his name, "ko-tak-ko." The night is ushered in by the solemn notes of the night jar* and bell-like sounds of frogs. The crescent moon shines through the trees, peopling the forest with mysterious shadows. Strange noises are heard around, a breaking branch perhaps, a dropping stone, or an animal's foot-falls. Then the little one creeps to its mother whispering, "Mother, the *hetha*"; and she, fondling, replies, "Yes, it is the *hetha*, child; be still." Now fires are stirred, and the Veddas, couched on leaves, and doubled up under their meagre rags, lie as close to them as they dare. For the caves are cold at night even on the hottest day. And every now and then throughout the dark, one or other of them groans with the chill, gets up, pokes the fire, and snuggles nearer to it. Is it a wonder that ash is the morning mark of the Vedda and *Alu galge* a favourite name of his cave? By six, the morning mists have melted and the cave begins to warm.

261 825 354 513

*At dusk, and all through the night, Horsfield's night jar gathers into its rich liquid notes the silence and mystery of the forest. There is no jungle, however desolate, in which this ever welcome music is not heard. It is at once the curfew of the jungle, the embodiment of all the stealthy, nocturnal life in it, and the destiny and doom of it.

Putha-hath-pevena (seven-sons-axe) is the Sinhalese name of the bird in perfect imitation of its cry; and the following story explains it.—A woman once sent her seven sons into the jungle to fell trees. One of the trees falling in their direction, the brothers attempted to shoulder it off and were all killed. The mother, having cooked the evening meal, waited at home for her sons. But as they did not return she went out to look for them, and found them all dead beside the fallen tree. Taking up an axe she killed herself and became this bird; and now from dusk till dawn she cries *putha-hath-pevena* through the lonesome woods. [539]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 them was their unhuman apathy and utter lack of interest.... Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

511 "At the time of our visit there were but three men and seventeen women and children in Makulugulla; these were 342 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but [184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like 627] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any [356] shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

511 "The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by [352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the 354] Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry 364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were fond, but the place was free from smells, and really 361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

342
361

Fig. 1. A chena settlement of the Henebedda Veddas

516
302
291

Fig. 2. Henebedda Veddas of the Namadewa clan inhabiting the chena settlement

[facing p. 36]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

166 in one instance there had been intermarriage with Sinhalese,
563 and we suspected this in other cases, though the majority appear to be reasonably pure-blooded.

361 These people make chenas[1] on which they live temporarily
231 in bark-covered huts; Plate X, figure 1, represents the chena settlement of the local group of the Namadewa *warige*, some of the members of which are shown in Plate X, figure 2. They gather honey and hunt, several of them possess guns, and some
[223 of them rear cattle for the Sinhalese villagers. Indeed, for
224] Veddas their lot is singularly happy, since they live in the heart of the park country where game is still abundant. Bailey first induced some Veddas in the Nilgala district to make chenas about the middle of the last century, before which all the Veddas in this district were probably living their natural hunting, honey-gathering life.

361 It is not often that a community that has taken to the semi-
511 civilised life of chena cultivation is seen, in which its members are so healthy and well fed, for Veddas dislike settling down and do not generally do so until they find they can no longer subsist on the game in the country, when they either drift into Sinhalese settlements, or make extremely rough chenas for themselves, the produce of which is seldom sufficient to feed the community. Besides which, as is the case with the Sinhalese peasants themselves, the crop is often pledged to Moormen pedlars before it is reaped. The poor Veddas then subsist as best they can on yams, honey and berries, and usually fall
[164] a prey to fever. Several Veddas in this wretched condition were seen between Namal Oya and Bandaraduwa, while those at Godatalawa were scarcely better off.

In the Nilgala district the conditions are different. Chena making and cattle rearing had been introduced while game was still abundant, families are still able to leave the chena settlement and hunt and gather honey, living during such times in rock shelters within their own hunting boundary. However, the

[1] Bailey defines a chena as "a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again: it is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.* Vol. II, 1863, p. 282.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

231 custom of the country and also selling those they have bred themselves. However, all this was unknown to us when we first met the people, nor would it have been possible to guess their prosperous condition from the first sight of their settlement.
123 It was well known throughout the Vedirata that investigations were about to be made among the Veddas, and all the village headmen had been given instructions to render assistance. They therefore told the Veddas to expect us, and would have sent for them to come to the Public Works Department bungalow on our arrival had we not expressly stated that we preferred to visit the people in their homes. A very rough track led to the top of
361 the Danigala Hill, about 1200 feet high, where, on a rounded
342 shoulder of rock, stood the skeleton hut of the Danigala Veddas shown in Plate II. This was built on the pattern of the ordinary village Vedda habitations but entirely lacked the slats of bark which make the sides moderately weather proof. By its side was an even rougher shelter consisting of a large bough with the smaller branches trimmed and overlaid with banana leaves. Kaira the patriarch or "senior" of the group sat outside the hut with three other men; there were also present three women, a boy of about 12, and two younger children, and although both of the latter had many teeth they suckled persistently. This hut and some of its occupants are shown in Plate II, the rough shelter by its side in Plate XI, figure 1.

609 Although Mr Bibile, whom all these people knew quite well,
123 was with us, they were quite apathetic, their attitude was clearly not the result of shyness, but simply due to the fact that they took no interest in our presence; the women continued to suckle their infants and the men squatted or lay upon the rocks and chewed in gloomy silence, and when addressed they grunted "yes" or "no." One of the infants who smiled and cooed and tried to gain our attention was the only member of the group who seemed to take the least notice of us. Kaira told us that the people we now saw represented all that remained of the Danigala Veddas. We noticed some bananas (which do not grow wild in Ceylon) on the further side of the ridge and we asked to see their plantation. A prompt denial of its existence was the result, though Kaira afterwards told Mr Bibile that he

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XII

361

Fig. 1. Mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chena at Bandaradowa

516
415

Fig. 2. Uniche Veddas

[facing p. 42]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they had been called upon to pay a chena tax as well as 1·50 Rs. per adult male road tax. Of course they were unable to collect this money and they dreaded the ensuing penalty, that of serving on the roads, for should the two young men leave the settlement the old man and woman and the girl must starve, the first being too old to work and the woman a cripple. Their plight would have been just as bad had the young man gone to work on some Sinhalese rice fields in order to earn the money[1].

Degenerate Veddas in the neighbourhood of the main Badulla-Batticaloa road[2]. The main road from Badulla to the east coast passes through country that was once the centre of the Vedirata, and on either side of it at a distance of some 2—6 miles are various settlements of half-bred and degenerate Veddas who will soon be entirely lost among the Sinhalese. Plate XIV, figure 1, represents two men of this class: it is obvious that the young man would pass for a Sinhalese, indeed in spite of his bow and arrows and traditional scanty Vedda garb the condition of his hair shows that he has at least been following a Sinhalese mode of life. It is possible that the whole Vedda get-up may have been assumed for our benefit, though in view of the comparative skill with which he handled his bow we do not think this likely. The old man was doubtless one of the last degenerate Veddas of the district.

Before passing to village Veddas a word must be said concerning the Omuni folk and those of Unuwatura Bubula. Sir James Emerson Tennant, in his work *Ceylon* published in 1859, states that Mr Atherton, A.G.A., in conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, attempted to civilise the Veddas[3]. In 1838 "cottages were built for them in their own district, rice land assigned to them, wells dug, coconuts planted, two communities were speedily settled at Vippammadvo." A

[1] This is a not uncommon practice at the present day.

[2] This road is only some forty or fifty years old, Mr Warren tells me that "the old road from Badulla to Batticaloa joined the road from Alutnuwara. It crossed the present cart road about Kallodi and must have worked its way in the neighbourhood of the present road to Tumpalancholai and so to the ferry into Batticaloa." Part of this track is still used as a short cut. "There was another road from Passera through Medagama past Makakandiyaweva to Mandur; *tavilam* travel that way now."

[3] Tennant, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 447.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XV

342
361
417

Fig. 1. Vedda settlement at Unnwatura Bubula

142
342

Fig. 2. Village Veddas of Dambani

[Facing p. 48]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours'
177 influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut
[562] because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the
[783] women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura
144 Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded,
141 since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

184 The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to
●361 describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *hile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanliness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is evidence that a hundred years ago there were organized communities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village-communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century. 184 361

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the surrounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure 2), though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility. 621 [177] [142] [609]

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been [197] 622 156

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. Aftergiving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

these village Veddas, though they seem to be of a somewhat morose disposition. He also said they take no interest in things unknown to them. However, the phonograph attracted as much attention and interest as it always had from Veddas and Sinhalese alike, and we distinctly saw one Vedda smile when his song was reproduced. 157

The shena settlement at Wallampelle was seen, but here it appeared that much intermarriage had taken place with the Sinhalese. 144

Maigoda. There are a number of people very mixed blooded, but calling themselves Veddas, living at Maigoda on the shores of Horaborawewa, a beautiful tank traditionally associated with the Veddas. They have dropped their old Vedda customs so entirely that the local Sinhalese no longer look upon them as true village Veddas, an attitude that has perhaps been fostered by the fact that here in Uva where the Veddas are exempt from all taxation these people pay road tax. Such at least was the point of view of the Arachi of Alutnuwara, "how can these people be Veddas?—they pay road tax." In spite of this there is no doubt that they are largely of Vedda descent and in many instances remember their *uriyage*. They live in very poorly built houses and depend largely on the seeds of the lotus for food. They still pose as pure-blooded Veddas to white visitors, and have been recently described by Drs H. M. Hillier and W. H. Furness, 3rd. "We followed the jungle path along the eastern shore of the lake, sometimes over outcrops of granite, or down by the lake side...and after following our guide through thick undergrowth for half-an-hour, suddenly, and without warning, we came out into a cleared space, where there was the merest excuse for a hut, and beside it a man and woman squatting side by side and cooking something in a blackened earthen pot, which rested on a fire of twigs and branches; a little beyond them were more huts and more women and children—lo! the Village Veddahs. The elderly man and woman whom we first saw had between them scarcely a yard of coarse cloth as clothing, their hair hung loose in dishevelled twists and strings about their faces, and they both squatted so low that their knees stood up above their shoulders. But the most impressive thing about 144 177 36 [651] 511

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 them was their unhuman apathy and utter lack of interest.... Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

"At the time of our visit there were but three men and 511 seventeen women and children in Makulugulla; these were 342 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but [184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like 622] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any [356 shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

"The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place 511 consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by [352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the 359 Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry 364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were fond, but the place was free from smells, and really 361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords. 361

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter. 301 304

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of coconut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]." 415 [531]

Village Veddas of Tamankaduwa.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of intermarriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils. 144 621

Kinkotaliya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-bred. Their mode of life is similar to that prevalent at Dambani and Balugahaladena, i.e. they are occupied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their marriage and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaku. 105 621

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve small huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1900. [113]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Veddas AXS

word arrived from the elder of the district. Then one of the archers accompanied him to the boundary which took between two and three hours' walking. Here he had once more to wait until word arrived from the elders of this district, whereupon the first guide handed him over to a second and then returned. In this way the second guide brought him to a third, and the process continued until he had had more than twelve guides, being over seven days on the way before he reached the province of Batticaloa and the flat district which extended to the coast, and is inhabited by Tamils. He and his ten or twelve companions never suffered any want on the way, as the Veddahs supplied them with food, consisting of good dried venison which was preserved in honey, ground nuts (probably yams) and fruit. But none of the Veddahs spoke a word with him or his companions because it was so prescribed by their customs[1]."

Nevill's account of the life led by both the wilder and the more sophisticated "forest" Veddas has been quoted on pp. 81 and 82, in the chapter on Family Life. Nevill's experience was chiefly gained among the Veddas of the Bintenne, but if rather less emphasis be laid on the hut built "close to a place where water can be got," and it be realised that even during the hot dry season rock shelters are the common homes of the wilder Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road, all that he says on this subject can be implicitly accepted.

Commenting upon Nevill's account, the Sarasins point out that since trespassing on land belonging to another group leads to fierce quarrels, the condition described by Nevill must be taken to imply that the territory of each group includes the whole or a part of one considerable hill or rock *mazuf*. Our experience enables us to confirm this suggestion, and it will be shown later that not only are hills the property of particular groups, but that subject to the rights of the group there is also personal property in hills. Text figure 4 is a sketch map of the territory of the Henebedda Veddas, and roughly shows the position of their caves, which are named Bendiyagalge, Pattiavelagalge, Hitibeminigalge, Punchikiriammagalge, Uhapitagalge, Maladeniyagalge and Kirawanbalagalge. The last is almost

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 479.

J. Seligmann & Seligmann 1-6 (1907-1909) 1911
AZS Vodds AZS

too small and too exposed to be called a shelter, consisting as it does of a small space under an overhanging slab which offers scarcely any protection from the weather, for which reason it seemed that it was never used. Bandiyagalge, situated about the centre of the Hunukobbi territory, consists of two rock

Fig. 4. Plan of the Hunukobbi territory.

shelters formed by a single mass of rock, broadly speaking rectangular in shape, with its long axis running roughly from north to south. The rock mass is somewhat tilted so that its southern edge is high above the ground towards which its northern extremity slopes, and the whole rock somewhat resembles an immense wedge. Its eastern face has weathered

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so as to form two rock shelters, each of which has a well-cut drip ledge in no respect differing from those admittedly cut by the Sinhalese about the time that Buddhism was introduced to the island, and the lower cave has in addition two square sockets cut in its roof resembling those discovered by Mr F. Lewis at Nuwaragala and figured by him[1]. Further, there are three steps cut in the solid rock shelters, and other smaller steps and signs of ancient working are to be found in the caves, though there are no inscriptions on the rocks of either of these caves, as there are below the drip ledge of Uhapitagalge.

Pattiavelagalge lies at a distance of rather less than an hour's walk to the S.W. of Bendiyagalge, at the base of the rocky hills forming the boundary of the territory of the Henebedda community. It was said that the name of this cave was derived from *pattia*, a place where cattle were tied, and *vela*, a field, the reason for the name being that about 100 years ago a Sinhalese chief, recognised by the Veddas as being partly of Vedda descent, was allowed to come and live here and pasture his cattle. This man may have been a fugitive during the rebellion of 1818, but this could not be determined with certainty. Hitibeminigalge lies a short distance due west of Bendiyagalge.

Punchihiriammagalge is a small shelter situated almost due south of Bendiyagalge and near the main track across the country. At the present day it is often used by Tamil gall-nut gatherers. Maladeniyagalge, about two miles from Ambilinne rest-house, is also much used by gall-nut collectors. Uhapitagalge, shown in Plate XVII, figure 2, has a well-carved drip ledge, beneath which is the inscription in Brāhmi characters referred to on p. 22.

The natural boundaries of the Henebedda territory as well as the fact that they still have as neighbours the Danigala Veddas, who exercise a jealous supervision of the border on that side on which there is no well-marked natural boundary, made this particularly easy territory to map out. The Sitala Wanniya territory, which we have attempted to delimit in text figure 5 was more difficult and its boundary is only an approximation.

[1] *Proc. Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, Vol. XIX, 1904.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423
361

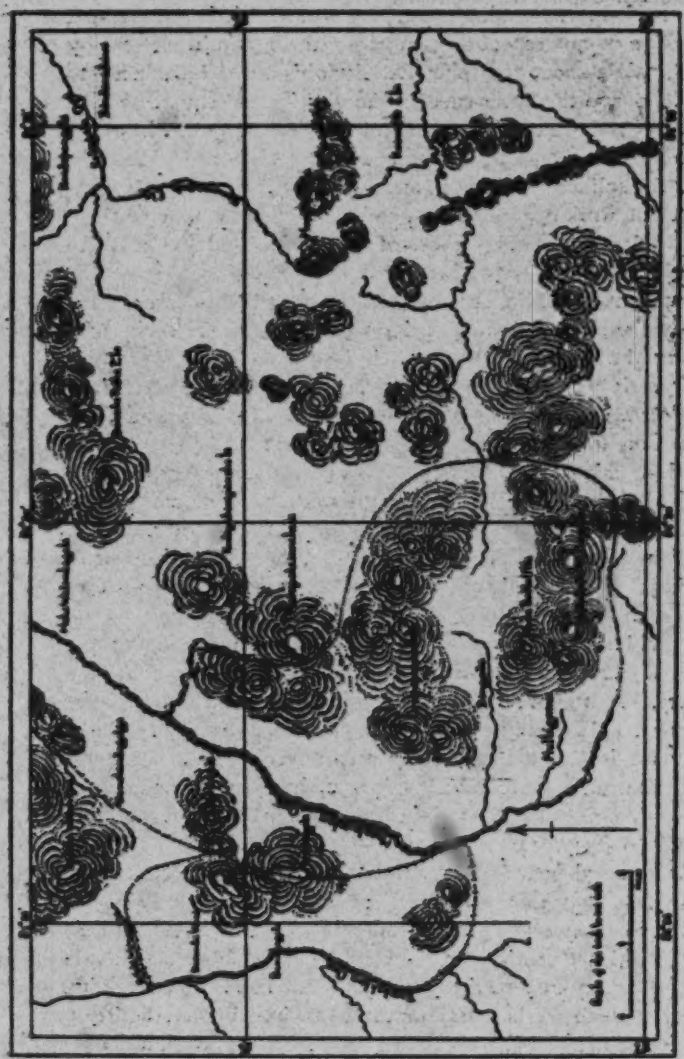


Fig. 5. Plan of Sitala Wanniya territory. All the country to the west of the dotted and broken lines is the property of the Sitala Wanniya community. The land belonging exclusively to Handuna and Nila is outlined |--|--|--, their common boundary line passing through Marinagala and the western portion belonging to Handuna. The land claimed by Kaira is indicated by —··—··, and where the boundary is doubtful by ·····. The country to the east is the property of the Veddas of Kovil Vanamai (Bandaraduwa).

CHAPTER XII

COAST VEDDAS

THE Coast Veddas or Verdas occupy a number of settlements in the Tamil zone on the east coast. They exceed in number both the Village Veddas of Bintenne and their wilder neighbours of the borders of Uva and the Eastern Province; this is no doubt due to the fact that in the majority of Coast Veddas there is a large admixture of Tamil blood, and the comparatively thriving condition of their settlements must be attributed to the same cause. The date of their first arrival on the coast and of their subsequent intermarriage with the Tamils is quite uncertain; the latter state that there have always been Veddas in the neighbourhood of the sites they now occupy, but the Veddas themselves have a tradition that they come from inland. Knox does not mention them, but Nevill considers that they come from Sabaragamuwa (Sufferagam), being driven thence in the 17th century.

101
144
361
173
101

"The Vaeddas say that they never were related to these Coast Vaeddas, and do not know when they came to the Coast, or where they came from, nor did they ever hear that they belonged to any waruge of the race.

"The Coast Vaeddas do not know when they came or how they came, but they say that long ago their ancestors came from the Gala, far beyond the hills to the west. They also sometimes say they came from Kukulu-gammaeda and spread out along the Coast. Some say this is Kukulugam near the Verukal; others suppose it to be somewhere far away[1]."

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. 1. p. 183.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
193 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *marage*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
241 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins
342 and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
415 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from
534 that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaddda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaddda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaddda."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

There are a few Verdas at Panichchenkeni, while near Vakarai still further to the north there is a Verda settlement of considerable size. Some eight miles beyond this are two Verda settlements Parchenai and Nargantonai situated close together. We heard of other smaller settlements of Coast Veddas in the neighbourhood of Batticaloa, but these were not visited as time was short and it appeared that those Verdas we did not see differed in no respect from those we met. We were told that formerly there were Coast Veddas south of Batticaloa and we later discovered that there were, and still are, certain shrines or temples within a few miles of the coast (e.g. at Mandur), which were generally recognised as Vedda shrines at which Veddas especially worshipped. This matter has been alluded to in Chapter VIII, and here it is only necessary to point out that the religion of the Coast Veddas is strongly tinged with Tamil customs and beliefs; indeed, many Verdas had Hindu sect marks upon their foreheads.

Some, but not all, of the Coast Veddas know the names of the *waruge* to which they belong, and a few also know the names of some of the more important *waruge* of the Veddas inland. Uru *waruge* appears to be the *waruge* to which most of the Coast Veddas who remembered their ancestral *waruge* belonged, but a few men stated that they belonged to Ogatam, Kavatam, Umata or Umatam, Aembalaneduwe and Aembale *waruge*; the last named and the one before it probably being the same as the Aembela *waruge* found inland. Some of the Coast Veddas whom we questioned said they had heard of, and still knew of certain of the old Vedda *waruge*, and such men were generally able to mention Morane *waruge* while fewer also knew of Unapane *waruge*.

The Coast Veddas have become expert fishermen and make and use various forms of nets including a cast net. They also spear and shoot fish, using a bifid iron spear-head which they have adopted from the Tamils. For shooting fish they use the usual Vedda bow, but the arrow has become a harpoon with a shaft as long as the bow into which the iron with its running line fits loosely. One of the nets used by the Coast Veddas is seen drying behind the house in the background of Plate LXIX,

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

calos and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.* 131 [177] [184]

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt. [137] [136]

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in their barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other. 184 361 342 224

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡ 161

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter 177

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenna. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited. [177]

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. [361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in [241] wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; [224] and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gâté, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticaloa boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

written from memory aided by not very adequate notes made shortly after the ceremony, helps to fill up a lacuna in the hitherto published records of Vedda customs and ritual. 121 796

In June of 1925 I was engaged, as a junior administrative officer, in dealing with an outbreak of cholera among the Muslim tobacco cultivators in the neighbourhood of a remote coast Vedda village, about forty-four miles north of Batticaloa on the Batticaloa-Trincomalee coast road. Investigation by the medical officer with whom I was associated soon revealed the fact that the focus of the infection was a yet more remote inland district lying behind that part of the coast, and that to grapple effectively with the disease it would be necessary to evacuate the population of that area and to concentrate it, for the treatment of the actually sick and for the segregation of the "contacts," in the comparatively accessible locality where we had already established ourselves, not far from the spot where the first cases to be brought to our notice had occurred. I therefore found myself obliged, at short notice, to enlarge the camp of which I had already begun the construction, and in particular to begin the building of a new hospital hut on a more grandiose scale than that originally contemplated. For the work of construction, which consisted of the erection of a framework of jungle sticks and the covering of it with *cadjans*,—dried and plaited palm branches,—according to the familiar village method, it was necessary to enlist the services of the coast Veddas of the adjoining settlement. The villagers were naturally reluctant to engage in work which they not unreasonably supposed would expose them to the infection, and it called for much tact and persuasiveness on the part of the Chief Headman of the *pattu* to get them to do so. Fully realizing that, apart from all other considerations, the occurrence of even one case of cholera among them would effectively put a stop to all co-operation, the Chief Headman and I took, successfully as the event showed, every possible precaution to prevent such a catastrophe. Everything seemed to be going on without let or hindrance when the Chief Headman upset my calculations by announcing that the work must cease for twelve hours on the 8th of June, to enable the villagers to perform a ceremony in honour of the *Periya Devi* 123 [131 361] [796 776]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

175 commodities which would produce both directly and indirectly its effect upon local plant life, either by the introduction of species of economic value, or by the direct export of woods found at hand.

137 In support of this it is noticeable that to the north-west of Pottuvil, Palu (*Mimusops luxandra*) and Satinwood (*Chloroxylon swietenia*) are comparatively abundant, as contrasted with the scarcity of the same species on the banks of the Kumbukkan river. Again, while Mi (*Bassia longifolia*) is abundant on the Kumbukkan, it may be called rare west of Pottuvil. As this last-named is an introduction of great value, it was spared where it existed near towns, but was neglected in those localities where the population had no permanent settlement, as we find is the case with the majority of the Maha Wodirata "villages" of the present day, and it is only in some places of old establishment that we find the Mi tree now.

361 The present population is very much scattered, its distribution being undoubtedly governed by the presence or absence of water; hence it will be found that the so-called villages are at considerable distances apart, and only where a supply of water can be got, however small or impure, all the year round. On the other hand, one finds the example of an unpopulated area bounded by a perennial stream, as in the case of the valley of the Kumbukkan river for the last thirty miles of its course. Here, however, we have the instance of a stream that rises to an enormous flood that inundates the country to a depth of many feet on both its banks, thus drowning out, in the wet season, any annual cultivation, and leaving the place parched and dry during the periods of drought—two factors sufficient to keep back a people unprepared to establish strong measures to secure permanent occupation.

Nor is this all. The Kumbukkan river, after it passes the foot of the isolated mass of the Monaragala hills, enters a country that afforded the Veddas their best hunting ground, and the Veddas appear in their early history to have been a race of people who depended almost entirely on the chase, using for their dwellings the rudest shelters of caves and temporary branch huts. They had no inducement to build

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

houses of lasting character, as neither their instincts nor habits necessitated such procedure. 361

At Kumuna alone we find a modification of these conditions, in that the greater part of the land where the village stood is above flood level, and possessed of constant fresh water all the year round, besides being at a spot where there was a prospect of trade.

It should be added that all the many anicuts on this river between Kumuna and Kebilitte bear silent testimony to the violence of the floods on the river, and to the once existence of a large population, that probably vanished as soon as these engineering works were destroyed—a population who could enjoy the benefit of the river's floodings by diverting the water into immense tanks, that now are but park-like pieces of jungle. 172

The present inhabitants of the region embraced within the boundaries recorded here are unquestionably of mixed origin, as it is easy to trace on the western limits the pure Sinhalese type of feature, these fading again to a more specific type through the Maha Wedirata, and again changing markedly on the north-east of that country, till it is practically replaced by Tamils in the Panawa Pattu. Thus, it would seem that the Vedda type lay between the Uvan Sinhalese on the west and the Tamil on the east, with the result that frequently one would hear men, while asserting that they were pure Sinhalese, conversing with each other in Tamil. This I found to be actually the case at Bowela, where the villagers insisted that they were of the Goigama caste. 101 162

I was completely baffled in my attempts to secure a vocabulary of Vedda words, though I offered liberal payment for a few lessons in that language. I was pointed out men who were able to speak Vedda, and it was arranged that we should meet, in secret, at a definite time, and at a fixed spot, but when the time came I was told the men had gone away to find stray cattle, or some other equally trumped-up story. 197 198

One night I camped close to some huts in the village of Wattegama, and after my lamp had been put out and I was supposed to be asleep, I heard an animated discussion in the nearest hut, but though I could hear every word, I did not

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Mussænda pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
224 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
●361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

than in densely populated areas, where the individuality of the creature is lost in environmental immensity. In the one case he and his are known, in the other he and they are but a fraction.

Considerations of space preclude my enlarging on this subject, or describing in detail the individual conditions of the different villages that I explored, but I venture to think that a careful examination of local factors would throw much light on the evolution of the race from its early stages of primitive existence to its present state of partial civilization.

Domestic Animals.—These consist of cattle, buffaloes, goats, dogs, cats, and fowls.

Black cattle are abundant in all the inhabited parts of the country I explored, and naturally more so where the opportunities for trade in them exists than in very isolated places. Milk is nearly always procurable, but I heard of no instance of children being exclusively reared upon cow milk. Buffaloes are, where possible, reared for agricultural purposes, and also for the supply of milk, which is often turned into a form of junket that is in much demand.

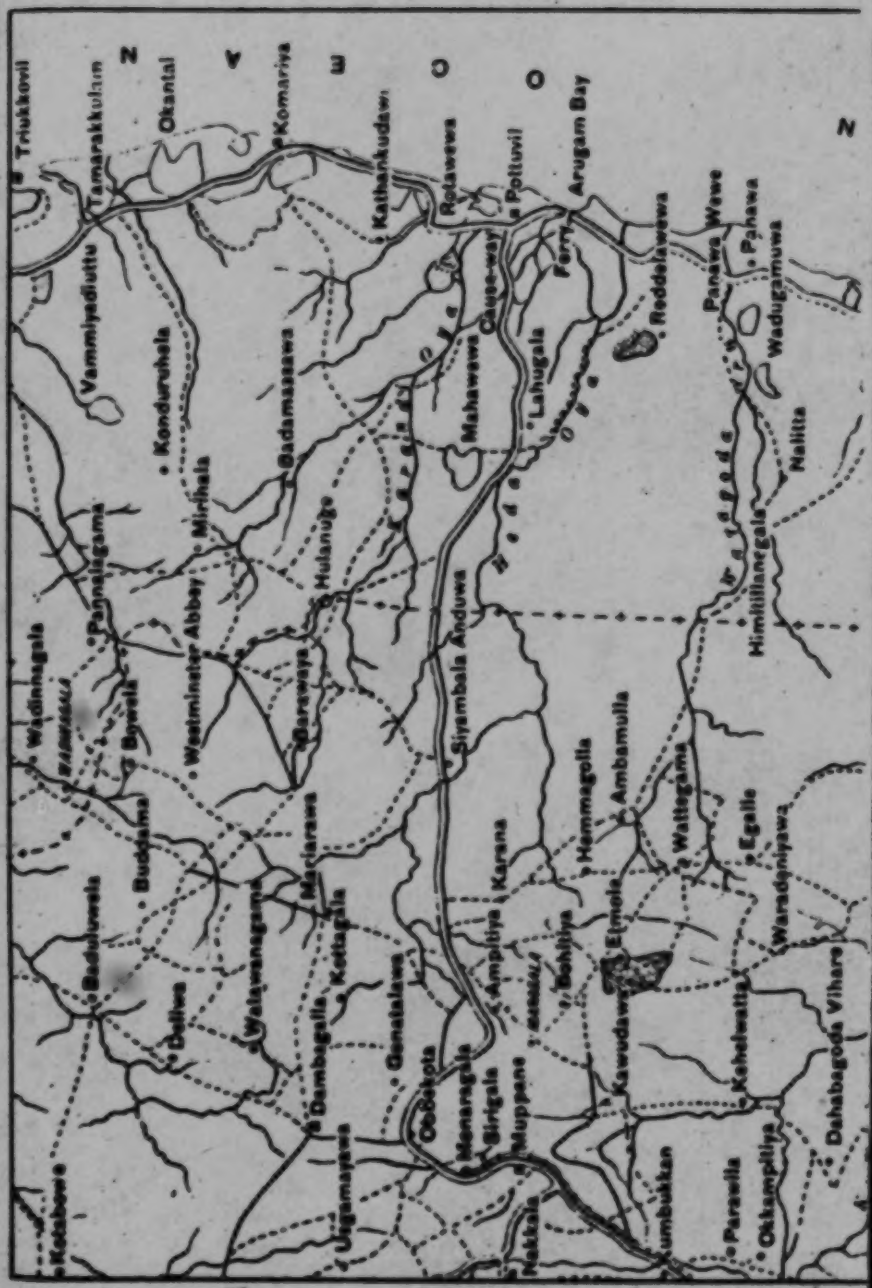
In one village in the Panawa Pattu I found a Tamil man owning a large herd of buffaloes, and to my surprise I found that he called them by individual names, the animals responding to his call.

I was informed that quite a large proportion of the domesticated buffaloes were half-breeds between the wild and the tame. This may explain why the Vedda-country animal is so much larger than the buffalo of, say, the Western Province.

Goats are rare, and only occur where there are Tamil or Moorish people. I met with them occasionally, but nowhere away from the influences above mentioned. Pigs, except wild, I never met with. Dogs are plentiful, and of a much superior build and type to the village pariah of the civilized country. This is doubtless due to the care the real Vedda has bestowed upon this animal from the earliest time. In point of size the dogs of the Vedda country are large, powerfully built, and bold. Black and white, or brown and white, are the usual colours of these animals. Cats are, generally speaking, scarce, though I remarked at Kumuna that while I only saw one dog, I found six cats in that little village.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

102
133
361



[Facing p. 164(A)]

100
133
361

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

The Vedda Country.

[Facing p. 164 (B)]

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *patkaw hakula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *hetue-kapaw*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
[281 open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats.
362] Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[84] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda,
[171] half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukkan* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handana's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Porosola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

[pp. 21-33 not processed]

CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE VEDDAS AND JUNGLE SHRINES

And here were forests ancient as the hills
Enclosing sunny spots of greenery

COLERIDGE

I. THE EMBRACE OF THE TREES

13 BURIED in the jungle ten miles north-west of Maha Oya lies the old Vedda
131 village of Omuna. Forest, unbroken by the meanest glade, intervenes
361 between. At a pool we flush a brace of bronze-winged pigeons or set a-chirruping a covey of small birds; while every now and then the scurry of unseen feet tells that the woods are live with game. Jungles darken early; by five-thirty a cathedral gloom creeps to the songs of roosting birds: the shama throats a rambling lay, the grubbing pitta sounds a shrill call, the cuckoo wakes, like a curfew, the forest echoes, "while like a long-roll drummer the night-jar thrills the treen."

It is all but dark when, through a break in the trees, the hill of Omuna stands before us; and the clamour of resenting dogs and a welcoming fire tell us we have reached the limit of an arduous walk.

13 Where the Vedda is, there is the inevitable rock. The tie between them
823 is intimate. To the life, animal and tree, on the timbered sides of the hill the Vedda is beholden for sustenance. The boulder-bound stream gives him water, and there lurk demons watchful for his undoing, and tutelary ancestral spirits. Nowhere is the relation between men and rock closer than at Omuna; for from the heart of the hill flows a spring that does not fail in the cruellest drought. Is it a wonder the place has for ages been
144 favoured of the Veddas? But time the iconoclast breaks the oldest bonds; the half-Veddas* there to-day are not of the ancient stock; that died out some fifteen years ago.

000 Besides its association with the wild men, Omuna has other claims to interest. Like many another forest stronghold it is the site of ancient Buddhistic ruins—frescoed caves and headless, chest-battered Buddhas despoiled by treasure-hunters What induced the priests of old-time to seek such sanctuaries as this, it is hard to surmise; religious persecution perhaps, by their inveterate foes the Sivaite Tamils; or merely the claims of austere devotion. Be that as it may, it was in these fastnesses that the light of Buddhism was nursed when it flickered low, till, happening

*There is almost certainly no Vedda living to-day without Sinhalese blood in his veins. The term *half-Vedda* therefore may appear superfluous, but is used to designate Veddas who have intermarried with the Sinhalese and settled down to agricultural pursuits, the word *Vedda* being used for the wilder folk that depend mainly on the jungle for sustenance.

[p. 34]

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1965 AX5 Vedda AX5

on serener days, it flamed through the Island making it its permanent home, while in India, the land of its birth, it dwindled away.

We had undertaken this trip with the object of visiting Meminigallagolla where we learned the wildest Veddas of the Eastern province lived; but on coming to Omuna we found that that place, only twelve miles away, was quite unknown to the present folk of Omuna, a pathless barrier of dense jungle intervening. We made the best of a bad job; and, abandoning our original project, struck west for Dolagalwella.

At evening we camped by a desolate pool called *Havan-kapane-mulle* (rush-cutting nook). There is barely a spot in these jungles, however lone, that has not its name, thanks to the nomadic Veddas. Here was a glade in which they hunted, or a pool at which they drank, there a hole in which an axe was found (*Poro-thutu-walle*).

The only indications of the track we followed were the barely recognisable prunings, fifteen years old, of saplings. The forest was ideal for travel; in the shelter of the great trees the morning air was cool and refreshing. Coming to the Maduru Oya we walked a mile up-stream and climbed the mimosa-covered bank, soon to be lost in a wilderness of trees. A leader monkey yelled a warning to his clan, a surprised sambur belled startlingly close; but after that a silence prevailed unbroken by the song of a single bird. We spent the night by a rocky streamlet close-hugged by dense forest walls. Heavy clouds crept over us to the rumblings of thunder. The blurred crescent of the moon struggled for freedom. Our camp fires crackled in the ghostly gloom, and quiet human voices pervaded the forest's deadly stillness save for the melody of the trickling water.

> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

Deserted Mahaella marked the limit of our westward journey. Here we struck at right angles the northern track to Yakkure, but, before taking it, deviated south to the village of Dolagalwella. For three days we had followed uncertain game trails, and seen no human beings besides those of our company. The path now began to show signs of use: there were chipped trees, polished stones on which axes had been whetted, and fire-places where monitors were roasted. Obviously we were nearing civilisation! Indeed, here it was.

Scaling a strong stockade we found ourselves in a *chena*, some twelve acres in extent, in which nestled the half dozen huts of the closely related families of a Vedda patriarchy. The maize and *kurrukkan* crops had been taken, and the place was now rank with a catch-crop of vegetables and fruit: beans, brinjals, melons, cassava, plantains and papaws. Chillies luxuriated; there was not a compound but had its vermilion heap, not a hut but had a section partitioned off with frame and fire-place for drying them during the rains; chillies were the current coin with which these folk traded with the pedlar Moors.

The males of the settlement were away in quest of food, and only the women and children remained. No folk on earth, perhaps, are shier than Vedda women; in the presence of the stranger they are dumb. Some of them were relatively fair-complexioned, presumably from Kandyan admixture; all wore an abundance of bead ornaments, finger

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. YAKKURE

This be the verse you grave for me;
Here he lies where belonged to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. STEVENSON

THROUGH a lush meadow studded with fragrant wood-apple, we entered Kalukolu Eba a hamlet of some twenty huts nestling in the picturesque dishabille of a *chena* rank with maize, vegetables and chillies. Here as elsewhere in the Vanni there was much evidence of parangi (framboesia). Fully three-fourths of the people showed active or quiescent traces of the disease. A boy had a necklace of loathsome papules; a woman covered with nodes in practically every bone of her body was boiling a decoction of dry leaves as a salve; another was stewing monitor flesh in chilli-water.

The first sign of our nearness to Yakkure was a cattle-penstamped clean, where half a dozen boys were securing cows and yearlings for the night. Scratching around the stockade with the tameness of domestic fowls were a jungle cock and his dames, and from every side came the jerky cries of wild chanticleers. A cairn of tumbled stones marked the site of an old *vihare*. Blue in the distance, across a wide lagoon bordered with sedge, lotus and dead trees, stood the long rock called Gunner's Quoin, with a bare patch, high on its tree-mantled flank, pointed out to us as the Maraweethiya, a historic cave.

Yakkure itself was a negligently palisaded hamlet nestling ina grove of tamarinds, in full view of a beautiful tank. We were unfortunate in our choice of a camping place. Five days of seclusion in the forest had made us forget that the immediate proximity to a village always meant flies, smells, and embarrassing attentions from forward men and coy but curious women. There were other draw-backs too. At sunset, from a pool near by, came a low, ominous hum auguring ill for our night's rest. We lit fires, bestowed meticulous care on bed curtains, and bedaubed ourselves with mosquitol. The lapwing's desolate cry, the doleful music of water fowl, the booming of great owls, the distant trumpeting of elephants, and more than all, the baffled mosquito murmur around, soon lulled me to sleep. But my companion who had failed to stop up betimes several holes in his curtain, the inside of which was found at dawn to be plastered with a blood-sodden host, tells a different story!

Three miles from Yakkure are the well-known falls of the Mahaweli. At flood-time their thunder is heard at the village. Once in a decade the waters creep up to and submerge the huts, sending the people up trees, and their cattle into the forest to be drowned or killed by leopards. With a *kapua* (priest) for guide, for the place is held eerie, we set out to visit the falls. Skirting an ancient aqueduct (*yoda ella*) which tapped the river a mile above the falls, we came to open jungle bordering the banks, that allowed us free passage through its colonnades of giant

[p 39]

3. THE MARAWEETHIYA

Far or forgot to me is near,
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear
And one to me are shame and fame.

EMERSON

13 FROM Yakkure to Horiwila is six miles. The first part of the journey is through marsh; here the Mahaweli make a bend which all but encroaches on the path. The place is rank with vegetation. Tall grass thrives amidst sombre trees that stand apart, clothed out of all recognition in stoles of trailing mycania. The air is humid and oppressively still. One is glad to be rid of the swampy luxuriance with its strong suggestion of malaria.

Beyond a pleasant stretch of paddy, closer than we had ever seen it before, stood Gunner's Quoin. Tinkling cow-bells and the mournful cries of peafowl welcomed us to Horiwila.

361 144 The racial types we have passed, will repay review. Omuna, Dolagalwella and Kalukolu Eba were shifting *chena* settlements inhabited by Veddas with a large proportion of Sinhalese blood. Yakkure was a permanent village with the *chenas* apart; here the people called themselve Veddas but showed strong Tamil traits. The folk of Horiwila were not sure whether to call themselves Tamils or Veddas; while Manampitiya, beyond Horiwila, was a purely Tamil village. So does propinquity shape the type of Vedda, and forest penetration by the Sinhalese on the one hand and Tamils on the other, tend to obliterate the aboriginal race.

000 Decoyed by its beauty, we camped on a rock on the bund of the Horiwila tank, soon to learn that a stone exposed all day to the sun, was not the most desirable of camping places even at night. The stored heat radiating from the rock kept us awake till morning, and we rose quite unrefreshed for the good day's work before us, for to-day we would climb the Quoin, which, ever since we saw it across the marsh at Yakkure, beckoned us on. The Tamils of the place could only take us to the base of the hill; from there a Vedda of the Ulpotta must guide us. It was quite an hour before we found him. I recognised him at once as Sinna an old friend; there were the bunions on his shoulder from carrying loads of lizards and yams, and there the hooked finger caused by a snake-bite when plucking a *kanava* comb from a creviced tree. A dwarf, with frizzly upstanding hair and wild eyes, and shy almost to timidity, Sinna had nothing of the sophisticated Vedda about him. He lived alone with his small family at the end of the rock. The rest of his people had left when the *kurrukkan* crop failed: but Sinna remained to gather a precarious living from the scanty pickings of the field. We came on him searching for food in the forest.

115 [142 157] [166]

The poor fellow was in great distress that morning, his favourite dog having been taken by a leopard the previous night. Hearing the animal's

5: Spittel D-5 (da.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

flesh which they tore out and ate. They were afraid only of the buffalo and the dog. The Veddas, not very long ago, are said to have herded the last of them into a cave and destroyed them. Brute or man, persistent rumour in jungle countries brings the *Nittaiwo* within the realm of the probable. 776

Entering the forest at Siyambala Anduwa, and working north, we strove to maintain a route as far removed as possible from civilisation represented by the coast road on the one hand, and the Badulla-Batticaloa road on the other.

Two miles within the jungle was the old path, now over-grown and abandoned, from Badulla to Pottuvil. It led hereabouts through a narrow pass guarded, it is said, a few generations ago by the Karande Hela Vedda who, having fenced it across, levied toll on travellers. Intercepting, as he did, a trade route from the interior to the coast, we may be certain he made a good thing of it, getting his share both of the *kurrukkan*, maize, vegetables and fruit of the *Vanni*, as well as of the paddy, salt and dry fish of the Coast. 173

Kandanketiya, nine miles from Siyambala Anduwa, boasts an ancient temple of the era of Dutugemunu. We found it in the keeping of a doddering priest of eighty, who showed us round, all the while muttering "hu-hu, hu-hu," his only form of comment. His bed-room, dark, airless and dirty, was better adapted to mice and spiders than human beings. A great brass spittoon, emptied he told us once in two weeks, was the proudest thing there. A stupendous bo-tree, planted by himself, mocked with its vigour the withered frame of him who had tended it. Throwing open the doors of his little temple, without much ado he bade us enter the holy of holies, and pointed proudly to pictures of *devas* and harpies, half spurred-fowl half woman, who he confidently asserted lived in the Himalayas. Incidentally he indicated a money-box on the altar. But no sooner were our donations secure than his interest in us rapidly declined, reaching its climax when we told him we were going: "All right, go," he said, settling down comfortably on his bed. 172

A hornbill flying repeatedly to a large tree attracted our attention. Perching itself wood-pecker-wise on the trunk, it fed the occupant of a hole there with berries which it brought out of its crop one by one. We were told this was the male feeding the female he had deprived of feathers and shut up in the hole. We suggested there might be young. "Not so," said a woman; "where then are the feathers and droppings at the root of the tree?" Here was an opportunity to test the truth of gossip we had heard regarding the domestic amenities of hornbills. A man was sent up to the nest. Squeezing his hand through the narrow opening he produced an egg; then seized something by the beak, and unsuccessfully tried to pull it through. With an axe he enlarged the hole and soon handed down to us a veritable travesty of a bird. Scared out of her wits, voiceless, featherless, with half-opened beak, she flapped pathetic wings and tumbled ludicrously about in attempts to escape. She was obviously unfit for existence in the outer world and we returned her to her dark abode. Rumour was right, the male hornbill took no risks. 136

Bowala village lies at the northern end of Westminster Abbey. Buried as we were in the forest depths, we had not seen the hill since leaving the heights of Haputale. Suddenly the leviathan bulked over the trees. "There, that is why it is called Govinda Hela*," said our guide pointing 361 [103]

*Goa inde hela—rock where the monitor lizard is.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342
361

Deserted Bowels (Page 48)

[facing p.48]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothurupathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A 302 man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 755 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarming blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a 252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company G of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike 101 those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the 105 jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a 361 medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

ooo A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the V Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That [132] evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 751 accompanied him, now struck the bear with his axe and, when she turned on him, killed her. So much for charms; excellent things—provided a weapon is in your hands. "Trust in God," says the Arabic proverb, "but fasten thy camel securely."

G 361 Uhana was a surprise; the place gave every promise of being in a few years a flourishing settlement, thanks to Government grants of land, cattle and grain on easy terms. Luck at last! Near Uhana was a gipsy camp. Wadinagala gave us first promise of these people; but like a mirage they had faded from stage to stage of our journey, leaving only their camp refuse to mock us. Now, here they were, within two miles of us. We stayed over the next morning that we might visit them. As we neared their encampment we met a man who told us that he had passed them on their way to another camp. They who had been here for weeks must needs pack and begone within an hour of our visit! They were bound, the man said, for a place a mile and a half away. We followed, but did not find them there; instead, was another tantalizer who assured us that we would find them on a knoll by a stream a mile and a half beyond. We proceeded, painfully aware that every step of our way must be retraced in the broiling sun before we could earn our lunch. Disappointment again! Almost tearful with frustration and fatigue, we had thrown ourselves down, when a kindly individual came to our aid.

"Rest here," he said. "I shall go forward and see. Come if you hear me 'hoo.' I can tell of their presence some distance away by the crowing of their cocks and the clatter of their camp." We waited and were rewarded.

G [492] [231] [343] On an undulant opening, reminiscent of Somerset pastures, we found the gipsies. They had just unloaded their pack-bulls and were setting up camp under the blazing sky of noon, disdainful of the shelter of the cool environing jungle—the very antithesis of Vedda ways. Cattle and fowls flecked the glade; boys led goats into the forest. Women, graceful as Dianas, were erecting talipot shelters over collected household goods and communal stacks of grain. Tall men, lithe and sinewy as greyhounds, with mongrels at their heels, carried naked babes. Children, reading favour in our faces, essayed shrill nasal choruses clapping arms G to chest. The chief, a quietly curious, grizzled man, with a care-free air 622 bred of the freedom and independence of his life, held in play a vicious cobra just captured. He summed the gipsy life in a sentiment savouring of Borrow: "What are we?" he said. "Children of the open ways, bronzed by the sun, soaked by the rain, born on the trail, buried on the G trail. That is our life." They had a sambur spear among them, and 411 apparently only one man adept in its use; but that spear, their little 224 dogs and their own untiring sinews were match enough for any sambur once started.

V 361 From Uhane to Kotelinda by way of hill-girdled Bokkebedda in the drenching rain. Here, at a glance, we noticed crude little Vedda huts amidst those of the Sinhalese villagers. We were now among the hills of Madana long famed for Veddas; but to-day their caves are only tenanted by bears. Up to now we had traversed a stretch of country V 103 designated on the maps Maha-Veddi-Ratta (Great Vedda Country)—an empty name of about as much significance at the present time as the term Cinnamon Gardens applied to Colombo. Kotelinda lies in the V 131 centre of a region that is to-day the last stronghold of the Veddas—that

4. FRIAR'S HOOD AND THE VEDDAS OF GALMEDE

ACCOMPANIED by Kauwa and a Tamil, we left Divulana to enter upon the wildest part of our journey. The *illuk* glades, so familiar to us for many days, now gave place to jungle sunless, forsaken, virginal and silent save for the cry of a cicala or the rustle of a jungle cock or chevrotan.

Crossing the Amankelle Oya we came to the deserted home of the Bandaradua Veddas—Kauwa's old home. It outlay a glade in full view of the Bandaradua rock. All that now marked the place were a cadju tree, that spread its branches in a great canopy, and a few live fence sticks all overgrown with *pussela-wel*, the pounded bark of which the Veddas soak in water rendering it soapy for cleansing their lousy heads.

Late in the evening we were at the foot of Friar's Hood, that loneliest of Ceylon's forest hills, the landmark of the old Portuguese mariners. The environing jungle was sinister with the menace of unseen things. Here our guide had once encountered a gang of no less than six bears, and indicated to us the very trees up which he and his companion had shinned. It was not the sort of place one would care to be in alone; and yet, in a clearing by the rock, a Moor had recently lived with his wife for three years, growing amidst his cassava a deadlier plant,* the joy and bane of Eastern lands.

We camped on this deserted plantation. As it darkened a sambur belled and stamped around us in high dudgeon that his accustomed pasturage had been usurped. The hooded peak before us melted into the gloom, only to stand out again under the stars more sinister and secret than ever. This lonely outlaw, standing away from the herded hills, had survived a race of men. It was there when the first paleolithic ancestors of the Veddas crossed from India, when Ceylon and that land were one. Towards it, and the security it afforded, was the best remnant of that race gradually driven by succeeding waves of civilisation through the long years. To-day around it the last of the Veddas are dying. And yet,

> The hills are shadows and they flow
> From form to form, and nothing stands;
> They melt like mists, the solid lands,
> Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

It is difficult to say where Galmede really begins. We must ascribe to it all that tract of deserted *chenas*, with their crumbling Vedda shelters and *mora* forests devastated by elephants, between Friar's Hood and the Magalawatavan Oya, on the other bank of which stand the few huts that comprise the Galmede of to-day. This place, the port of our dreams, we entered with beating hearts.

The first individual to meet us was no Vedda at all but a Chetty!

"Where are the Veddas?" I asked eagerly.

"There are no Veddas here," he said.

*Cannabis indica.

[p. 59]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

"But surely there are Veddas in Galmede; everybody told us so," I insisted.

"Veddas of a sort, yes," was the reply; "and perhaps among them, one or two good ones; but the best live away in the caves, in those rocks yonder. Now if you'd come yesterday you'd have seen two of them who brought me some *goas* in exchange for betel and tobacco."

Disappointment melted into sudden hope. So, there were real Veddas still left. But oh! these people. Was ever chase so disheartening? Always the promise, never the fulfilment. Were we chasing phantoms of the wilderness, mocking spirits of a dead race, intolerant of the intrusion on their tranquil sepulchres?

There was no possibility of visiting the cave-Veddas that day. So I decided to stay over and visit them the next morning, travelling across the pathless hills to the high road; while my companion,—fed up to the teeth by now at the very mention of the word Vedda, and in a bad way with festering tick-bites, heat exhaustion, and lack of fresh food—tried to dissuade me from an adventure that promised no success. But I was bent on it. So we agreed that most of the bearers should accompany him to Maha Oya by an easier route, while I remained behind with three men and a two days' ration of tinned food.

With nightfall my prospect of securing a guide to the Galmede hills was no nearer than in the morning. The only man who could be relied on was down with fever. I was seated disconsolately in the Chetty's garden after dinner, close to a chatting group, when suddenly I saw a shadow slip in out of the darkness and join them; there was some whispering; "Ah, is this the man they call Meenemaruwa?*" I heard one of my bearers ask.

"Yes, I am he they call murderer, rogue and everything besides." The answer came loud and unabashed from the man himself.

Rumour had spoken of him as far away as Kotelinda; and it had not spoken kindly. He lived three miles up the river by himself, inspiring the neighbourhood with awe of him. He was in a quandary that night. Returning home after a short absence, he had found that his brother had been taken into custody for illicit *chena* cultivation. He waxed eloquent on his wrongs, while the others listened: "Now what I want to know," he said "is why they should have taken my brother, who is a fool and cannot say a word in his defence, when they might have taken me? No, they wouldn't do that because I can talk. My brother cultivated the *chena* it is true, but it was I who gave it to him; the land is mine. They want me to pay taxes, I who am a Vedda! My grandmother was a Vedda of Veddas, you should have seen her. How well I remember the piece of human liver she carried in her betel-bag. We children would take it from her and want to throw it away; she would pluck it from us, saying, 'Hu, what do you want with this, isn't it mine?' Io, why do they treat me like this? Someone is angry with me. It must be the *aratchi*. No, the *aratchi* is good to me; he and I are friends. Now *Hettyar*, what must I do? I must go to the courts myself and get a petition drawn." Thus he talked interminably, while I wondered how a Vedda could come to argue like a lawyer.

"Now leave all that aside," I interrupted, "and tell me how I am to see these Veddas of the rocks tomorrow."

*Murderer.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

He left the group and seated himself before me—a sinewy, handsome, bearded man of perhaps forty. /15

"Those Veddas," he said contemplatively, when I told him how we stood; "who can say where they are? In one cave to-day, in a another to-morrow. They said they came from Dhik-galge, did they? But you can never take a Vedda's word for that. If they are not there—what then? All our trouble will be in vain. I cannot say I know the caves in those hills very well. I have only been among them once, and that many years ago, when I took my wife from her people. She and I wandered about there. How well she knew the trails, she who had trodden them but once as a little child; for her home, like mine, was elsewhere. I would see a track and point to it saying, 'This must be the way to the cave.' 'No,' she would say 'that leads to the wilderness; there should be a path by that tree yonder'; and she would always be right. I remember well the *kong* tree by the Alu-galge; I shot two monkeys and we ate them there." And so his thoughts rambled amid honey-moon scenes he loved to recall. 114

But, as this meandering led nowhere, I offered a reward of five rupees to anyone who would show me the Veddas in their caves on the morrow, and took to bed. For long I lay pondering what manner of man was the Chetty who could live in this wilderness with a Vedda woman for wife. He seemed to know intimately every Vedda in the district, and had sometimes even shared their caves. He remained an enigma, as also that smile of his, no more than a mere display of the teeth, which imbued the knit, pathetic cast of his features with an expression whether of saintliness or villainy, it was hard to tell. Ostensibly he was here to rear cattle; but why come so far for that?

The next morning, accompanied by Meenemaruwa, the Chetty and a half-Vedda of Galmede, we set out on our quest. The plan was this; we were to travel to a spot where a certain stream crossed the path: there we would probably find foot-prints; if these led to the hills we would follow, if in the opposite direction, pursuit would be useless, as that would imply that the Veddas had returned to their homes in Bingoda fifteen miles away; for at this season the Veddas did not live in their caves, and the party we were in search of must have come on a few days hunting. I now understood the reticence of these people to take me on what might prove a wild goose chase; and learnt, what was more important, that the Veddas of Galmede were the Veddas of Bingoda. 114

We came to the stream; the foot-prints were there. Our guides bent down eagerly examining them. "This is Suthubanda's," they said "and this Badapissa's; this other is a woman's; no, it's a boy's." The tracks pointed towards the hills! The chase began.

Meenemaruwa led, for he alone could decipher that trail, three days old, on the hard dry ground. Once we left the stream there was apparently not the faintest indication of a foot-mark; but our guide moved rapidly along, and soon involved us in an enforested labyrinth of hills. Very occasionally a broken twig would furnish a clue. Indicating one of these Meenemaruwa said, "Now, that would never have been done had old Handuna been alive. 'Hu,' he would have said, slapping the errant one, 'do you want to show everybody the way to our caves; then where would we go if people came after us?' To the rock, the cave and the hive there must be no clue; that is the Vedda law. 114 [36] 487

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 342 114 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aratchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 224 482 142 609 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

680 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese *chena* village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

and terrified they stood around the border. Then did the Saviour cause the pleasant Giridipa (Highlands) to come here near to them, and when they had settled there, he made it return to its former place. Then did the Saviour fold his rug of skin; the devas assembled, and in their assembly the Master preached them the doctrine. The conversion of many kotis of living beings took place and countless were those who came into the precepts of duty. The prince of the devas craved of him something to worship. The Conqueror, who had pure and blue black locks, passing his hand over his head, bestowed on him a handful of hairs. And he, receiving this in a splendid golden urn, when he had laid the hairs on a heap of many coloured gems, seven cubits round, piled up at the place where the Master had sat, covered them over with the thupa of sapphire and worshipped them.

"When Sambuddha had died, the thera Sarabhu, by his miraculous power, received, even from the funeral pyre, the collar bone of the Conqueror and brought it to Lanka and laid it in that same cetiya.

"The king Dutthagamini, dwelling there while he made war upon the Damilas (Tamils) built a mantle cetiya over it eighty cubits high. Thus was the Mahiyangana-thupa completed."

Barely four miles from Alutnuwara is the beautiful tank of Horabora Wewa whose vast waters have been cunningly trapped by a great earth work or bund, amidst a natural barrier of surrounding hills. As one sits here of an evening and looks across with field glasses to the wilder opposite shore, small herds of deer may be seen feeding on the grassy edge between forest and lake; and in the drought, herds of elephants come to the water. White cranes fly overhead to roost on the bordering trees at dusk. Placed as it is in the heart of the Vedda country, this tank has long been associated with the Veddas. To-day only a few very destitute families of half-Veddas are to be found at Malgoda on the borders of the tank, living in the crudest of shelters, and feeding for the most part on the seeds of lotus pods (*olu*).

By an ancient sluice cut out of stone,* the tank-water is conducted along a channel to a wide stretch of paddy fields, now mostly in disuse owing to the paucity of the population. This brimming waterway, its grassy banks studded with beautiful trees, affords many a delightful picture, especially where the lotus thrives with its large, snow-white blossoms and no less beautiful leaves be-diamonded with sparkling droplets of water. Here halcyons fish all day. Up to recent years the tank itself was covered with lotus; but now, for some reason or other, there is none; and when no breeze stirs the glassy waters at midday, they reflect an ever changing panorama of dazzling clouds only broken where a darter or cormorant gambols.

It is not surprising that so beautiful a tank should have inspired a fine poem, of which I have attempted a poor translation that does scant justice to the euphonious idioms, the long vowel cadences, the alliterations, and rhymes of the Sinhalese original.

*Tradition has it that two giants (*yodhayas*) sat here on opposite sides of a crack in the great rock, and each, seizing that part on which he was seated with his hands, and thrusting with his foot against the other, wrenched the rocks apart, making an outlet for the water!

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously. 131

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. 101 [301] [157]

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were apparently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very jealous of their women. [36] [626] [152]

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine. 576 [411]

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukhan* and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community. 342 [241]

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit! 101 361

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting. 161 177

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from 224

511 them was their unhuman apathy and utter lack of interest.... Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

"At the time of our visit there were but three men and 511 seventeen women and children in Makulugulla; these were 342 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but [184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like 622] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any [356 shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

"The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place 511 consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by [352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the 359 Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry 364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were fond, but the place was free from smells, and really 361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

342 (figure 2) and the Bendiyagalge caves (figure 1) show. In the former the shelter was constituted by the weathering back for about five feet of a horizontal stratum softer than the rest of the rock mass. The shelter thus formed was about five feet high at its front and three feet at its back, and from personal experience we can testify that it afforded comparatively good shelter from the wet. This can hardly have been the case with such caves as Bendiyagalge which appear to have been formed by the weathering of a stratum with a dip of about 45 degrees, or by the oblique tilting and subsequent weathering of a rock mass such as appears to have formed Uhapitagalge (Plate XVII, figure 2). Indeed we were told that such shelters as Punchlamagalge and Bendiyagalge sometimes became uncomfortably wet. Plate XVII, figure 1, is a view taken to show as much as possible of the rock mass in which the Bendiyagalge shelters are formed, and this figure and that of Uhapitagalge when examined in connection with the plan of Bendiyagalge will give a good idea of the possibilities of a Vedda rock-shelter as a home. As will be seen from Plate XVIII, figures 1 and 2 of Pihilagodagalge [364] (Sitala Wanniya), no care is taken to keep the cave clean. At Bendiyagalge we noticed an unpleasant odour about the cave due to the lack of sanitary precautions taken by the members of the comparatively large community then living in these caves. Plate XIX, figure 1, shows the general appearance of these caves including the steps (Plate IX) hewn in the rock between the lower and upper caves and the worked edge of the upper cave forming a drip-ledge. Plate XIX, figure 2, is an early morning scene in the cave, and was taken soon after its occupants had awakened.

The love of the wilder Veddas for their rock-shelters, as well as their disregard for climatic conditions, is well illustrated by a remark made by Handuna the oldest and most influential man among the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, "It is pleasant for us to feel the rain beating on our shoulders, and good to go out and dig yams and come home wet and see the fire burning in the cave and sit round it."

152 Such a remark is in itself evidence of a cheerful disposition, and before going any further we must describe the Vedda

151 Dr Rivers' experiments upon the Todas gave the same result and led him to conclude that the threshold is slightly higher on the right than on the left side. In coming to this conclusion he took into account a set of control experiments in which the left side was first stimulated; it will be noticed in the above table that the left side of the sternum was the first stimulated[1].

Smell.

No attempt was made to determine the olfactory acuity of the Veddas, but our experiments with scents suggested to us that this was not specially well developed. Certainly the Henebedda Veddas suffered no inconvenience from the objectionable smell which arose round the Bundiyagalge rock-shelters after a few days' occupation, nor did they seek to [364] diminish this smell, which was due to the lack of the most elementary sanitary precaution.

The following scents were offered to a number of Veddas at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, Godatalawa, Sitala Wanniya and Unuwatura Bubula: civet, camphor, jasmine, *fleur d'Espagne*, tonquin, orris, assafoetida, peppermint, verbena, crategine, chloroform, Lin. terebinthinae aceticum (B.P.), chloral, and eau de Cologne. The men examined were: Tuta of Henebedda (1), Kaira of Henebedda (2), Poromala Walalu (3), Kaira (bearded) of Henebedda (4), the Vidane of Bandaraduwa (5), Bandu of Bandaraduwa (6), a number of men of Godatalawa (7), Kaira of Sitala Wanniya (8), Handuna and Nilu of Sitala Wanniya (9), Naida and Appu of Unuwatura Bubula (10), Tambia (11), Banda (12).

In most cases their opinions were taken down separately, but 151 at Unuwatura Bubula and Godatalawa the scents were passed 901 round and the general opinion of our informants recorded. The Veddas were always interested in examining the scents, but though they said a number of the odours were good they

[1] In his paper in the *British Journal of Psychology* Dr Rivers discusses at some length the possible fallacies of the method described.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of these days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 226 water of pools with the bark of *dambu*, *tukapata*, *pusiyala* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425
428
372

Plate XXIII

Seisin consisting of hair, tooth, quartz fragment, and strike-a-light

[facing p. 114]

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moora." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 few solitary examples of *S. urens*, but I feel confident that this last is an introduction. *Pterospermum suberifolium*—the Welanga of the Sinhalese—is very abundant.

824 372 411 The young straight shoots of this plant supplied the Vedda arrow, while the wood was employed by them for the manufacture of "fire drills."

The distribution of *Helicteres isora* is curiously restricted to what might be turned "patches," the largest of which I found at Etmole. *Heritiera littoralis*—the Chomanturai of the Tamils—is scarce, but occurs near Panawa and Pottuvil.

Of the Tiliaceæ, I noticed that the distribution of Halmilla (*Berrya ammonilla*) was not very general, while its abundance or scarcity appeared to be a matter of its easy access or the reverse. This is to be expected of so valuable a timber tree.

"*Vidpani*" (Tamil) (*Pityranthe verrucosa*), so plentiful in the Trincomalee District, is comparatively scarce in the Vedda country. Of the Grewias, *G. tiliæfolia*, *G. microcos*, and *G. polygama* are the commonest, but the first of these is not so abundant here as in the dry zone of the Ratnapura District.

As representing the Linaciæ, *Erythroxylon monogynum* may be taken as an abundant typical example. It is alleged in the Panawa Pattu that meat hung in the smoke from burning wood of this plant, if eaten produces a purgative action.

Both *Hiptage madablota* and *H. parvifolia* of the Malpighiaceæ occur in the Vedda country, but in no abundance.

The bright, but pestiferous, *Tribulus terrestris*, is to be found near Pottuvil and at Panawa, in places where the soil is not too dry, but its distribution does not spread far inland.

Of the Geraniaceæ I found very few examples. In some slightly moist spots, west of "Westminster Abbey," I observed *Biophytum sensitivum*, and in some of the tanks I got *Hydrocera triflora*, but in other respects, except the introduced *Averrhoa bilimbi* and *A. carambola*—common in gardens—this order is poorly represented. The Rutaceæ is not well represented in wild species, if we except the well-known *Feronia elephantum*, *Murraya kœnigii*, and *Toddalia aculeata*. In the gardens oranges, lime, and pummalo have been introduced, but with no marked success either in the matter of quality or quantity

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena*; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house"; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned:

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain: it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good!

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes: *Góna-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

3. SOME VEDDA ARTS AND A DANCE

EDIBLE LIME

321 276 [237] THE Vedda method of making from snail-shells an edible lime, the concomitant of a betel or bark chew, is interesting. Four varieties of snail afford it :—The large, white, land snails (*wantako* or *godang bello*) ; the small, black, river snails (*alang bello* or *gadu bello*), found in dry stream beds ; the bivalved *ethal bello* ; and the convoluted *kanburo* or *lanu bello*.

The *wantako* give the best lime. Six to twelve of their shells are dropped into a small fire, and a layer of dry twigs is laid over them. The flame is now vigorously fanned with a leafy sprig, to prevent the shells getting charred. When the overlying layer of twigs is reduced to embers, and the shells glow white, they are gently picked off with a stick, taken on the palm and placed in a large leaf (*kenda* or *halmilla*). A little water is then added or, in its absence, saliva ! The leaf is quickly folded over the shells which now disintegrate and " ripen." They are then smashed up with the fingers, and the chunam is distributed.

When the small *gadu bello* are used, the process is slightly different : the burnt shells, moistened and bundled in a leaf as before, are replaced on the embers quietened down with a sprinkling of water. The chunam from these is coarser and more gritty than that from the *wantako*.

FIRE MAKING

372 Fire is obtained by jungle folk in a variety of ways. When gun-powder is to hand there is a choice of two methods : (*a*) A little powder is placed on a stone and closely surrounded with small fragments of cloth or tree cotton. It is then ignited, and the rag set on fire, by striking it sharply with an axe-head previously warmed by rubbing on a rock. (*b*) When, in addition to powder, a cap is available, the powder is put into a small square of rag with the upturned cap in its centre. Into the cap the point of a knife is inserted, and the rag is closed over and clapsed firmly against the blade. The striking of this on a stone explodes the cap, ignites the powder, and lights the rag.

These methods being too wasteful for routine use, the commonest mode of fire-making in the jungles is by means of a C-shape iron strike-a-light (*gini-katuwa*) and a piece of chert or crystalline quartz (*irimana gal*), against which is a piece of *kitul* cotton or rag to take the spark when the two are struck together.

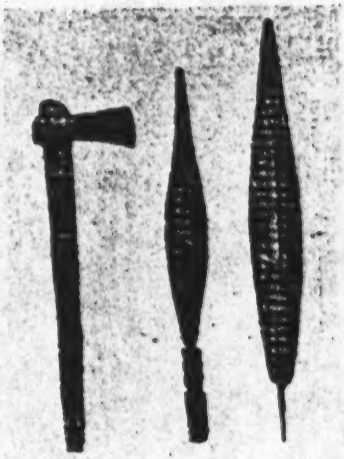
The most primitive, and essentially Vedda, art of making fire is by the attrition of two sticks. Although I had hitherto travelled much in Ceylon forests, always making inquiries about this mode of obtaining [184] fire, it was not until I came to Bingoda that I was able to see it done, and that with astonishing ease. In Henebedde and Bintenne the art was dead ; indeed some of the Veddas had never even heard of it !

The light *velang* stick of which arrows are made is the wood *par excellence* for fire making. Elephants being fond of the tree, the dry

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

372
412
535

Strike-a-light and flint. (Page 74)



Vedda axe and audes

372
516

Fire making by rubbing sticks. (Page 74)

[Facing p. 74]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

sticks are easily obtainable from broken branches scattered everywhere. Gama, who was entrusted with the demonstration, chose two twigs, one the thickness of the index finger and about a foot and a half long, the other as thick as the little finger and about ten inches long. Having barked these, he whittled down the centre of the larger stick, and, in the flat surface thus produced, scooped out a shallow cavity, at one border of which he contrived a V-shaped extension. A piece of cloth about two inches square was placed on the ground under the centre of the stick which was held firmly down, cavity uppermost, by the toes of the operator, aided by the hands of an assistant. The smaller stick was then placed vertically over the other—its point, rendered bluntly conical, engaging in the cavity—and briskly rotated between the open palms. The firm downward pressure with which these movements were accompanied, caused the palms to descend the length of the stick from time to time. As often as this happened, the hands were quickly disengaged and re-applied as before to the upper part, and the twirling manoeuvre repeated. This had been done but twice when smoke was seen. Soon a small heap of charred dust like coffee-grounds accumulated round the hole, to escape down the V-shaped gutter on to the cloth. The smoke increased; there was a smell of charred wood. Suddenly a spark was thrown on to the black dust and the rag caught fire. A few dry leaves were collected and set alight. Within two minutes of the commencement of the operation there was a lively fire. When the smoke is observed to come from the accumulated dust, apart from that at the point of contact between the two sticks, it is a sign that the object is achieved. The rag is then rolled to enclose the dust—cigarette-fashion—and blown into at one end, so that it soon smokes heavily and catches fire. 372

It is strange that an art so simple in adept hands (not by any means so in those of a novice) should have been allowed to fall into disuse in wild Ceylon. I have seen refinements of this method; a coconut-shell, flat stone, or skull of a small animal for instance, being used by an assistant to press down the vertical stick, and a twist of bark to rotate it but they were less effectual than the simple procedure I have described. [178]

ARCHERY

322 411

The present day Veddas, we have seen, are poor bowmen; they have, however, not yet quite lost the art of fashioning superb bows and arrows.

The bow is made from the *mahakahala-gaha* or the *kobawela*; the stone bow (*gal-dhunna*) from the *gatawela-gaha*; the bow string from the inner sheath of the bark of *aralu-wel*.* [324]

The size of the bow is proportioned to the archer's strength. I have seen one six and a half feet long and as thick as a child's wrist; and, judging from its drawing power, no hand but a giant's could have wielded it. The usual length of a bow is from five and a half feet to five feet ten inches. It is made of a single stave, thick at the centre, without contrivance to give grip, flattened along the back, and tapering towards the horns which, without being notched, are tightly encircled by a few turns of cord to prevent the string slipping.

The arrow is made from the *ee* or *welang*† tree, the wood of which when dry is of remarkable lightness. A straight twig the girth of the finger

*Terminalia chebula.

†Pterospermum suberifolium.

342 eggs of gekkoes very like candle droppings. A few of the caves have drip ledges (evidence of Sinhalese occupation) which serve to keep them dry: those without this feature are all adrip during the rains and their floors are mossy. Rocky out-crops, large loose stones and, perhaps a white-ant hill or two, divide up the floor space into sections in which the various Vedda families lie grouped, each in its allotted span. Here and there the stony floor is cupped where maize has been pounded, or worn [372] smooth where *kurrukhan* has been rubbed to flour with the flat polished stones that lie about. A fire-place or two, a cooking frame, and dry leaves (*pana*, *pinney dea*, or *helanea*), the bedding of these people, complete the picture.

Let us take the more important of the caves as we pass them on our way from Bingoda to Newaragala. Like our houses they are all named.

Matigaha galge is a deep roomy grotto formed by a superincumbent rock mass supported slantwise on large flanking boulders. Partially obstructing its entrance, and just within cover of its roof, is a steep rounded stone which one family would occupy silhouetted against a [312] tree-intersected sky. Its only source of water is the Magalavatan Aar a quarter mile away. This disadvantage, and its nearness to the Bingoda homes, accounts for its present disuse. Suthu Banda was born here. Kaurala who had not seen it since his childhood could not help a word of regret on seeing it now after the long years: "Ah!" he sighed. "Is this the old home. No one to inhabit it now,"

Gallhale galge (Rock-slab cave) owes its name to a slab of rock within it, beneath which one must crawl to gain a gloomy inner compartment. A reedy pool below, and the cyfax, cactus and vines about its mouth give it a touch of wild picturesqueness.

Alu galge (Ash cave), which lies at the base of Newaragala, is less a cave than a passage under an immense boulder spanning two lateral outcrops. It is so well concealed by large stones guarding its mouth that one would not suspect its presence even when standing within a few feet of it. The floor slopes up steeply towards a narrowing exit, and is so bestrewn with rocks as to afford no convenient resting place. Yet, in a cranny here or a basin there, the Veddas contrive to make themselves comfortable, as the withered leaves that have served them as mats testify. A small tripodal frame shows where flesh has been [312] roasted. There is no lack of water here; for not only does a perennial spring lie at its entrance, the resort of innumerable bears during the drought, but in the rainy season a rivulet flows right through the cave.

This cave is a favourite of the Veddas who come here when the jak 222 trees, which grow on the slopes of Newaragala, are in fruit. Then, spending a few days, they feast to surfeiting on the tender fruit, and with their [261] characteristic improvidence carry none away. It was here that Kaurala stayed when he "skinned" Nuwaragala—which was his own beautiful way of saying he had stripped it clean of hives. How secret are the ways of Veddas may be judged from the fact that here was a cave frequented by them without its being known to the Sinhalese who lived six miles away. And we who had once spent a night on Newaragala were ignorant that here below us was a cave used by the very Veddas we yearned to know.

261 But of all the caves I have seen *Dhik galge* was the best. I have already described this cave; it remains for me to add a few vital touches. In

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222 the hives are beyond the reach even of this: and then, though the honey itself may not be secured, the wax may, by being dislodged with long bamboos and collected at the foot of the hill; *iti bambara* (wax hives) such combs are called. There are others, so safe under prominent brows, that they are absolutely untakeable; *yakhini baliya* (she-demon's portion) is the name of them.

[417] When the rock is not too high, the ladder is made long enough to reach the ground, where it can be held slantwise close up against the face of the rock, bringing the gatherer within easier access of the hive. But where the hill is too lofty for this, as usually happens, the ladder hangs free, and the gatherer may even have to swing to and fro to enable him to get at the combs. Nor is this all; the *bambaras*, several of which may kill a man, have to be reckoned with; they can only be dispersed by heavy smoking; and, what is worse, when several hives are clustered together in a colony, the work has to be done on a pitch dark night.

Imagine then the picture of the man smothered in smoke, assailed by angry bees, swinging in the darkness two hundred feet or more above the stony earth, with neck and knee hitched to the ladder so as to leave the arms free to manipulate torch and prong. Is it a wonder that every Vedda is not a *kapunkaraya* or cutter, but only the boldest of them; and that he, when he descends to his work, does so without thought in his heart of life or father or mother?*

222 417 284 We will now describe the scene as it actually takes place:—On Panihela were five large combs the Veddas meant to have one night. That morning they assembled on the rock. Their first business was to collect the canes and vines that go to the making of the ladder (*yothala*). Two canes, some twenty or thirty feet long and about an inch in diameter, were cut, dragged to the top of the hill, and lined out. Knotting the end of one to a tree they split it in half. One man, standing at the end, held these apart; while two others stood in between, constructing strong rungs at intervals of two feet with *kiriwel* creepers, which they first looped round the two halves of the cane and then bound together with a running twist. A ladder of any length may thus be constructed; for, should a single cane not be long enough, its ends are looped and interlocked with similar loops in another length of split cane. The ladder is finished off by overlapping and binding together the free ends in the form of an U. This is the type of ladder employed in the perilous descents; where the drop is easier they do not go to all this trouble, but merely split the end of the cane for a yard or so and tie a stick across; standing on this the man is lowered.

372 222 The ladder having been completed, the *hullas* or torches and the *matha* or forked stake are yet to make. The torches, four of which are required, are designed to give a maximum of smoke, and are therefore constructed by enclosing dry *mana* grass, leaves and bark within a sheath of green leafy twigs. The *matha* or *masleya* is a stake six feet long, made of the light *velang* or *walumala*; it is pointed at one end and forked at the other by being split cross-wise into four pointed prongs which are kept apart by two pieces of stick wedged in cross-wise and tied. Both *matha* and *hulas* have long loose loops attached to them by which they are slung to the arms when not in use.

* "*Pana epa hiyath wala bahinsy; amma thatha epa hiyala.*"

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920). 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Lastly, there is the *hangotuwa* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakha-hatta* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom. 222 415 776

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuape**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight. 222 [372]

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *hulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation* to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone. [58] 607 [782]

With smoking *hulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *hulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *hulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives. [412]

*"The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

†*Yothinawa* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Haiboa, haiboa, haiboa.
Ma winthagang hotuahee maritchee,
Ahi upang naventhengis maihi helaney,
Maihi ural opuhova thenawa hithen,
Hamatheyan santhosen opuaragana harunahagena.
Tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

full of people. To our left was a shrine set up against the jungle wall in that quarter. In a space left clear in front of the shrine stood what can best be described as a sort of "maypole," and between the "maypole" and the spectators was a small area enclosed by lengths of coloured cloth stretched between upright sticks. Within this area could be seen a small temporary booth, with human figures moving about a fire, over which, the Chief Headman informed me, rice was being cooked to be offered to the goddess.

When we reached the clearing the ceremony had not yet begun. I was conducted to a seat of honour in the front row of the spectators, and sat there for some minutes looking round with interest on the scene, which was lighted here and there by the flare of torches, and listening to the monotonous throb of the tom-tom, which was apparently being played somewhere close by in the jungle. Suddenly the tom-tom took on a more staccato note. Excitement rose among the spectators; and presently, from a gap in the jungle wall on my right and rather behind me as I sat facing the shrine, there defiled into the clearing a procession which slowly threaded its way through the ranks of the spectators to the clear space in front of the shrine. In this procession there were carried two wooden ceremonial swords,* which were to be prominent in the dances which followed. In front of the shrine the procession stopped, and a ritual of some sort, the exact nature of which it was impossible to gather in the semi-darkness, was gone through.

At the conclusion of the ritual at the shrine a red flag, bearing embroidered upon it the sun and moon and two human figures, and another device the details of which I was unable to distinguish, but which was possibly the figure of a ship, the emblem of Kapalpe, was hoisted upon the "maypole." This was, perhaps, the formal beginning of the ceremony, for after the hoisting of the flag flowers were brought in baskets, as a mark of respect, to the Chief Headman and myself. Under the Chief Headman's

* These swords resembled the ceremonial swords (*ran haduwa*) seen by the Seligmanns *only* in the ceremony of the invocation of Rahu Yaku at Sitala Wanniya, (fifty miles from the place at which the ceremony here described was performed), and illustrated on p. 256 of *The Veddas*.

5. NESTS AND HIVES

This is the time to climb the steep;
Up through the shadowy woods to grope,
Over the stones where the lichens creep,
On to the crag that crowns the slope;
To the wild bees stronghold hushed in sleep.

J. STILL

NESTS

136 222 IN dark fearsome caverns, and down the sides of dizzy ravines, the little edible-nest swiftlet builds its dainty nest fashioned of hardened saliva and moss. Those who think they know better will tell you that the all but invisible specks, sometimes seen high away in the empyrean at dusk, are flights of these birds on their way to the sea to gather salt foam with which to build.

222 One of the favourite pursuits of the Veddas is the collecting of these nests for barter. They call the birds *kudukarayas* (nest-makers) and their [439] nesting caves *kudu galges*. These caves are often deep gloomy recesses only entered with lighted candles (made by squeezing a column of bees-wax round a central wick of cloth or bark) to scare away the scores of [373] poisonous snakes (*karawalas* and *mapilas*) that gather there to eat the eggs and young. Sometimes the nests stud the steep sides of narrow [417] gorges, and are then taken by the aid of cane ladders let down from above.

The nesting-places are a secret the Veddas guard closely. When they took me on one of their expeditions it was on the condition that no bearers came. A hard climb brought us to near the summit of the tree-covered mountain side. "*Cho-ho-ho*," shouted the Veddas as a warning to possible bears. The approach to the cave was over-run with *aralu-wel* (used for bows) and *niyande* (of which waist strings are made). The cave itself, surmounted by an enormous rock the fall of which seemed imminent, was dark and stifling; and it was quite a time before one could discern the cup-shaped nests that clung in clusters to the vaulted roof. A Vedda handed me a parent bird he had trapped, a tiny-beaked, brownish thing, with sweeping wings, black feet and unswallow-like tail. It was quite a time too before one realised that there was a commotion in the air, and that little wraith-like forms were flitting in and out in sore distress "Swish, swish; wing, wing; twit, twit; kisiri, bisiri; takara, takara; kata, kata, kata," as from fairy castanets, came the barely audible sounds. Outside, these were louder, "Chara-chiris, chara-chiris; che-week, che-week, che-week," they twittered in futile resentment. But to these sounds the ruthless despoilers were deaf, as, mounted on heaps of stones, they scraped away with knife or arecanut cutter the trim nests from their tenacious attachments, leaving only those with eggs behind, lest the colony be killed outright. On a boulder near by [252] was a fire-place where the young had been roasted, as Kauwa of Divulana had described.

[p. 86]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222
417
481

"Over the edge." (Page 89)

222
373

Honey-gatherer, girt with torches and stake, ready to descend. (Page 89)

[Facing p. 87]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251

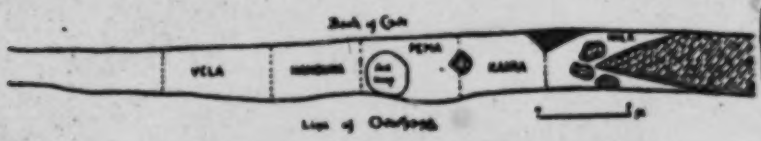


Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

[342 423 592]

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [695] 837

[1] *Theosophist*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

C.G. Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

make drawings[1], but unfortunately we did not pay attention to this matter until we had seen Pihilegodagalge. 532.

This was due to the frequent occurrence of rough drawings and scribblings made by Tamil gall-nut collectors in some of the rock-shelters sometimes used by the Henebedda Veddas. The Veddas obviously had nothing to do with these, and they denied that they were responsible for the only other drawings that we saw, namely those of an elephant and two men in Punchikiri-aranagalge.

Probably drawings are made in many of the sloping rock-shelters and are habitually washed away by the monsoon. Indeed this view was put forward by the men of the Sitala Wanniya group who stated that all Veddas could make pictures.

Pihilegodagalge was, however, specially well situated for the preservation of the drawings, and the pictures on the back wall of the cave were never touched by rain. The drawings were usually made by women, who said they did them when they were waiting for the men to return from hunting, apparently merely to amuse themselves. We feel confident that no magical import attaches to these pictures, the usual subjects of which are men and women, various animals and the hide vessel *maludema* (Sin. *hangetu*) in which honey is collected. Ashes were mixed with a little saliva in the palm of the hand and stroked on to the rock with the forefinger of the right hand, the spots of the leopard being put in with a charcoal paste prepared in the same manner. [386]

Plate LVI, fig. 1 shows on the right a *maludema*, a vessel made of deer's hide in which rock-honey is collected. The radiating lines which make this drawing appear like the sun's disc, represent handles made of loops of creeper, while the spots inside indicate the honey. The *maludema* (a photograph of which is given in Plate LXV) is a favourite subject and occurs in a number of rock paintings. Below the *maludema* on the right is a dog and below this a leopard is represented. On the

[1] Mr H. C. P. Bell has written to us that he has seen drawings in the rock-shelters and a few years ago by the Veddas of Tamankaduwa, and Mr Alfred Clark formerly of the Woods and Forests Department has also observed them.

1-Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so as to project downwards between the legs: the radiating lines above the head were said to represent hair. In the lower part of the photograph in the centre is a dog. The next three figures represent a bow and arrow, a woman and a man, looking at them from above to below. On the right is a group of men. The lower figure in this plate shows a sambar deer in the centre and four dogs, two men and a woman. Plate LX shows a leopard, a dog and several men and women. 532

The figures of elephants and a man with a bow and arrow on Plate LXI were drawn on grey millboard and were so faint that it was necessary to blacken them before reproduction. The carelessness with which the trunk is put in is noteworthy.

The only other occasions on which we saw pigments used were at the Bambara Yaka and Rahu Yaka ceremonies described in Chapter IX, black and yellowish-brown marks being made on the properties prepared. The black marks were made with charcoal paste, the brownish marks with turmeric. [38]

Pantomime.

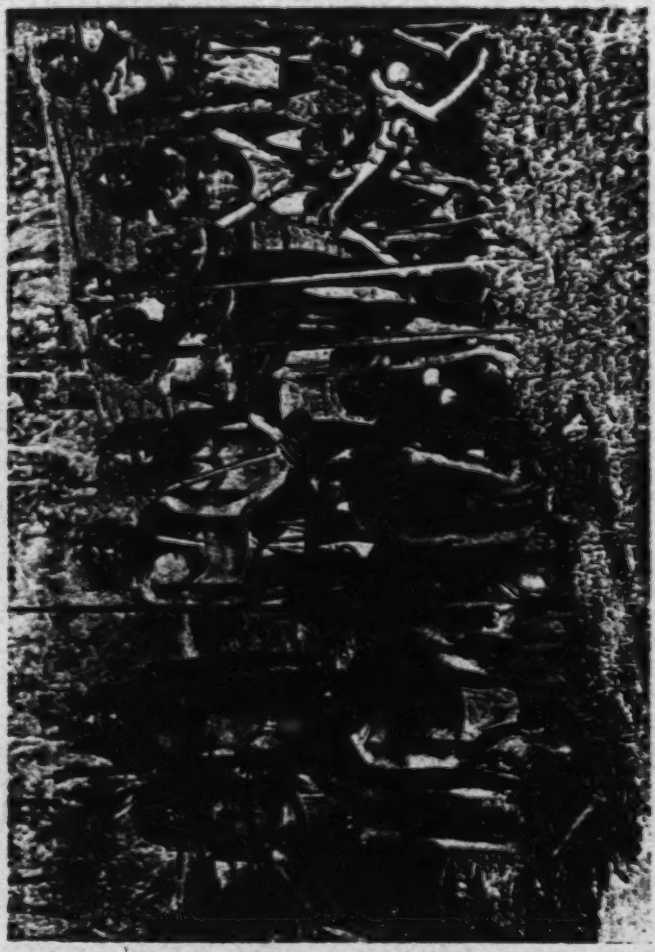
The only other art practised by the Veddas is that of pantomime from which they undoubtedly derive real pleasure. Within the limits of their daily experience they are good actors, and will most faithfully portray their own method of doing things. The zest with which a number of Henebedda Veddas spontaneously prepared the properties for a pantomimic exhibition of honey gathering, and then enacted the scene at Bendiyagalge caves, was very striking and has been referred to in Chapter IV. 536

Another piece of pantomime which we never saw enacted spontaneously but which was performed at our request, was the stalking of game. Directly the object to be "stalked" had been indicated, the stalker fixed his eyes on it, and then approached stealthily and warily, with body bent and head forward, every muscle ready for instant action, till within a few paces of the object when he would straighten his body and return to the rest of the party at his usual easy pace.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
302
411

Plate III



Group of Veddas of Hanabedda and Bingoda

[facing p.16 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of these days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 226 water of pools with the bark of *dambu*, *tuhapata*, *pusiputu* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kuhuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason
161 to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this
221 time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led
621 a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakhan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

222 Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted
411 of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda
423 chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to
621 the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

614 The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *waruge*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states
197 that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil
128 tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirakodol*, "nothing," is said

Plate XIV

142
144
411
291

Fig. 1. Men of mixed Sinhalese and Vedda blood from the neighbourhood of Maha Oya.

142
291
854

Fig 2. Women of Omuni

[facing p.46]

342
516
411

Fig. 1. Lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge

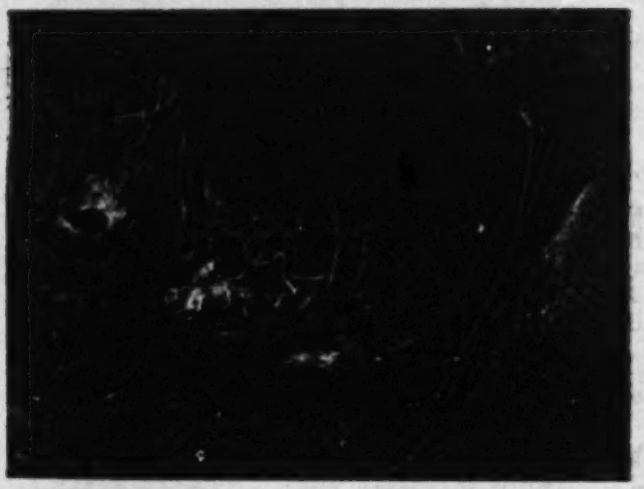


Fig. 2. Early morning scene in lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge

[facing p. 84c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clothing is younger in the case of girls than boys. The boy 855
assumes a piece of rag attached to a string in the same manner 291
as men, while girls wear a piece of stuff fastened round their hips like a sarong. A child's first cloth is put on by its mother without any ceremony. The only toys seen were bows and arrows, and these are possessed by every male child. We never 524
saw a little girl play with a bow and arrow, but mothers make 857
them for the baby boys while these are still crawling about. Such toys of course are small and roughly made, but bigger boys of five years old and upwards make quite neat little bows, and shoot with them tolerably well; they do not feather their arrows. Other children were seen playing with clay and sticks; and girls frequently play with broken pots with which they pretend to cook.

As women take the children with them when they go out to 868
dig for yams little girls soon learn to do this, and boys would begin to be taken out hunting when about ten years old. It was difficult to find out whether the fathers' or mothers' brothers took the greater part in training the boys and it seemed that a lad eager to go out hunting would be taken by any grown man, who in the very small community is usually a relative. Lads would be encouraged by their elders to shoot at a mark with their bows and arrows, and later they would stalk small birds and shoot fish[1].

When a child tells a lie he may be told "Go away, I do not believe what you say," but it appeared that even young children were usually truthful. One thing is taught the lads systematically, that is the method of collecting honey from the combs of the rock bee. Whenever the caves are conveniently situated
a ladder of creepers is suspended from a tree in the jungle 524
above and hangs over the end of the face of rock which forms 857
the cave. On this the youths play at "honey getting." At 868
Pihilegodagalge the lads were quite willing to demonstrate to us how it was done, and the elder men showed clearly that this

[1] Nevill, in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. 1, 1886, p. 189), says ".....a pellet bow is used occasionally by small boys, and birds are often shot with it, though the aim seems very uncertain." Pellet bows were seen at Henebedda, they are used regularly by the Sinhalese in the neighbourhood, and we do not doubt that the practice was introduced by them. [411]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

considerable part of Vedda possession is a fraud, deliberately conceived and perpetrated, for knowing, as many Veddas do, of the frequency with which the Sinhalese see "devils" and "spirits" of all sorts, nothing would appear easier, if fraud were intended, than for a shaman to assert that he could see the spirits which every Vedda believes are constantly around him.

Arrows play a considerable part in the Vedda religion, two forms of arrow being used. The first is the ordinary arrow used for shooting game, the second a ceremonial arrow called *aude* with a blade 8 to 18 inches long, which is usually but not always hafted into a handle often considerably shorter than the blade[1]. Both forms of arrows are used in the possession dances described in Chapter IX, but in addition to this the shooting arrow is used as a protection to infants, being commonly thrust in the ground by the side of a sleeping child when its mother is forced to leave it. We heard of this custom in several communities, and at Sitala Wanniya, where arrows were scarce, were shown a wooden bladed arrow which was said to be used in this way (figure 7 (*a*)); *aude* might also be made of wood when an iron blade was not available, and figure 7 (*b*) shows a wooden *aude* made for us at Henebedda. These facts are important as showing that the power of the arrow lies in itself and not in its iron blade.

The protective power of the arrow was noted by Nevill, who stated that the Nilgala Veddas "regard the symbol of an arrow, placed by their babe, as efficient protection for it. They leave tiny babes upon the sand for hours together, with no other guard than an arrow stuck in the ground by their side. Their belief in the efficacy of this has received no shock. They never know such a child to be attacked by wild beasts, pigs, leopards, jackals, etc. or harmed[2]."

With regard to the long-bladed and short-handled ceremonial arrows, the handles of these are sometimes covered with incisions so roughly executed that they do not form a pattern and can hardly be decorative even in intention, so that probably they only serve the useful purpose of preventing the hand from

[1] These ceremonial arrows are doubtless identical with the large blades described by various authors as formerly used in shooting elephants.
[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 164.

411
778

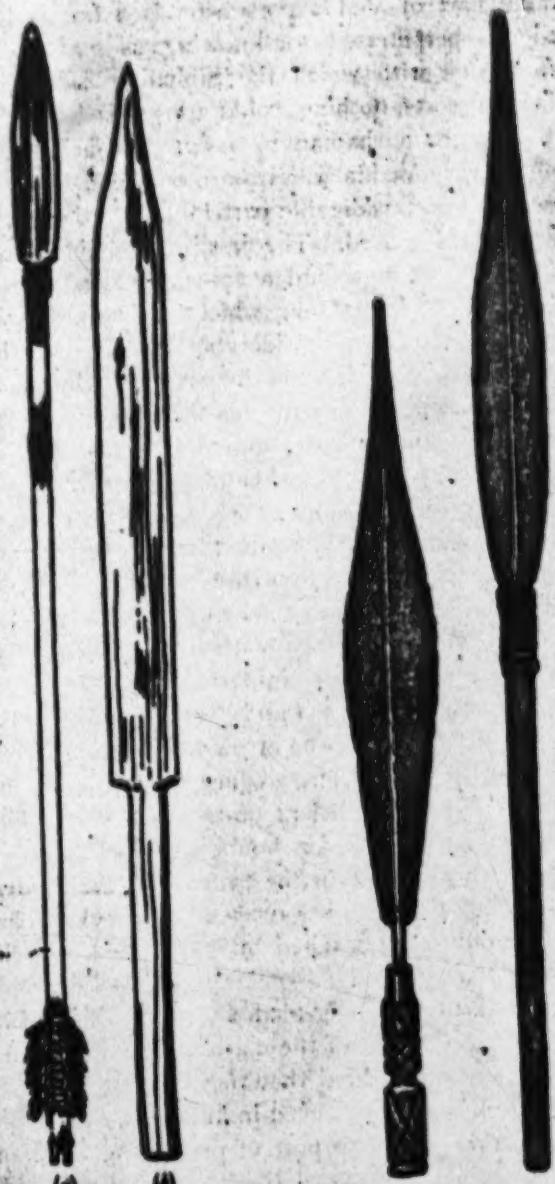


Fig. 7.
Arrow with wooden blade and wooden stem.

Fig. 8.
Axe. x ½.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

slipping. Such ceremonial arrows are generally heirlooms, not necessarily passing from father to son but rather being handed down in apostolic succession from shaman to shaman, and among the village Veddas of Bintenne I have handled one such blade with a history running back for five generations. 411 778 [523 428]

Figure 8 shows two ceremonial arrows which we were able to collect. Besides these we saw similar *aude* at Omuni and were told at Sitala Wanniya that Handuna had formerly possessed one. Rutimeyer has figured one of these ceremonial arrows about 14 inches long, obtained from Kaira the "senior" of the Danigala Veddas. These arrows are carefully preserved by the shaman, and just as he himself observes certain dietetic rules, avoiding eating pig and fowl which are supposed to be particularly repulsive to the *yaku*, so among those more sophisticated communities who believe in the periodical uncleanliness of women, special precautions are taken to avoid the possible contamination of the *aude*[1]. This is generally done by keeping them in some comparatively remote spot such as a cave or in the roof thatch. It is necessary that the shaman should hold one of these arrows in his hand when invoking Kande Yaka; he should also have one for Bilindi Yaka, though as a matter of practice Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were often invoked using the same *aude*, another *aude* being reserved for invoking the *Nae Yaku*. Both arrows were, however, commonly held in the hands during the whole of the *Nae Yaku* ceremony, but in spite of this no confusion seemed to arise nor had the onlookers the least difficulty in saying which *aude* belonged to Kande Yaka whenever they were asked. [783]

The offering of rice in the pot would be stirred with the *aude*, and betel leaves might be ceremonially transfixed with it. Among the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula the testing of the quality of the food provided for the *yaku* was performed with the help of the *aude*, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka using the *aude* to remove from the pot a few grains of rice which the *yaka* in the person of the shaman several times examined before expressing his approval of the offering provided. 411 778 782

[1] The belief in the periodical uncleanliness of women has been borrowed from the Sinhalese. It did not exist in the "wildest" group we met with, on the other hand we found it among all the more sophisticated Veddas, attaining a maximum where these had come under foreign influence.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nat Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas. 775 782 769

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaku* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death. 776 777 [773]

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*kadaru*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness. [411]

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and 776

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 156), had been metallised and were said to represent swords.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

were generally associated with rocks and were not the spirits of the dead. There is however an exception, namely, Dehigole Yaka, whose history is as follows. A man from Dehigole, a Vedda, went to Kandy to see the king, probably Sri Vikram Rajah Sinha, the last of the Sinhalese kings, who was dethroned early in the last century. On his way back he was killed by an elephant, and now his spirit looks after the chena and prevents elephants breaking into and destroying the crops. A leafy branch is tied to a pole or dead tree in the chena, and Dehigole Yaka and other spirits are invoked, an offering of sweetmeats, jaggery, coconuts and rice cooked in coconut milk being made and subsequently eaten by the owners of the chena. There was said to be no invocation of the *yaku* of the recent dead, nor before taking honey which is obtained from trees.

LINDEGALA.

The "Veddas" described on p. 76 from Lindegala in the neighbourhood of Kallodi worship a large number of male and female spirits including the Bo Gaha Yaka and the Na Gaha Yaka[1].

As already indicated the people of Lindegala are Veddas in scarcely more than name. The most important of them, an old man with his son and son-in-law, visited us at Kallodi. The old man who is tall and presented typical Sinhalese features is a renowned *vederale* (medicine-man) and is employed by the Sinhalese for miles round. He brought with him to show us two ceremonial arrows with which he invoked the spirits. One of these arrows is of the shape of a Hindu trident, the other is of the usual Vedda shape and is notable on account of the silver *bo* leaf with which the blade is inlaid. This *aude* is shown in Plate XXV. Both of these had been presented by the Sinhalese king to one of his ancestors, apparently about 100 years ago.

[1] Although these *yaku* were spoken of in the singular there were many individuals of each species. Some of the other more important *yaku* which were worshipped were named, Wategala Wanniya, Gala Degala Wanniya, Gurugala Wanniya, Maldampahe Yaka, Lepat Yaka, Eheregala Yaka, Meheregal Yaka, Komal Yaka, Walmat Yaka, Hiliihangala Yaka, Mikmal Naida Yaka, Kehelpotagale Yaka, Mawaragala Yaka, Hereng Yaka, Inihangala Wanniya, Muluhangala Wanniya, Gara Rajah Wanniya. These were only an insignificant fraction of the total number of *yaku* known to our oldest informant.

411 The story told us was that when this ancestor, who was a Vedda
778 headman and a shaman of great fame, gave up his jungle life
173 and began to cultivate, the Sinhalese king sent him the two *aude* as tokens that he granted the land on which he settled to him and his descendants for ever. It seems that previously to this they had led a more or less unsettled life, or had perhaps been dispossessed of their own territory during the troubles of the period. The arrows were in fact "seisin" and were considered the equivalent of a *sannasa*, the inscribed metal plate or rock face on which grants of land were formerly recorded. Inquiry showed that it was by no means uncommon for a man to be given a ceremonial example of an implement of his trade or profession as a *sannasa*. Thus, in the Kandy Museum there is a beautifully worked Bull's bell (*gonmiligediya*) given as *sannasa* to Rantun Mudiansе of Walala head of the Pattiya or Nilamakkara people by King Narendara Singhe of Kundasale who reigned 1706—1739. We may also refer to a ceremonial weaver's shuttle in the Colombo Museum and to the lacquered arrows described in Chapter XI.

776 The *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Wanegata Yaka are con-
775 sidered less important than the tree *yaku* and the host of *yaku* alluded to above. Indigollae Yaka and Rahu Yaka are recognised but not considered very powerful, though it was said that all these were formerly invoked to give success in hunting. The *kolamadhwa* ceremony is known, very many spirits being invoked including Unapane Kiriamma. The *Nae Yaku* become attendants on some of the *yaku* mentioned in the above list and these are invoked first and bring the *Nae Yaku* with them, but it appeared that it was no longer the custom to hold a *Nae Yaku* ceremony within a few days of a death. Among the *Nae Yaku* mentioned was the spirit of the man on whom one of the last Sinhalese kings had bestowed the land of which the inlaid *aude* shown in Plate XXV is the *sannasa*. Another *yaka* greatly venerated is that of Kimbul Otbe, an important individual living a few generations ago concerning whom Nevill has written at some length[1].

[1] Nevill, who says that he could find no clue to his identity, still regarded Kimbul Otbe as "a great historical personage," for "The Sinhalese of the Eastern Province

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411
778

Plate XXV

Axe with inlaid silver Bo leaf

[facing p.172]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Having made arrow-heads of the shape of Nā leaves,
Of the shape of Bō leaves, from hill to hill,
From foot-(print) to foot-(print) of excellent number deer,
There (he) goes, my Wanniyā of the Chief Place of the hill.

Mr Parker explains that the "chief place of the hill" is its crest or summit, but in every case in which the expression *Kandē mul pala Wanniyā* occurred in an invocation our informants explained that the expression was one of the names of Kande Yaka, and they clearly regarded these words as constituting a proper name. *Wanniyā* is a common constituent of Vedda names, and has something of the significance of chief or leader. Mr Parker points out that it means "he of the Wanni" or "he of the forest track," and that it is a title given to Vedda chiefs in former times. Mr Parker considers this invocation important, "since it shows that the arrow heads were of two shapes, a narrow one with nearly parallel sides (resembling the leaf of the *nā* tree or ironwood) like some Sinhalese arrows, and a broader one (resembling the *bō* leaf"). At the present day the heads of Vedda arrows are long and relatively narrow, that is, roughly of the shape of a leaf of the *nā* tree. We have not seen any arrow heads whose shape recalled the leaf of the *bō* tree.

[411]

Invocation to Kande Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

XVI. *Kandulu ēyā kandulāgē yanna yanna kandu nirindu wasā tunduwan. Rāwanā dammāgē ēyā kaddē dammanāgē rendu rendu gal-gasa-rugat pēyan pēyā kuriyyā ehyanāā kandē mul pala Wanniyā.*

King of the Hills, who continues to go from hill to hill, causes rain[1]. (He is) the Wanniyā of the Chief place of the hill, who causes to fall the heads of excellent number deer, from foot (print) to foot (print), from Rāwanā Dammā (the grass plain of tents) to Kaddē Dammā (the grass plain of the hill)[2].

" *Nirindu* from *naru* and *indra*, a poetical expression meaning 'chief of men.' It is never used colloquially by Sinhalese.

" *Kuriyyā* = *kuriyya* (Tamil) 'mark,' 'traces.'"

[1] "Lit. rain rain."

[2] "These names signify respectively 'the grass plain of the tent' and 'the grass plain of the hill.' Dr Seligmann was told that these hills teemed with game though on inquiry it appeared that no man had visited them or knew their situation."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

782
411
516
142
787

Plate LV

Nila holding bow while reciting invocation No. XXIII. When the name of the yaka causing the illness is spoken the bow swings to and fro

[facing p. 290]

323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a [531 177] rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made [172] pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

Tools and Weapons.

411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by [437] barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes 411 or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *hebberal* 322 (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained, it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of [283 a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind 314] that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the timbal tree (Diospyros embryopteris).

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

resin obtained from the *timbiri* tree (*Dipterocarpus embryopteris*). 411
The shaft of the arrow is commonly made of the wood of the 322
mulan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*). The arrow is still the almost universal cutting tool, as we had good opportunity of ascertaining at Henebedda. There was no knife in the com- 412
munity, and we noticed the skill with which a deer was skinned 252
and cut up with an arrow. The Veddas certainly desired no better tool, and when we pressed a butcher's knife on one of them in order to see how he would handle the unaccustomed tool, it was interesting to note how slowly he worked and how poor the result was compared with that he obtained with an arrow, which he held just above the blade somewhat as a European holds a penholder. No less astonishing was the skill employed in removing the skull cap with a few strokes of the axe, not only was the brain lifted out and cooked entire, but it was removed so neatly and cleanly that the result was more suggestive of an anatomical preparation than a piece of butcher's work.

The Veddas we met were all bad or indifferent shots, and 411
we have no doubt that game is seldom shot at a distance much beyond fifteen or twenty yards, the marvellous stalking of the Veddas enabling them to approach within this distance. The bow, to which the string is securely fastened at one end, is carefully unstrung when not in use. To string it, this end is placed upon the ground, the upper end of the shaft and the string being held in the hands, the sole of one foot is then placed against the middle of the shaft which is steadied, we might almost say gripped, between the great toe and the second toe. Much of the weight of the body is thrown against the middle of the shaft while the hands pull down the upper end to which the string is quickly secured, as is shown in Plate LXIII. Plate LXIV shows the position of the hands and arms immediately before the arrow is released. The bowman is Handuna
of Henebedda, who is left-handed and who in spite of being the [145]
father of a large family remains the only left-handed individual in the community. The length of a bow collected at Henebedda was 172 cm., while four arrows also obtained at Henebedda varied from 88 to 105 cm. in length.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411 648 It appears that painted and lacquered arrows were sometimes presented to the Veddas by the Sinhalese kings as signs of gratitude or favour, just as ceremonial forms of other objects were presented to particular Sinhalese[1]. Dr Willey told me of a lacquered bow and arrow which he heard of among a community of sophisticated Veddas, and which he was told ultimately found their way to the Kandy Museum. Among the peasant Sinhalese of Nilgala we heard of a lacquered arrow—said to have been lost recently—which, according to tradition, had been presented many generations ago to the Vedda ancestors of its last owner by one of the kings of Ceylon. With regard to the specimen in the Kandy Museum, the arrow is feathered in the usual Vedda style, the condition of the lacquer on it shows that it is of considerable age. The iron which is said to belong to it is loose, and it is entirely unlike any arrow head we have seen. Instead of having a tang it has a socket into which the end of the shaft must have fitted, and there is a shoulder or "stop" upon the iron. The bow shown us as having been acquired with the arrow was in much better condition and had a small band of silver or some metal resembling silver round it. According to the account given at the museum both specimens were procured from a priest who gave a history of the specimens which does not connect them with any Veddas[2].

224 177 Traps and snares are unknown among the least sophisticated Veddas, but at Danigala we saw a small deadfall trap avowedly introduced.

HONEY.

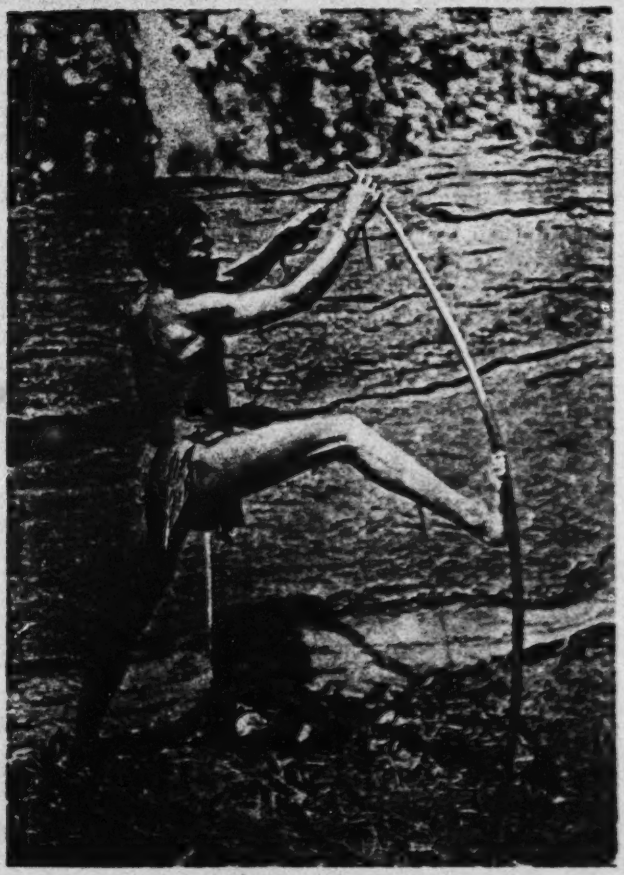
222 The importance of honey in the Vedda diet has been mentioned in Chapter IV as well as the large part it plays in barter. The honey of the *bambara* (*Apis indica*) is taken in June and July, though at other times of the year small combs are taken

[1] There is in the Colombo Museum a beautifully lacquered weaver's shuttle, presented to certain cloth makers by one of the Sinhalese kings.

[2] It was stated that the bow and arrow had been found in the verandah of a disused house with some broken articles said to have been thrown there, having been taken from the *walawwa* (house) of Molligoda Adigar. The house was in the Kegalle district. The villagers gave the bow and arrow to a priest who brought them to the museum.

Plate LXIII

411
142
291
516



Handuna of Hemabedda stringing his bow

[facing p. 326 a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vodda AX5

411
516

Plate LXIV

Handuna shooting

[facing p. 326 b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

There are a few Verdas at Panichchenkeni, while near Vakarai still further to the north there is a Verda settlement of considerable size. Some eight miles beyond this are two Verda settlements Parchenai and Nargantonai situated close together. We heard of other smaller settlements of Coast Veddas in the neighbourhood of Batticaloa, but these were not visited as time was short and it appeared that those Verdas we did not see differed in no respect from those we met. We were told that formerly there were Coast Veddas south of Batticaloa and we later discovered that there were, and still are, certain shrines or temples within a few miles of the coast (e.g. at Mandur), which were generally recognised as Vedda shrines at which Veddas especially worshipped. This matter has been alluded to in Chapter VIII, and here it is only necessary to point out that the religion of the Coast Veddas is strongly tinged with Tamil customs and beliefs; indeed, many Verdas had Hindu sect marks upon their foreheads. 361 [778]

Some, but not all, of the Coast Veddas know the names of the *waruge* to which they belong, and a few also know the names of some of the more important *waruge* of the Veddas inland. Uru *waruge* appears to be the *waruge* to which most of the Coast Veddas who remembered their ancestral *waruge* belonged, but a few men stated that they belonged to Ogatam, Kavatam, Umata or Umatam, Aembalaneduwe and Aembale *waruge*; the last named and the one before it probably being the same as the Aembela *waruge* found inland. Some of the Coast Veddas whom we questioned said they had heard of, and still knew of certain of the old Vedda *waruge*, and such men were generally able to mention Morane *waruge* while fewer also knew of Unapane *waruge*. 614

The Coast Veddas have become expert fishermen and make and use various forms of nets including a cast net. They also spear and shoot fish, using a bifid iron spear-head which they have adopted from the Tamils. For shooting fish they use the usual Vedda bow, but the arrow has become a harpoon with a shaft as long as the bow into which the iron with its running line fits loosely. One of the nets used by the Coast Veddas is seen drying behind the house in the background of Plate LXIX, 226 227 411 227

C.G. & B.Z. Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

[113] Fig. 13. Vanla bow and harpoon × 1/10.
Iron harpoon head × 1/3.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *marage* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *marage*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *marage* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 132.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

element as they are in the midst of a civilised crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear.

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back.

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made, and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonoomadala (*sterospermum chelonoides*), the kekala (*cyathocalyx zeylanicus*), a creeper called kobbówel, or the pandóro tree.

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zeylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the areloowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

439 now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough with the Singhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests.

224 411 They have the reputation of being expert with bow and arrow, and as it is only the larger game, such as elk, deer, etc., which they pursue, it is very probable that with their remarkable power of creeping stealthily through the jungle, they may be able to come upon their prey unawares and do execution. But they are miserable shots at a mark. I never saw more than two 411 decent hits made at several small "archery meetings," which I have, from time to time, got up for my own amusement and their pecuniary advantage. And with regard to the latter, I must con- [177] fess that I never saw that contempt for money which Tennent supposes is still existing.*

The practice of drawing the bow with the feet to which Tennent also alludes as still in use, has so long ceased, that in all my inquiries—and I was very particular on this point—I could not find a single Veddah who ever witnessed it, but it is undoubted that such a mode of archery once existed, as is traditional among them.†

224 They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no 231 distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued. Knox tells us, that dogs were given "for portions with their daughters in marriage;"‡ and Percival relates, that "before the last war broke out between us and Holland, a Dutch officer sold a couple of Weddah dogs at Surat, for 400 rix dollars, about £30."§

---

them not, they will do him a mischief one time or another by shooting in the night. If the smith make the arrows, he leaves them in the same place where the Veddahs hung the flesh." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 62. *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, and note; also vol. i, part. v, chap. ii, p. 568, 2nd edition.

* "Money to them is worthless." *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, 2nd edit. I had been told that they would refuse silver, not knowing what it was, and would accept copper. But I never had a rupee refused when I tendered it; and the word "rupee" is by no means unintelligible to them. A good many years ago, I can well believe money was worthless to them, but that was long before Tennent's time.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part iv, chap. iii, p. 439. Some wild Veddahs of the Batticaloa district shewed Mr. Birch, when making some inquiries among them at my request, how the bow was drawn with the foot, but said it was never so drawn now.

‡ Knox, part iii, chap. i. § Percival, chap. xiii.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 few solitary examples of *S. urens*, but I feel confident that this last is an introduction. *Pterospermum suberifolium*—the Welanga of the Sinhalese—is very abundant.

[824 372 411] The young straight shoots of this plant supplied the Vedda arrow, while the wood was employed by them for the manufacture of "fire drills."

The distribution of *Helicteres isora* is curiously restricted to what might be turned "patches," the largest of which I found at Etmole. *Heritiera littoralis*—the Chomanturai of the Tamils—is scarce, but occurs near Panawa and Pottuvil.

Of the Tiliaceæ, I noticed that the distribution of Halmilla (*Berrya ammonilla*) was not very general, while its abundance or scarcity appeared to be a matter of its easy access or the reverse. This is to be expected of so valuable a timber tree.

"*Vidpani*" (Tamil) (*Pityranthe verrucosa*), so plentiful in the Trincomalee District, is comparatively scarce in the Vedda country. Of the Grewias, *G. tiliæfolia*, *G. microcos*, and *G. polygama* are the commonest, but the first of these is not so abundant here as in the dry zone of the Ratnapura District.

As representing the Linaceæ, *Erythroxylon monogynum* may be taken as an abundant typical example. It is alleged in the Panawa Pattu that meat hung in the smoke from burning wood of this plant, if eaten produces a purgative action.

Both *Hiptage madablota* and *H. parvifolia* of the Malpighiaceæ occur in the Vedda country, but in no abundance.

The bright, but pestiferous, *Tribulus terrestris*, is to be found near Pottuvil and at Panawa, in places where the soil is not too dry, but its distribution does not spread far inland.

Of the Geraniaceæ I found very few examples. In some slightly moist spots, west of "Westminster Abbey," I observed *Biophytum sensitivum*, and in some of the tanks I got *Hydrocera triflora*, but in other respects, except the introduced *Averrhoa bilimbi* and *A. carambola*—common in gardens—this order is poorly represented. The Rutaceæ is not well represented in wild species, if we except the well-known *Feronia elephantum*, *Murraya kœnigii*, and *Toddalia aculeata*. In the gardens oranges, lime, and pummalo have been introduced, but with no marked success either in the matter of quality or quantity

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 *Sarcostemma brunonianum* occurs frequently, especially in the bush country.

Dregea volubilis is also fairly abundant near to Liyangolla and Muppane.

Of the Loganiaceæ, the well known *Strychnos nux-vomica* is most abundant. It is remarkable, in view of its being so common, that cases of children poisoning themselves by eating the seed are rarely heard of.

S. potatorum occurs, but is not abundant. I looked out for cases where the seeds were used for precipitating muddy water, but failed to find an instance of its use in this direction.

Of the Gentianaceæ, *Exacum zeylanicum* occurs in fields, but the flowers are much paler than in wet-country examples.

Of the Boraginoæ, *Cordia myxa* is fairly common. *Tournefortia argentea* occurs on the seashore, but is not plentiful. *Heliotropium indicum* is very common in waste ground.

Of the Solanaceæ, mention need only be made of *Datura fastuosa*, which appears in nearly all the more established gardens. The various "Battus" I can pass over, as being common all over the Ceylon low-country, and as probably introduced.

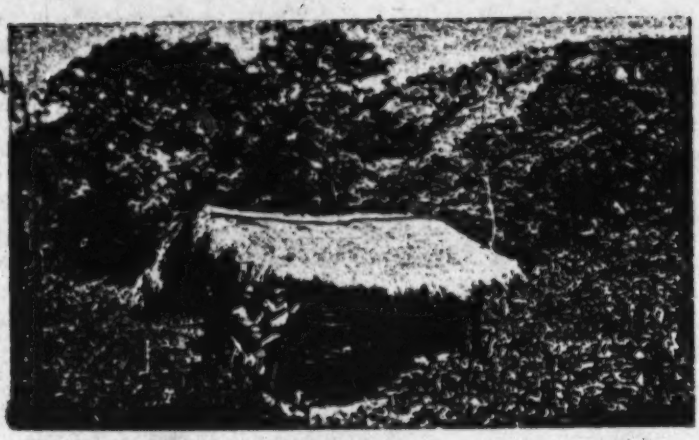
Of the Scrophulariaceæ I desire to draw attention to only one, *Centranthera procumbens*, owing to its presence in a dry country being remarkable. I found it on two occasions only, first between Nangalla and Danakiriya, and the second time about five miles south of Liyangolla. On both these occasions I asked the villagers if they could name it, but without success. Its presence is singular, as it is generally to be found only in the wet zone, or in a country where extremes of drought are not experienced.

Of the Bignoniaceæ, *Oroxylum indicum* is moderately common, but I think there is little doubt that it was introduced for the sake of its medicinal value. *Dolichandrone rheedii* occurs near the coast, near standing water. *Stereospermum chelonioides* is fairly common. Its wood was used by the [411 824] Veddas for bows.

Of the Pedaliaceæ, *Pedalum murex* is common near the coast, and is used by both the Sinhalese and Tamils for a demulcent. *Martynia diandra* occurs on the fringes of villages

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342



Poromola's lonely home

291
411

Vedda bowman of Dambana

[facing p. vi]

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

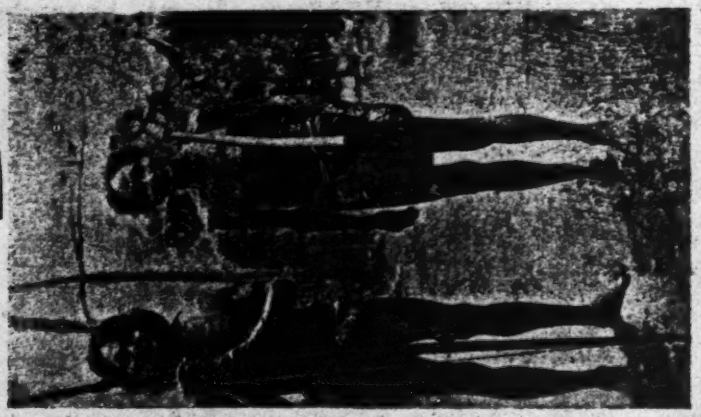
[137] *A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

†*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
411
271
[412
482
622]



The best of the Hennebedde Veddas.—Porontola and Handuna (Page 16)

Handuna strings his bow (Page 16)

[facing p. 16]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. FOREST CHILDREN

621 THE village of Potuliyadda lies in the heart of the country of the Henebedde Veddas. We had hoped to take these people unawares in their homes some three miles away; but it was not to be; for a Vedda boy who had witnessed our arrival had forestalled us.

We were at lunch, when my friend, whose seat commanded a view of the jungle, quietly remarked, "Hullo; who are these? Veddas without a doubt."

142 157 [411] [622] Five men, armed with bows, arrows and axes, strode in single file under the leadership of a small one-eyed man, half of whose face was covered by an awful scar which puckered an eyeless socket, giving a touch of pathos to an otherwise harsh expression. Such was Poromola, chief of the Henebedde Veddas also called *Walaha* (bear) for obvious reasons. Then there was Handuna a fine type of wild man; though close on fifty his figure was well-knit, and this combined with his goatee beard and tousy head gave a strength and rugged dignity to his bearing. There were also a tall bearded man of forty, loquacious and sophisticated enough when you knew him; a lanky, slouching, beady-eyed fellow; a robust, curly-haired bumpkin; and lastly, the snub-nosed little mischief-maker to whom we owed the honour of this visit.

123 As the Veddas came up to us, they uttered some fierce jargon we did not understand. It was pretty obvious they were acting; and not caring to encourage them in this, I casually motioned them away. They retired mumbling. We recalled them later to find them in dudgeon, evidently not being used to such treatment. They stared mutely at us affecting not to understand a word of the Sinhalese in which I addressed them. I tried again and again, but not by the flicker of an eyelid did they signify comprehension. Civility and persuasion having failed, I tried the effect of candour, telling them that we were not gullible strangers and knew all about them. This also was without effect.

Opening Seligmann's book, which contained the portraits of these very Veddas taken ten years previously, we suited picture to prototype. They gazed uncritically with stolid intentness showing no surprise or enthusiasm. I asked them whether they remembered the author and his wife who had spent so much time with them and been so kind to them. One nodded, and the others' faces betrayed interest. Thus was the first barrier carried.

Gradually we won them over one by one; but despite our best efforts the conversation flagged. And we, tired of making all the advances simulated an indifference we far from felt, and took to our books.

"We are hungry," said Handuna after a while. "Will you not give us food?"

We could only offer them money, an almost useless thing to the Vedda. We had made the serious mistake of coming unprovided with a surplus of rice, betel, arecanut and tobacco; for the surest way to the heart of the Vedda is through his stomach. We

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854

Handuna's household. (Page 18)

142
291
224
411
482

Hennebedde Veddas (Page 16)

The iguana hunter. (Page 17)

[facing p. 17]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukkan* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

V 136 825 to something; but it was long before I saw the bird, a veritable leaf among the leaves and more motionless than they.

The hilly jungles of central Ceylon echo, during certain seasons of the year, to this bird's incessant cry, the popular onomatopoeic renderings of which are, in English, "Captain Philpotts" and "Bring the tappal" and in Sinhalese "*Botuakappan*." Most people have heard, but very few seen, the shy author of these dolorous notes. There is a gruesome story associated with the bird :—A Sinhalese king once asked his dhoby, in order to test his marital fidelity, whether he would cut his wife's neck and bring him her head! "Oh! king," said the man falling at the monarch's feet, "even if you behead me I cannot do such a thing." The following day the king called up the dhoby's wife and made a similar request of her. She replied that she would do it. Going home she helped her husband with his bath, rubbed boiled limes on his head, and cooked him a good meal. Like a good wife she asked him to lay his head on her lap where he soon fell asleep. Then, with a knife she had in readiness, she cut his throat; and severing his neck, put the head into a pot, covered it with a cloth and carried it to the king. On the way she met a man who, singing, asked her, "What do you carry in the pot on your head?"

S 539

"I am taking *mee amba** to the king," answered the woman.

"Why cover it so carefully?" sang he.

"If I take them uncovered, wayfarers will ask me for them," she replied. "It is on a fine journey I go."

When she brought her gift to the king, he was incensed at her cruelty, and ordered her head to be struck off instantly. Ever after, has she gone about in the form of this bird, crying *botua-kappan* (cut the throat), as her one refrain.

ooo While making our way through a tree-studded glade, we surprised two men carrying sacks of dried meat on their shoulders; through rents in the bags peeped unsavoury scraps of sambur, monkey and pig. Their first impulse on seeing us was to escape; for to shoot sambur legitimately, gun and game licences are necessary; and what money have they for these, who have barely the wherewithal to purchase the ammunition for their ramshackle muzzle-loaders.

V 533 When we camped, Kombua regaled us with Vedda songs of questionable taste chanted rapidly in a high nasal monotone, lengthened indefinitely by endless repetition, and accompanied in the last staves with a clapping of hands. To the suggestion that he should show his skill in archery he responded with alacrity; jumping up, he seized his weapons as if confident of skill. A fragment of paper, six inches square, placed fifteen paces away, was the mark. At the word he loosed his arrow. A clean miss! He walked up to the target and dashed it down in dudgeon, and nothing would induce him to shoot again. Archery is a lost art to the Veddas, though they still have considerable skill in fashioning bows and arrows. Jungles that echo to guns are no places for bowmen.

V 411

V 576 Kombua's farewell was as bizarre as his greeting of us. Tossing head and hands in the direction we were taking, and tapping us on the chest, he wished us good going in tones more peremptory than complaisant.

V 515 Quite a number of our carriers were half-Veddas. There was one whose constant occupation was to run his fingers comb-fashion through his upstanding hair scraping out vermin. His expression was of that thoughtful seriousness which is the surest mark of profound vacuity.

*A species of mango.

S: Spimel D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

triangle bounded on the south by the Gal Oya: on the west by the Bibile-Batticaloa road: and on the east by the coast road. Within this space are found the Veddas of Danigala, Henebedda and Bingoda, besides the few about Kotelinda, Divulana and Serangamadu. If to this tract were added that to the west and north of the Bibile-Batticaloa road, between it and the Mahaweli-ganga, we shall have embraced the Veddas of Bintenne, Gunner's Quoin, and other scattered settlements, and accounted for every Vedda extant—a mere handful of people in all.

Kaurala of Kotelinda was the first Vedda worthy of the name we had encountered on this long journey. He was a Bingoda Vedda of the Morana *wanga*, but had spent most of his days at Bandaradua now derelict. He lived with his family in a crude hut in the jungle; his sole weapons were an axe, a bow and arrows. He was a simple soul, laughing uproariously at one moment, and the next assuming that troubled gravity so characteristic of his race. He knew every inch of his jungles; there was no tree, stream, or stone once passed which he could not instantly recognise again. This instinct and the sun were his sole means of orientation. We tried to press him into service, but he refused. "How can I come?" he said, tossing head and arms like a windmill. "I am a lone man. I live in the jungle. I am only a Vedda. If I go, who is there to look after my children? See here, now," pointing to the damaged trees about his hut; "this is what the *hotuhandas** have done. How can I come?"

Our deviation to Kotelinda was in vain. We had hoped to cut across the hills of Madana to Galmede; but the path had long been absorbed into the forest. We had therefore to double back to Bokkebedda, and thence strike north, through Gonagalla, to Divulana. With our usual ill-luck on this trip, we caught our fifth thunderstorm. It dropped plumb on us and worried us all the way; while in the unscathed beyond, over the treed parkland, the sunset wrought a panorama of opal and pearl, touching to glory the austere peak of Friar's Hood, queen of the distant hills.

*Elephants.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

411

Kaurain and his wife. (Page 55)

291
516
854

A Galmede home. (Page 60)

[Facing p. 59]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VI

VEDDAS OF BINGODA

I. BINGODA HOMES

Innumerable years had flown,
Since first the chisel in her hand
Necessity, the sculptor, took,
And in her spacious meaning planned
These forms, and that eternal look.

L. BINYON

197 [101] CONCEDE me three points and I shall attempt to show that there exist in Ceylon to-day Veddas worthy of the name. Language, apparel and weapons are the concessions I ask.

Let us begin by confessing, that the Veddas we shall tell of have no pure language of their own, but merely a patois, in which Sinhalese words predominate and Vedda words are few ; their clothing is not the traditional 291 leaf or threshed *riti* bark, but fragments of foul rag affording, if anything, less cover ; the weapons they favour are guns (of a type almost as ●411 dangerous to user as to quarry) and not bows and arrows which they employ only in sore necessity.

Vital issues, you will say, which should deprive this people of their name. But language, dress and arms may change without materially altering, for a time at least, ancient customs and primeval instincts.

101 The word Vedda originally meant hunter ; and a people supreme in jungle-craft, always capable of gleaning from the unfriendly forests a sufficiency for their needs and utterly incompetent to husband even the primitive agriculture of the *chena*, has surely a claim to the name.

224 It must not be supposed that every Vedda possesses a gun ; far from it ; [411] occasionally there may be a single weapon to a whole clan. The usual thing is for the Sinhalese or Moors to lend their guns to these superb [427] trackers, who never waste a shot and seldom return without their quarry, a large share of which goes by agreement to the owner of the gun.

114 Of my first accidental meeting with these Veddas amid the hills of Galmede, I have already told. Barely four months had elapsed before I found myself renewing their acquaintance ; this time with set purpose.

Arriving at the forest village of Mullegama, sacred to Buddhists, and abounding in lime groves and Moors, I was fortunate enough to run up against my friend Kaurala of Kottelinde, who, so difficult of acquisition before, now became our willing guide.

131 Bingoda, the home of our Veddas, is some three miles from Mullegama, and lies on the Dhungolla Oya, a tributary of the Magalavatan Aar which connects Bingoda with Galmede ten miles away—all in the circuit of

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

804
411
516

Method of measuring length of arrow shaft. (Page 76)

411
516

Feathering the arrow. (Page 76)

[Facing p. 75]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

sticks are easily obtainable from broken branches scattered everywhere. Gama, who was entrusted with the demonstration, chose two twigs, one the thickness of the index finger and about a foot and a half long, the other as thick as the little finger and about ten inches long. Having barked these, he whittled down the centre of the larger stick, and, in the flat surface thus produced, scooped out a shallow cavity, at one border of which he contrived a V-shaped extension. A piece of cloth about two inches square was placed on the ground under the centre of the stick which was held firmly down, cavity uppermost, by the toes of the operator, aided by the hands of an assistant. The smaller stick was then placed vertically over the other—its point, rendered bluntly conical, engaging in the cavity—and briskly rotated between the open palms. The firm downward pressure with which these movements were accompanied, caused the palms to descend the length of the stick from time to time. As often as this happened, the hands were quickly disengaged and re-applied as before to the upper part, and the twirling manoeuvre repeated. This had been done but twice when smoke was seen. Soon a small heap of charred dust like coffee-grounds accumulated round the hole, to escape down the V-shaped gutter on to the cloth. The smoke increased; there was a smell of charred wood. Suddenly a spark was thrown on to the black dust and the rag caught fire. A few dry leaves were collected and set alight. Within two minutes of the commencement of the operation there was a lively fire. When the smoke is observed to come from the accumulated dust, apart from that at the point of contact between the two sticks, it is a sign that the object is achieved. The rag is then rolled to enclose the dust—cigarette-fashion—and blown into at one end, so that it soon smokes heavily and catches fire. 372

It is strange that an art so simple in adept hands (not by any means so in those of a novice) should have been allowed to fall into disuse in wild Ceylon. I have seen refinements of this method; a coconut-shell, flat stone, or skull of a small animal for instance, being used by an assistant to press down the vertical stick, and a twist of bark to rotate it but they were less effectual than the simple procedure I have described. [178]

ARCHERY

322 411

The present day Veddas, we have seen, are poor bowmen; they have, however, not yet quite lost the art of fashioning superb bows and arrows.

The bow is made from the *mahakahala-gaha* or the *kobawela*; the stone bow (*gal-dhunna*) from the *gatawela-gaha*; the bow string from the inner sheath of the bark of *aralu-wel*.* [824]

The size of the bow is proportioned to the archer's strength. I have seen one six and a half feet long and as thick as a child's wrist; and, judging from its drawing power, no hand but a giant's could have wielded it. The usual length of a bow is from five and a half feet to five feet ten inches. It is made of a single stave, thick at the centre, without contrivance to give grip, flattened along the back, and tapering towards the horns which, without being notched, are tightly encircled by a few turns of cord to prevent the string slipping.

The arrow is made from the *ee* or *velang*† tree, the wood of which when dry is of remarkable lightness. A straight twig the girth of the finger

*Terminalia chebula.
†Pterospermum suberifolium.

411
516

Stringing bow by foot-thrust. (Page 76)

Stringing bow with aid of knee. (Page 76)

[Facing p. 76]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

322 is taken, barked, and straightened by being passed rapidly a few times
411 through a flame, and then bent over the knee or between the hands. It is shaved down to uniform thickness with an arecanut-cutter or arrow blade, and cut to suitable length, roughly gauged by holding it along the outstretched arm from the nearer nipple to the end of the middle finger, giving it an average measure of two and a half feet, or slightly less. An arrow belonging to the great bow I have mentioned, measured three and a half feet. The nock or notch is a quarter of an inch deep and cut square.

411 The arrow is feathered with the wing plumes of the owl, devil-bird,
237 jungle-cock, or large crane (*mana koha*); the owl's, besides being the
284 best, are easily picked up along dry stream beds, on the trees bordering which the birds usually roost. A feather is split unequally down the rachis, only the larger segment being used. Four such segments, about two inches long, are arranged equidistantly round the shaft, an inch and a quarter from the end, and bound neatly down with *aralu* fire, the mouth helping in the process. The first turns are merely taken round that part of the shaft, which is immediately below the feathers, then round the bared lower ends of the rachis, and then carried along, at spaced intervals, between the carefully separated barbs. Should a strand not prove long enough, it is finished off by having its end tucked in between rachis and shaft, and another is similarly begun. Finally the ruffled barbs are straightened out between the thumb and fingers moistened with saliva. A few turns of fibre just below the notch serve to give grip to the drawing fingers.

411 The arrow-head is made of flattened iron obtained from local black-
smiths. It is three to five inches long, of lanceolate shape in imitation of the *na* leaf, and sharp at the edges; serving as much as a cutting implement as an arrow. By a tang it is let into the end of the shaft to which it is firmly secured with fibre. All the strung parts of the arrow,
[824] as well as the bow-string, are finally dressed with the sticky milk of *kiri-wel* to prevent untwisting. Both bow and arrow, being very liable to the ravages of boring insects, are always kept hung over the smoke when not in use.

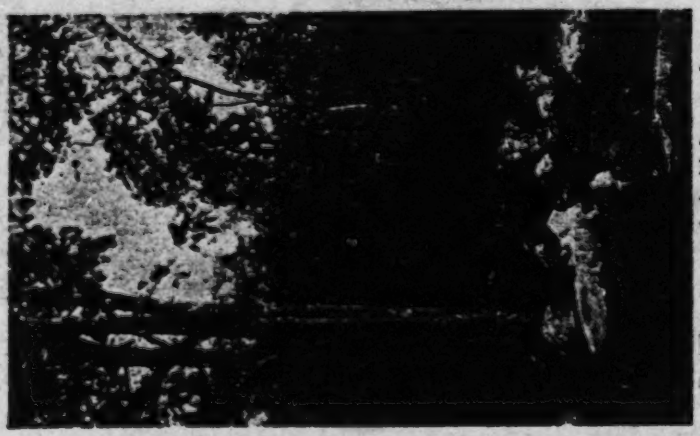
The method of stringing the bow is by placing one end of it, to which the string is knotted, on the ground, and then pressing on its centre either with the bent knee or by a foot thrust. A correctly strung bow should measure at its centre a span between string and belly of bow; this is rather more than the "fist-mele" (clenched fist with thumb upright) the rough estimate of European stringing.

The arrow release favoured by the Veddas is that in which the cord is drawn with the first joints of the index and middle fingers, the arrow being usually placed on the left of the bow. The style of archery is often peculiar: the arrow fitted to the bow is raised head high; the right elbow is now swung up in an awkward flourish above the head, and then brought slowly down to alignment with the eye, as the string is drawn out to its fullest extent and the arrow delivered.

DANCING

177 The ceremonial dances of the Veddas have been minutely described
and illustrated by Seligmann. The dance we are about to describe
536 seems to have been performed before him in its greatest purity at Henebedde. The differences between his description and ours must be

4/23
5/14



Boundary tree marked with bow mark or *dhuna hena*. (Page 79)

411

A Vedda archer of Bintenne. (Page 76)

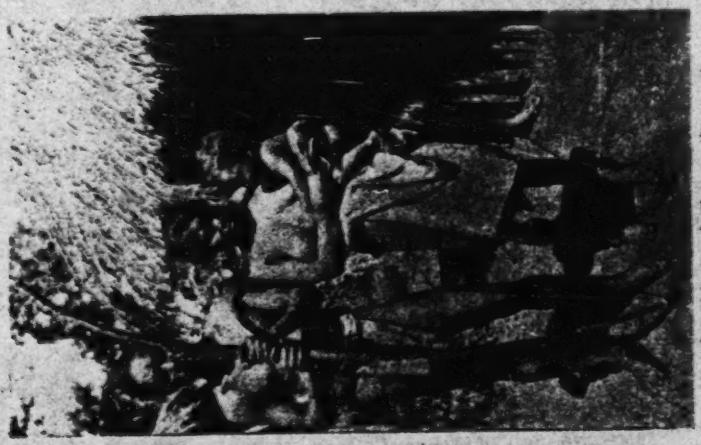
[facing p.77]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

342
516
854

Veddas of Bulugahadena. (Page 93)

[411]



Veddas of Bulugahadena. (Page 93)

[Facing p. 93]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
411
415
482

The finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. (Page 93)

[facing p. 95]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were 131
unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously.

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these 101
parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow [301]
stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved [157]
and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne.

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found [361]
the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were apparently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep [626]
the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very 152]
jealous of their women.

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each 576
hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted [411]
us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine.

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for 342
Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukhan* [241]
and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community.

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the 101
same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered 361
about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit!

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never 161
before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by 177
their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting.

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, 224
better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5
142
302
516
291
4-11
137

Fig. 16. Veddas from the Nilgala District (Ceylon) *Photo R. Martin.*

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Yelda AX5

Fig. 17. Veddas of the Nilgala Region

Photo Fr. Sarasin.

342
137
291
516
411
854

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

was a game which they encouraged. A lad of about thirteen collected some green leaves and tied them together with creeper, then taking an arrow, a toy *mastiya*, and a broken gourd tied with creeper, which hung over his arm, for a *mahudema*, he set fire to the leaves and climbed the ladder[1]. While lowering the smoker and letting the smoke blow into the crevice in the rock where the comb was supposed to be, he pretended to cut round its sides with an arrow and thrust at it with his *mastiya* (figure 3), from which he transferred the honey into the gourd. As he descended from the ladder he beat his chest and sides as though driving off the bees, and directly he reached the ground rushed into the jungle to escape from them, all the smaller children imitating him with great glee. Obviously this was a well-known and favourite game, for even the elders took part in it, throwing their cloths over their heads and running into the jungle.

At Henebedda (which we visited before Pihilegodagalge) there were no children present when we spoke about honey getting, but four young men were eager to show us how it was done and acted the scene with great spirit. They took from our camp a piece of white and a piece of brown paper, and fastened them with some wax to the roof of their cave, then as there was no tree above the cave around which to fasten a creeper, one man crouched on the top of the rock and held the ends of the ladder in his hands, another stood above and lowered a smoker of green leaves while a third climbed the ladder and collected the honey from the white paper and the grubs from the brown. Afterwards the collector divided the spoil equally and amid much laughter they all sat down and pretended to eat, one actually going through the pantomime of washing his hands after the meal. They eat the grubs as well as the honey.

As regards clothing, pedlars have brought them cloth for so long that no Vedda living knows what was done when they could not buy it, but it is generally stated that they made bark

[1] The *mahudema* is the vessel made of dammba in which honey should be collected and the *mastiya* the wooden four-pronged implement with which the comb is broken up and transferred to the *mahudema*. For figures of *mahudema* and *mastiya*, see Plate LXV and figure 3 (p. 94) respectively.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cloth of the *riti* (*Antiaris innaria*) of which material the Sinhalese still make rice bags. Men wear a rag of "white" cotton about 9 inches wide passed between their legs, and held in place by each end being passed over a waist string. This cotton material they prefer to anything else for two reasons, firstly, it very soon becomes a dull brown, and hence is less obvious when hunting than a coloured cloth would be, secondly, it is thin machine-made material from which they can easily tear narrow strips for tinder, when they make fire. The women wear coloured cotton cloth of the kind that is woven at Batticaloa, it is a strong material and is not easily torn. A single width forms the length of their skirt from waist to knee and is fastened round their waists like a sarong. Thus, the men's preference for "white" and the women's for coloured cloth is purely economical, depending on the kind of material it has been the pedlar's habit to bring. These pedlars visit the wilder Veddas once a year after the honey collecting season; they never approach the caves, but when within about a quarter of a mile of them they shout till a Vedda comes to them, then they expose their wares and the Vedda returns to the cave to fetch as many pots and gourds of honey and as much dried flesh as he is willing to exchange. The "silent trade," mentioned by Knox[1], is now a legend among the Sinhalese of which no tradition lingers among the Veddas. We have Bailey's evidence that it had ceased before 1863, and the old Kandyan we met (see p. 31) remembered it only as a tradition in the days of the rebellion in 1818. They are not now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough

Fig. 5. Toy stone-axe ×$\frac{1}{2}$ (about).

[1] Cf. p. 6.

291
[524
412]
439
437

resin obtained from the *timbiri* tree (*Dipterocarpus zeylanicus*). 411
The shaft of the arrow is commonly made of the wood of the 322
mulan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*). The arrow is still the almost universal cutting tool, as we had good opportunity of ascertaining at Henebedda. There was no knife in the community, and we noticed the skill with which a deer was skinned 412 252
and cut up with an arrow. The Veddas certainly desired no better tool, and when we pressed a butcher's knife on one of them in order to see how he would handle the unaccustomed tool, it was interesting to note how slowly he worked and how poor the result was compared with that he obtained with an arrow, which he held just above the blade somewhat as a European holds a penholder. No less astonishing was the skill employed in removing the skull cap with a few strokes of the axe, not only was the brain lifted out and cooked entire, but it was removed so neatly and cleanly that the result was more suggestive of an anatomical preparation than a piece of butcher's work.

The Veddas we met were all bad or indifferent shots, and 411
we have no doubt that game is seldom shot at a distance much beyond fifteen or twenty yards, the marvellous stalking of the Veddas enabling them to approach within this distance. The bow, to which the string is securely fastened at one end, is carefully unstrung when not in use. To string it, this end is placed upon the ground, the upper end of the shaft and the string being held in the hands, the sole of one foot is then placed against the middle of the shaft which is steadied, we might almost say gripped, between the great toe and the second toe. Much of the weight of the body is thrown against the middle of the shaft while the hands pull down the upper end to which the string is quickly secured, as is shown in Plate LXIII. Plate LXIV shows the position of the hands and arms immediately before the arrow is released. The bowman is Handuna [145]
of Henebedda, who is left-handed and who in spite of being the father of a large family remains the only left-handed individual in the community. The length of a bow collected at Henebedda was 172 cm., while four arrows also obtained at Henebedda varied from 88 to 105 cm. in length.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

element as they are in the midst of a civilized crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear. 181 [481]

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back. 411 [412]

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡ [147] [283]

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made," and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not 439

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonoomadala (*stereospermum chelonoides*), the kekala (*syathowalyx zylanicus*), a creeper called kebbówel, or the pandòro tree. [818]

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the areloowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192
197
[412]

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Elephant	Botah kandah Mólah	Alya, or ota (tusks)	"Kandah" (Singh.), a hill or mountain. "Mólah" (Singh.), the thick heavy black pounder used as a pestle in pounding rice—an allusion, probably, to his trunk. The Batticalao Veddahs say "ut-botah" and "cotah bebéla".
Monkey	Patagahapoocka	Wandura, or rilawa	
Porcupine	Nittawe	Ittawe	
Pengolin (*manis pentadactyla*)	Gal gawra	Kaballiya	
Iguana	Moondé	Talagoya	Called by the Veddahs of Batticalao "goya", "goy-botah", and "hellá".
Lizard	Cat-tombá	Hoona	
Snake	Polongoo	Sarpaya	"Polongo", a very venomous snake. The Batticalao Veddahs call a snake "sarra-botah".
Snail	Tombá	Golu bellá	
A bird	Sappoo Chappoo Sattriaye	Kurullá	In the Assamese and Bengali dialects, birds are called "charai" and "chiriya".
A crow	Kalu eka	Kaká	"Kalu" (Singh.), black, "eka", one.
To walk	Mangwettinawa, mittiganawa	Æwadinawa	"Maga" (Singh.), a road; "wettenawa" (do.), to fall; "mittiya" (do.), a hammer; "gahanawa" (do.), to strike.
To jump	Bota damanawa	Paninawa	"Bota" (Singh.), the neck; "damanawa" (do.), to place.
To shoot (with bow & arrow)	Pennagatcha	Widinawa	
To rain	Diya pompanawa	Wahinawa	
To drink	Diya kanawa	Bónawa	"Diya-kanawa", to eat water—not an uncommon expression among the Kandyans.
To eat	Kapat ennawa	Kanawa	
To speak	Katan kiyanawa, & banawanawa	Kiyanawa and katakaranawa	
To call	Kilápeh	Andagahanawa	
To see	Reviga	Dakenawa	
To die	Miyoona Miya pér�igé	Marenawa	"Miyoona" (Singh.), dead; "miya" (do.), dead; "miya pereliya", dead and gone.
To sleep	Nidanawa	Nidaganawa	
I am hot	Raddagana		
I am cold	Bopati sitaganawa		

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee reihee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

804 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel Ð-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

137
342

A Vedda home of the Ulpotta. (Page 8)

142
291
412

Veddas of Gunner's Quoin. The two to the left (Vela and Sinna) are the most typical. (Page 8)

[facing p. 8]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
411
291
[412,
482]
622

The best of the Henebedih Veddas—Punsiola and Handuna (Page 16)

Handuna strings his bow (Page 16)

[facing p. 16]

and ear-rings and necklaces. Sober, wistful children ate raw melons or fragments of *hurrukkan* cake as hard as brick, plastered over with flies.

Indian corn and *hurrukkan*, the staple food of these people, are prepared in a variety of ways. After soaking in water for twenty-four hours, they are reduced to flour, *hurrukkan* on grind-stones, maize with pestle and mortar, and eaten in one of three forms—*talapa*, *roti*, or *pittu* appetised with pungent sambols.

Let us look into one of their homes. It is windowless and dark, except for the light that comes between the bark-slats in a hundred dazzling shafts. There are two rooms; the inner small and narrow, the outer a larger living room with a single doorway protected by a two foot fence—a provision for the children. At one corner is a hearth underlying a low trestle bridging the wall angle, for drying flesh; at another a cage-work containing earthen pots and garish Allervale cups and plates. Hanging about the walls are rolled mats, oil bottles, baskets and clusters of sheathed corn cobs. Head-high is an open ceiling containing a jumble of things such as an old umbrella, wicker baskets, large earthen pots and gourds. On the floor is a large grind-stone, and littered about are shreds of mats, a deer skin or two, dirty cloths, a small pillow, a betel bag, a rush broom and a polished plank—certainly the most primitive chair imaginable. There is also a coconut-scraper of curious design, made of a serrated iron disc wedged into the outstanding limb of a triple-branched stem resting on its Y-shaped arms. Such are the appointments of a *chena* Vedda's domicile.

These communal dwellings stockaded against beast aggression in the heart of wild nature, the watch huts on the trees, the hallos all night, proclaim the incessant struggle between man and the animals in whose strong kingdom he is only a small unit. But for its inalienable hardships the life of this people makes a homely appeal to the human heart. Nature a capricious giver, bestows now abundantly now sparingly, and he who would wrest a living from her must have supple thews and great endurance.

Henanagalla was a place of antiquarian interest a few miles from Dolagalwella. On the summit of a large low rock in an undulating glade stood a broken dagaba completely obscured by a growth of big trees and scrub. Desultory worshippers had trussed up a slab for offerings of wild flowers. A low wall of hewn granite blocks surrounded the structure, and a half buried monolith or two peeped out of the ruin.

Descending from here and working round through a tangle of brushwood, we came to a commodious cave quite forty paces long, showing the remains of enclosing and partitioning walls, a slotted stone for the support of a pillar and a large flat *puja* stone.

Besides these evidences of ancient occupation, were signs of more recent use. The cave was obviously a resort of monitor hunters. There were the long sticks with which the savoury creatures had been poked out of deep lairs, and cooking frames where they had been roasted. The floor was littered with their dry heads, corn-cobs and nut-shells.

But more interesting than all this were the crude drawings that adorned the inner dome. Here was a veritable gallery of untutored art, wrought with finger for brush and a mixture of ash and water for paint. There were the most primitive representations imaginable of leopards, elephants

5: Spitzel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

with men astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalastic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 [191] 142 301 492

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen floated away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing 136 825

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133

Dastota falls. (Page 39)

291
412
415

Sinna, a Vedda of Gunner's Quoin. (Page 42)

[Facing p. 39]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the *goa*-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Manweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

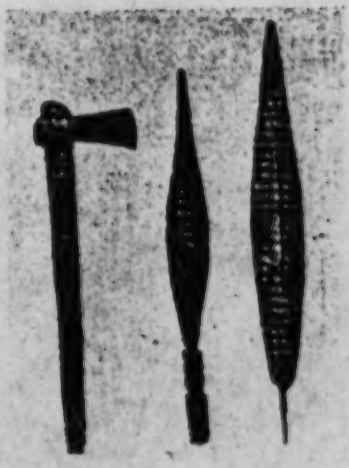
We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

372
412
535

Strike-a-light and flint. (Page 74)



Vedda axe and sudes

372
516

Fire making by rubbing sticks. (Page 74)

[Facing p. 74]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920). 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Lastly, there is the *hangotuwa* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakko-hatte* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom. 222 415 776

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuapa**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight. 222 [372]

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *hulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation* to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone. [587] 607 [782]

With smoking *hulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *hulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *hulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives. [412]

*"The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

†*Yothinawa* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Heibea, heibea, heibea.
Ma ninthagang hetunkee marilchee,
Ahi upang nawanthangis maihi helanay,
Maihi wai opuhara thenawa hithen,
Hamatheyan senthoeen opuaragana harwanhagena.
The hadey yanna, the hadey yanna, the hadey yanna.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from trees. Besides the *bambara* other species including the 222
small stingless bee supply a considerable quantity. The first two months of our sojourn in the Vedda country (January and February) was at a time when honey was particularly scarce, and even at the end of March and in April it was not abundant, yet such was the courtesy of the Veddas that each community managed to make us a small present of honey, though this often entailed a long search and the combs were frequently full of grubs. In two communities only, which were better off than the others, namely Danigala and Kulukalaeba, were we given large pots of strained honey, the remains of the previous year's store.

The manner in which *bambara* colonies are regarded as 262
property has been discussed in Chapter v. Writing in 1886 251
Nevill says, "Honey forms a great part of their diet. It is eaten fresh in large quantities, wax and all; combs with young bees in them being considered especially wholesome. It was also the practice formerly to store strips of dried meat in honey, filling in a cavity of some tree with it, the cavity being first lined with clay. At present they barter away their surplus [437]
meat and honey, during the hunting season, and keep no store for the rainy season. This often brings privation and is one cause of the rapid decrease in their numbers.

"They tell me their health is never so good as when their 262
food largely consists of yams and honey.

"To procure honey they rapidly cut open hollow trees, even 222
of the hardest wood; and to take the hives of the large black bambara bee, they make long ladders of cane, called 'rang [417]
kendiya,' by which they descend precipices, and cut off the combs adhering to their sides.

"They do this at night, generally, as the bees are not so savage then; and smoke them with a sort of resin. The hives are often cut off with a sort of wooden sword, made for the [413]
occasion. These frail ladders swing fearfully, and the task is so dangerous, only the boldest and most athletic attempt it. While engaged on the task they sing lustily, songs specially 222
made, which appease the spirit of the rock, and prevent him 533
from dashing the hunter off the ladder. They also go about

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 533 the work with songs, so as to get up a certain degree of excitement, necessary to carry them through the task. A song is chanted, and a little honey sprinkled for the spirits, before the combs are cut off the rock[1]."

222 413 415 Before honey collecting as many pots as possible are made and old pots and gourds are overhauled. The wooden sword which Nevill mentions is probably the *mastiya* (fig. 12). This is a stout stick about 2¼ metres long with four prongs at one end, which the Vedda carries hanging by a loop from his forearm and which he uses to detach the comb and convey it into the vessel called a *maludema* in which the honey is collected. This is also carried hanging from the forearm and should be made of deer's hide so that it may not be broken against the rocks as the honey collector swings to and fro. Plate LXV shows a *maludema* collected at Sitala Wanniya. An arrow is also carried and is largely used in detaching the combs from the rock.

222 476 Before taking the honey a bundle of green leaves is set alight and lowered in order to stupefy the bees. The smoker is called *ediya* (Sin. *kula*) and the creeper attached to it *yatawella*[2]. Several men of the community join together to collect rock-honey, the whole spoil being equally divided without any special consideration for the owner of the land, though it seemed that the owner would decide when the honey should be collected. The women accompany their men to crags and gulleys where the *bambara* build their combs. They hold torches and sing while the honey is being collected.

231 Plate LXVI shows a gourd, used as a hive for a colony of the stingless bee, hanging outside one

Fig. 12.
Mastiya × $\frac{1}{12}$.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

[2] For the use of these see Chapter IV where the pantomime of honey getting is described.

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the 226 water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *mahapata*, *puwalata* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *tiubiri* (*Diospyros embeopteris*) and *hukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

Plate XII

361

Fig. 1. Mixed Sinhalese and Vedda dance at Bandarawela

516
#115

Fig. 2. Uddha Vedda

[facing p. 42]

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords.

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter.

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of coconut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]."

Village Veddas of Tamankaduwa.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of intermarriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils.

Kiskotaliya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-breed. Their mode of life is similar to that prevalent at Dambani and Bulugahalandaw, i.e. they are occupied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their marriage and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaku.

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve mud huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1900.

Plate XVIII

342
516
415

Fig. 1. Philogrodogrigo rock shelter

Fig. 2. Part of Philogrodogrigo rock shelter

[facing p.84 b]

was a game which they encouraged. A lad of about thirteen collected some green leaves and tied them together with creeper, then taking an arrow, a toy *maslya*, and a broken gourd tied with creeper, which hung over his arm, for a *mahulama*, he set fire to the leaves and climbed the ladder[1]. While lowering the smoker and letting the smoke blow into the crevice in the rock where the comb was supposed to be, he pretended to cut round its sides with an arrow and thrust at it with his *maslya* (figure 3), from which he transferred the honey into the gourd. As he descended from the ladder he beat his chest and sides as though driving off the bees, and directly he reached the ground rushed into the jungle to escape from them, all the smaller children imitating him with great glee. Obviously this was a well-known and favourite game, for even the elders took part in it, throwing their cloths over their heads and running into the jungle.

At Henebedda (which we visited before Pihillegodagalge) there were no children present when we spoke about honey getting, but four young men were eager to show us how it was done and acted the scene with great spirit. They took from our camp a piece of white and a piece of brown paper, and fastened them with some wax to the roof of their cave, then as there was no tree above the cave around which to fasten a creeper, one man crouched on the top of the rock and held the ends of the ladder in his hands, another stood above and lowered a smoker of green leaves while a third climbed the ladder and collected the honey from the white paper and the grubs from the brown. Afterwards the collector divided the spoil equally and amid much laughter they all sat down and pretended to eat, one actually going through the pantomime of washing his hands after the meal. They eat the grubs as well as the honey.

As regards clothing, pedlars have brought them cloth for so long that no Vedda living knows what was done when they could not buy it, but it is generally stated that they made bark

[1] The *mahulama* is the vessel made of dendrite in which honey should be collected and the *maslya* the wooden four-pronged implement with which the comb is broken up and transferred to the *mahulama*. For figures of *mahulama* and *maslya*, see Plate LXV and figure 1 (p. 92) respectively.

796
535

Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot of food (Unuwatura Bubula)

[417
415]

Fig. 2. Ruwala ceremony, the *ruwala* prepared by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

[facing p. 262]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

532

Fig. 1. Rock drawings in Pihilagodagalge cave

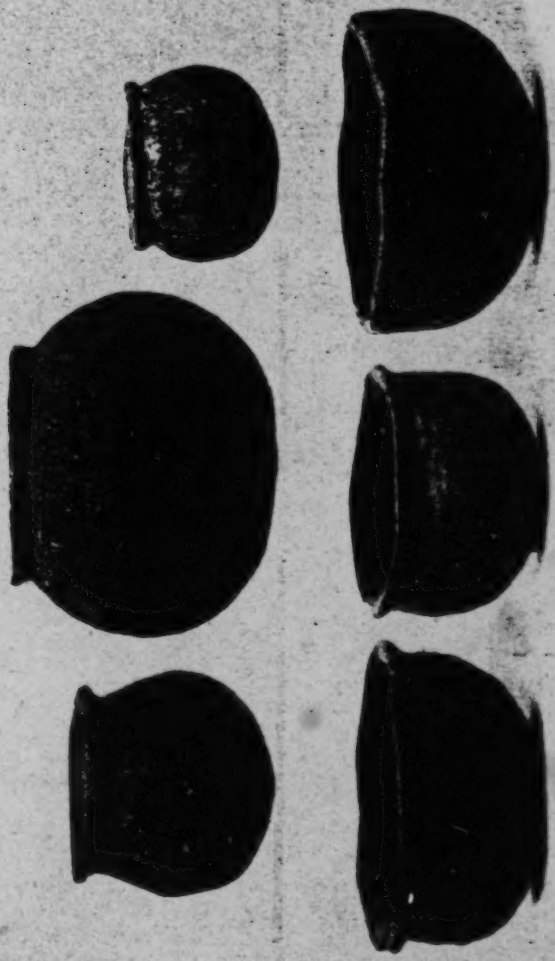
●415

Fig. 2. Rock drawings in Pihilagodagalge cave

[facing p. 328]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

323
415
531
Main EXH



Vedda pots

[facing p. 324]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 593 the work with songs, so as to get up a certain degree of excitement, necessary to carry them through the task. A song is chanted, and a little honey sprinkled for the spirits, before the combs are cut off the rock[1]."

222 413 415 Before honey collecting as many pots as possible are made and old pots and gourds are overhauled. The wooden sword which Nevill mentions is probably the *mastiya* (fig. 12). This is a stout stick about 2¼ metres long with four prongs at one end, which the Vedda carries hanging by a loop from his forearm and which he uses to detach the comb and convey it into the vessel called a *maludema* in which the honey is collected. This is also carried hanging from the forearm and should be made of deer's hide so that it may not be broken against the rocks as the honey collector swings to and fro. Plate LXV shows a *maludema* collected at Sitala Wanniya. An arrow is also carried and is largely used in detaching the combs from the rock.

222 476 Before taking the honey a bundle of green leaves is set alight and lowered in order to stupefy the bees. The smoker is called *adiya* (Sin. *kula*) and the creeper attached to it *yatawella*[2]. Several men of the community join together to collect rock-honey, the whole spoil being equally divided without any special consideration for the owner of the land, though it seemed that the owner would decide when the honey should be collected. The women accompany their men to crags and gulleys where the *bambara* build their combs. They hold torches and sing while the honey is being collected.

231 Plate LXVI shows a gourd, used as a hive for a colony of the stingless bee, hanging outside one

Fig. 12. *Mastiya* × $\frac{1}{12}$.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

[2] For the use of these see Chapter IV where the pantomime of honey getting is described.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1897-1900) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

415
281

Plate LXV

Deerskin vessel (machedenna) used for collecting honey

[facing p. 328a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXVII

415
281
276

Betel pouch made of monkey skin (Hambadda)

[facing p. 330]

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

261 beautiful species of Gardenia with fragant flowers and crimped
276 laurel-like leaves. These seeds or nuts are astringent and to me resemble exactly in taste those of the areca palm. They are only an occasional luxury however. The bark which he chews is almost a necessity to a Vedda, the leaves or seeds a mere luxury[1]."

[125] It is not always that the Veddas can obtain lime, which they
276 make by burning the shells of a land snail *wantaiko* (*Cyclophorus involutus*). The shells are laid on red hot pieces of charcoal, more glowing embers are heaped around and upon them, and the whole is fanned with a tuft of green leaves for a few minutes, when the embers surrounding the shells are raked away and the shells allowed to cool before being crushed and dropped into the vessel in which the lime is carried. This is
[415] often a tin match box or it may be a brass covered cartridge case. Specially made lime spatulae do not exist, but one Vedda of Henebedda had a long broad nail with which he removed the lime from his tin match box.

The betel pouch is usually a roughly sewn bag of trade
276 cloth, but the Henebedda Veddas also make pouches of monkey
415 skin, one of which is shown in Plate LXVII. We omitted to inquire how the hair was removed, but probably it was singed off, the whole skin being subsequently scraped.

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. I. p. 192.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
173 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *warige*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
241 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins
342 and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
415 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from
534 that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

Plate XIX

342
.415

Fig. 1. Settlement of Coast Veddas

[417]

Fig. 2. Settlement of Coast Veddas

[facing p. 332 b]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

away more frightened than you. A scratching noise under your pillow may lead to the discovery of a scorpion or a centipede. Beetles, moths, biting ants, and insects of all descriptions investigate and experiment with you. But you soon learn to ignore these little draw-backs and drowse to the lullaby of some wood-land songster.

Tropical Nature is a stern mistress; her favours are never unalloyed. For him who would seek her she holds grievances in store, grievances that enhance the very joy they encumber; toning down ecstasy lest it pall with surfeit; giving to the contemplation of foregone experience that unfettered pleasure the reality denies, prompting us in after years to say, forgetful of all the hardships, "those were happy days we had".

The Verugal where it joined the Mahaweli was at this season an insignificant stream. Quite a colony of tobacco growers flourished here. Very picturesque are these settlements or *thethes* as they are called. Four to six huts stand some distance apart in clearings along the bank, most of them beautifully overspread with melon-creepers. Every hut has its vegetable garden; and standing before them, like sentinels, are the draw-wells, usually in couples, that feed the tobacco plots direct from the river. The lowing of cattle under the superb trees that stud the clearing, the crowing of cocks, the sound of human voices complete the atmosphere of rural domesticity in this wild land and furnish scenes which would rejoice the heart of a painter.

Putting up one evening in a coconut grove owned by a Moor we found an unkempt ill-clad fellow seated on his haunches staring at some simple wares a pedlar was displaying. They told us he was a Vedda from a village some miles away. Becoming restless under our scrutiny he walked off. I followed him to his miserable shelter, where I found his daughter, a puny girl of four, covered with ulcers. Edging up towards her father she stared at us distrustfully with the eyes of a startled doe. A few broken pots were their sole belongings. The bond of tender solicitude that united these human derelicts, of no consequence except to each other, was indeed a touching sight. I asked the man what he did for a living. He said he "earned a rupee for two months work". He knew neither his nor his daughter's age, and when pressed for an answer said irritably, "What do I know of age? Am I a man who knows anything about age?" Blessed mortal!

We gave him a coin which he at first refused, and only accepted with persuasion; he had evidently never handled one like it before, for he looked at it puzzled and suspicious; and when the amount it represented was explained to him he was not enlightened.

"He knows nothing," said the Moor vociferously. "Ask him to count six and see if he can. He's a real bull. What does he know? He's a Vedda. For thirty-six cents he will bring a kerosene-tinful of *bambara** honey, and," he added chuckling with subtle satisfaction, "he does not know what thirty-six cents is!"

The next day we saw in the distance the blue contours of Gunner's Quoin, the goal of our journey. The river had now become considerably shallower with broad stretches of its sandy bed exposed. As we punted along the shady border, we suddenly came upon a most realistic piece of ancient sculpture—the life-sized head of an elephant carved out of a

*Rock-bee, *Apis dorsata*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

804 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trifuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
301
●415
516

"Their homes, the shelter of the trees." (Page 9)

142
291
622

Nakin and his family. (Page 9)

[Facing p. 9]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133

Dastota falls. (Page 39)

291
412
415

Sinna, a Vedda of Gunner's Quoin. (Page 42)

[facing p. 39]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 [103] to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though [262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They 287 fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that 281 ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, 415 stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and [534] manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *kalbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kathuru-pathaka* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

224
292
534
535

The Cluster in Perseus. (Page 4)

Nebula in Orion, photographed with a telescope. (Page 4)

281
287
415

The Nebula in Orion, photographed with the 60-inch telescope. (Page 4)

[Facing p. 49]

Lastly, there is the *hangotuwa* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakka-hatte* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom. 222 415 776

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bumbaru, bumbaru, bumbaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bumbaru thapa**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight. 222 [372]

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *bulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation† to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone. [58] 607 [782]

With smoking *bulas* looped to forearms and *mathe* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *bulas* mounted on the *mathe* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *bulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yakka* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives. [412]

* "The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

† Vathimanu it is called; and thus it goes:—

Mathu, mathu, mathu.

Ma vinthagung hatuthe mathiku.

Ahi ugung nanumthungin mathi kuhung.

Mathi ural ipuhuru thununa hithu.

Hunuthayan nathuna ugurugunu hurunuhugunu.

The baby yunna, the baby yunna, the baby yunna.

3; Spinal D-6 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
411
415
482

The finest Vedda we saw in Ceylon. (Page 95)

[facing p. 95]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XV

342
361
417

Fig. 1. Vedda settlement at Unuwatura Bubala

142
342

Fig. 2. Village Veddas of Dambani

[Facing p. 48]

Plate XXIX

796
787
535

[417]

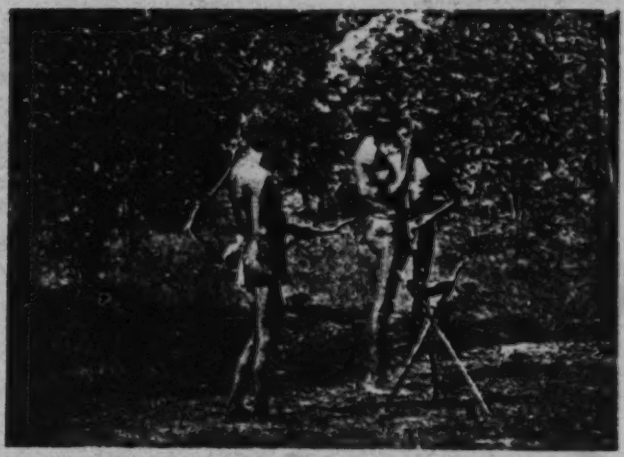


Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, censing the *ausde* and coconut (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *ausde* and coconut (Henebedda)

[facing p. 220]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
787
535
417

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the *bulatyahana* (Unuwatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman before the *bulatyahana* (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 238]

535
796

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, preparing the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[417]

Fig. 2. The Bambura Yaka ceremony begins by Handuna singing an invocation (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 a]

535
796

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar wounds the hunter (Sitala Wanniya)*

[417]

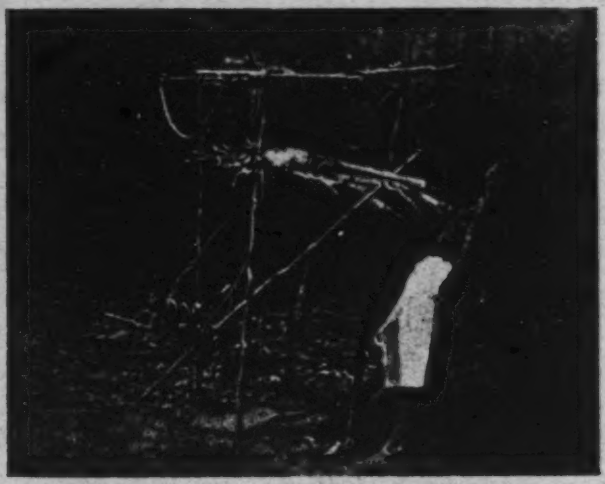


Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar is at length killed (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 b]

535
796
417

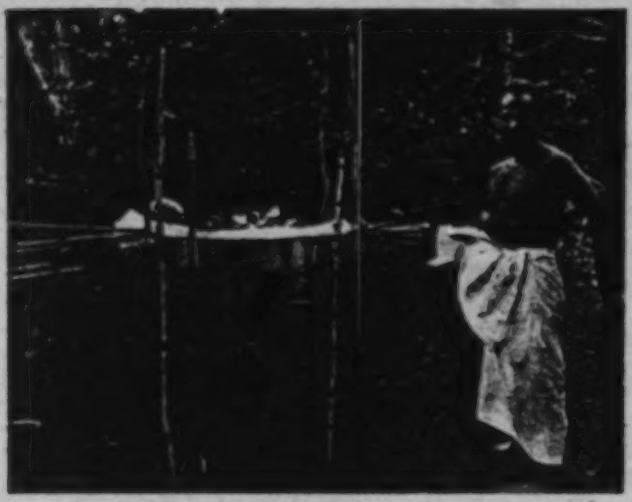


Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, offerings and properties prepared for the ceremony by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Wannaku kills the boar (Maha Oya)*

[facing p. 246]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann- E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot of food (Unuwatura Bubula)

[417
415]

Fig. 2. Ruwala ceremony, the *ruwala* prepared by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

[facing p.262]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Invocations to Bambura Yaka.

The invocations to Bambura Yaka are the most puzzling of all those we collected. None of our informants understood them and the translations given were fragmentary, or else we were told that although the words of the sentences could be translated so as to make some sort of sense, the significance of the invocation was unknown, or if appreciated did not necessarily agree with the meaning of the literal translation. Further, although it is certain that Bambura Yaka especially gives success in searching for yams and hunting pig, Mr Parker's translations make it quite certain that these invocations really apply to honey collecting. The reference to the "golden creeper," i.e. the ladder made of jungle creepers and used in taking honey, lowered across the face of the Inginiya rock makes this certain. Nevertheless both at Sitala Wanniya and Uniche, invocations with these expressions in them were recited as invocations to Bambura Yaka to send pig, and none of our informants regarded Bambura Yaka as having anything to do with honey. It may be suggested tentatively that the resemblance in sound of Bambura the home of the *yaka* and *bambara*, the word for the rock bee, may have brought about this confusion.

782
539
[222
417]

Sitala Wanniya.

XXVII. *Mē mage Bamburaṇi, Bamburaṇi. Mage Bamburō bat hadēt nāḍew nāḍew gala gala suniyaniyē.*

Mē mata muratapa gaḍu maḍānē maḍuhat hāpu hapapa sindu denē hapa no kiyandē. Mē kuḍā Inginiyā galapa hāpu ray wacla galat gala gala mē wara wasē goiā.

This is my Bamburā, Bamburā. While my Bamburā is eating rice make a sound, make a sound, "gala, gala"—save, save (him)—by magic.

At this very instant destroying the mounds (on the face of the rock) be pleased to give to the mouth that has eaten honey (the power to sing) songs (correctly and) not to speak nonsense. Save, save (both) the golden creeper that has been lowered down this little Ingiriya rock and the rock, (or otherwise) this time the rock will fall.

"Bamburō (pl.) and Bamburani are honorific forms of Bamburā. Compare *Maharajeni*, used in addressing a king.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from trees. Besides the *bambara* other species including the 222
small stingless bee supply a considerable quantity. The first two months of our sojourn in the Vedda country (January and February) was at a time when honey was particularly scarce, and even at the end of March and in April it was not abundant, yet such was the courtesy of the Veddas that each community managed to make us a small present of honey, though this often entailed a long search and the combs were frequently full of grubs. In two communities only, which were better off than the others, namely Danigala and Kulukalaeba, were we given large pots of strained honey, the remains of the previous year's store.

The manner in which *bambara* colonies are regarded as 262
property has been discussed in Chapter V. Writing in 1886 251
Nevill says, "Honey forms a great part of their diet. It is eaten fresh in large quantities, wax and all; combs with young bees in them being considered especially wholesome. It was also the practice formerly to store strips of dried meat in honey, filling in a cavity of some tree with it, the cavity being first lined with clay. At present they barter away their surplus [437] meat and honey, during the hunting season, and keep no store for the rainy season. This often brings privation and is one cause of the rapid decrease in their numbers.

"They tell me their health is never so good as when their 262
food largely consists of yams and honey.

"To procure honey they rapidly cut open hollow trees, even 222
of the hardest wood; and to take the hives of the large black bambara bee, they make long ladders of cane, called 'rang [417] kendiya,' by which they descend precipices, and cut off the combs adhering to their sides.

"They do this at night, generally, as the bees are not so savage then; and smoke them with a sort of resin. The hives are often cut off with a sort of wooden sword, made for the [413] occasion. These frail ladders swing fearfully, and the task is so dangerous, only the boldest and most athletic attempt it. While engaged on the task they sing lustily, songs specially 222
made, which appease the spirit of the rock, and prevent him 533
from dashing the hunter off the ladder. They also go about

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the huts in the Morane chena settlement at Henebedda. It was shown us with pride by Handuna who said he was keeping it for his twelve year old son. He told us that in the old days the hollow branches, the homes of colonies of these bees, were frequently kept in the rock-shelters.

The ladder with the help of which *bambara* honey is collected consists of a greatly elongated loop of cane, apparently derived from a species of *Calamus*, across which rungs of creeper are stretched. In Plate LV (p. 290) there can be seen the bottom of the ladder some fifty feet long, used for training the young, hung from the top of the cliff across the face of the rock mass at Sitala Wanniya. In spite of the fact that honey is usually gathered at night the Veddas do not travel or hunt at night and know only two stars by name. One of these is a star or more probably a planet which often appears close to the moon and is called *pantaru* which, we were told, is the name by which the Sinhalese know it. The other named star appears soon after sunset, always in the same place and before the other stars, and is almost certainly Venus; this is called *irabada tarna*, i.e. "side of sun star." Although the Veddas hunt in the dusk of the dawn the idea that anyone would roam about at night seemed absolutely ludicrous to them (Sitala Wanniya), they roared with laughter at it, "why should one go into the jungle? it would be too dark to see to shoot, besides bears are about, absurd idea," they laughed again, in fact it was quite ten minutes before Kaira had forgotten the joke.

MASTICATORIES.

All Veddas chew eagerly, but as they can rarely obtain a supply of areca nuts they commonly use instead of these the bark of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) and the *dawata* tree (*Carallia integerrima*). Concerning the other plants that they use as masticatories Nevill says, "They occasionally chew the leaves of several aromatic herbs, particularly *Anisochilus suffruticosus*, a sort of sage that grows on rocks. The areca does not grow wild in the Eastern Province, but Veddas are very fond of the seeds of the lakada bush, *Gardenia carinata*, a

Plate XIX

342
415

Fig. 1. Settlement of Coast Veddas

[417]

Fig. 2. Settlement of Coast Veddas

[facing p. 332b]

5. NESTS AND HIVES

This is the time to climb the steep;
Up through the shadowy woods to grope,
Over the stones where the lichens creep,
On to the crag that crowns the slope;
To the wild bees stronghold hushed in sleep.

J. STILL

NESTS

136 222 In dark fearsome caverns, and down the sides of dizzy ravines, the little edible-nest swiftlet builds its dainty nest fashioned of hardened saliva and moss. Those who think they know better will tell you that the all but invisible specks, sometimes seen high away in the empyrean at dusk, are flights of these birds on their way to the sea to gather salt foam with which to build.

222 One of the favourite pursuits of the Veddas is the collecting of these nests for barter. They call the birds *kudukarayas* (nest-makers) and their [439] nesting caves *kudu galges*. These caves are often deep gloomy recesses only entered with lighted candles (made by squeezing a column of bees-[373] wax round a central wick of cloth or bark) to scare away the scores of poisonous snakes (*karawalas* and *mapilas*) that gather there to eat the eggs and young. Sometimes the nests stud the steep sides of narrow [417] gorges, and are then taken by the aid of cane ladders let down from above.

The nesting-places are a secret the Veddas guard closely. When they took me on one of their expeditions it was on the condition that no bearers came. A hard climb brought us to near the summit of the tree-covered mountain side. "*Cho-ho-ho*," shouted the Veddas as a warning to possible bears. The approach to the cave was over-run with *aralu-wel* (used for bows) and *niyande* (of which waist strings are made). The cave itself, surmounted by an enormous rock the fall of which seemed imminent, was dark and stifling; and it was quite a time before one could discern the cup-shaped nests that clung in clusters to the vaulted roof. A Vedda handed me a parent bird he had trapped, a tiny-beaked, brownish thing, with sweeping wings, black feet and unswallow-like tail. It was quite a time too before one realised that there was a commotion in the air, and that little wraith-like forms were flitting in and out in sore distress "Swish, swish; wing, wing; twit, twit; kisiri, bisiri; takara, takara; kata, kata, kata," as from fairy castanets, came the barely audible sounds. Outside, these were louder, "Chara-chiris, chara-chiris; che-week, che-week, che-week," they twittered in futile resentment. But to these sounds the ruthless despoilers were deaf, as, mounted on heaps of stones, they scraped away with knife or arecanut cutter the trim nests from their tenacious attachments, leaving only those with eggs behind, lest the colony be killed outright. On a boulder near by [252] was a fire-place where the young had been roasted, as Kauwa of Divulana had described.

[p. 86]

222
417
481

"Over the edge." (Page 89)

222
373

Honey-gatherer, girt with torches and stake, ready to descend. (Page 89)

[Facing p. 87]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

HIVES

There are five varieties of honey bee in Ceylon :—The large *bambara* (*Apis dorsata*) that builds huge combs of very pure wax on bare hill sides and the large branches of lofty trees ; the *mee massa* (*Apis indica*) sweetest honey bee of all, whose combs are to be found in hollow trees, rock-clefts and within ant-hills ; the *dandual massa* (*Apis florea*), the smallest honey-bee in the world, that hives on rocks and boughs ; the *kanava massa* (Rosin or Dammar bee) a docile, stingless, friendly little creature whose long black combs within tree crevices yield a delicious, if heady, honey ; the *kotha massa*, an even smaller species, whose puny comb is hardly worth the taking. 222 136

Kanava and *kotha* combs are available all the year round ; they are the *pathinchikarayas* or stayers. If the Vedda is hungry it is for one of these he goes at a pinch. The *bambara* and *mee massa*, the most abundant honey makers, are seasonal in their habits ; and June and July are the great honey months ; the fruit season synchronising with this, marks these months as the festive time of the jungle ; then the Veddas leave their homes for caves and stream beds, take their fill, and have a surplus for barter. 222 [439]

On the flavours of honey the Veddas are connoisseurs. They can tell by tasting a comb the flower or medley of flowers that contributed to its making. That honey is relished most which prevails when the *mora*, *veera* and *galsembela* are in bloom. [151 262]

Honey gathering is the master art of the Vedda. Supreme as he is in other jungle crafts, he is supremest in this. As he travels through the forest he is alive to the faintest hum, and no hive, however concealed, escapes him. His adroitness in tracking a bee to its lair is well described in a delightfully euphonious song they have (beginning, *Thomba, thomba Gomba me-na-na*), that tells of a Vedda Thutha who goes on the honey quest with his brothers Gomba and Naga. Thutha leads in the trail of a particular bee ; and as he goes he sings to his brothers, indicating various trees in which bees are busy ; but not decoyed by these, and with his eye steadily on the bee he first sighted, he follows it, till eventually it guides him to its hive within the skull of an elephant—*kolanathe gatche* (tree without leaves) as he quaintly describes. [533]

The taking of any hive, other than that of the rock *bambara*, is a very simple thing for the Vedda. All he does is to climb the tree, steady himself at the hole containing the comb, and blow into it to drive the bees away. Then with his axe he enlarges the opening sufficiently to enable him to introduce a hand and secure the cache, stopping every now and then to blow inside or to slap an offending bee. He eats the comb at his perch, grubs and all, throwing down fragments to those below.

The *bambara* comb is quite a different proposition. These great bees build high on the precipitous sides of rocks ; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only. A dangling cane at Westminster Abbey gave us some idea of the daring of the enterprise. To reach the combs ladders of vines are lowered from the summit of the rock ; and down these the collector descends ; as this does not bring him within arm's length of the hives, he has usually to rely on the use of a long stake. Sometimes [417 481]

222 the hives are beyond the reach even of this: and then, though the honey itself may not be secured, the wax may, by being dislodged with long bamboos and collected at the foot of the hill; *ili bambara* (wax hives) such combs are called. There are others, so safe under prominent brows, that they are absolutely untakeable; *yakkini baliya* (she-demon's portion) is the name of them.

[417] When the rock is not too high, the ladder is made long enough to reach the ground, where it can be held slantwise close up against the face of the rock, bringing the gatherer within easier access of the hive. But where the hill is too lofty for this, as usually happens, the ladder hangs free, and the gatherer may even have to swing to and fro to enable him to get at the combs. Nor is this all; the *bambaras*, several of which may kill a man, have to be reckoned with; they can only be dispersed by heavy smoking; and, what is worse, when several hives are clustered together in a colony, the work has to be done on a pitch dark night.

Imagine then the picture of the man smothered in smoke, assailed by angry bees, swinging in the darkness two hundred feet or more above the stony earth, with neck and knee hitched to the ladder so as to leave the arms free to manipulate torch and prong. Is it a wonder that every Vedda is not a *kapunharaya* or cutter, but only the boldest of them; and that he, when he descends to his work, does so without thought in his heart of life or father or mother?*

222 417 234 We will now describe the scene as it actually takes place:—On Panihela were five large combs the Veddas meant to have one night. That morning they assembled on the rock. Their first business was to collect the canes and vines that go to the making of the ladder (*yathala*). Two canes, some twenty or thirty feet long and about an inch in diameter, were cut, dragged to the top of the hill, and lined out. Knotting the end of one to a tree they split it in half. One man, standing at the end, held these apart; while two others stood in between, constructing strong rungs at intervals of two feet with *kiriwel* creepers, which they first looped round the two halves of the cane and then bound together with a running twist. A ladder of any length may thus be constructed; for, should a single cane not be long enough, its ends are looped and interlocked with similar loops in another length of split cane. The ladder is finished off by overlapping and binding together the free ends in the form of an U. This is the type of ladder employed in the perilous descents; where the drop is easier they do not go to all this trouble, but merely split the end of the cane for a yard or so and tie a stick across; standing on this the man is lowered.

372 222 The ladder having been completed, the *hullas* or torches and the *matha* or forked stake are yet to make. The torches, four of which are required, are designed to give a maximum of smoke, and are therefore constructed by enclosing dry *mana* grass, leaves and bark within a sheath of green leafy twigs. The *matha* or *masleya* is a stake six feet long, made of the light *velang* or *walumala*; it is pointed at one end and forked at the other by being split cross-wise into four pointed prongs which are kept apart by two pieces of stick wedged in cross-wise and tied. Both *matha* and *hulas* have long loose loops attached to them by which they are slung to the arms when not in use.

* "*Pana opa hiyath wala bahinay; amma thatha opa hiyala.*"

C.&B.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

CHAPTER V

PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

421 All Veddas have a keen sense of ownership, and this is equally developed with regard to the hunting land of the group and the possessions of the individual. It was clear that of old the boundaries of the former were accurately known to all the men of the group and were seldom disregarded except in pursuit of a wounded animal, a contingency especially provided for by the Vedda game laws, and many writers have borne testimony to the unwillingness of Veddas to trespass on the territory of another group.

423 This was noted by Knox, whose remarks on this subject
609 have already been quoted on p. 7. The next mention of this important feature in the organization of the Veddas is made by the Dutch Governor of Ceylon, Ryklof van Goens (1664—1675), the following account being taken from the Drs Sarasin: "The jungle is so divided among the Veddas that every one can easily recognise his boundary...they leave, however, comfortable roads through the interior of their country, for their own purposes as well as for strangers who are obliged to travel from the hills to the plains and vice versa. Don Juan de Costa has told us of such a journey made in the service of Rajah Singha. It was 45 years ago (consequently in 1630) that he descended from the mountains to these Veddah districts. There he was stopped by an archer who was accompanied by others who, armed in a similar manner, stood under the trees. The first enquired his business, whither he intended travelling and what was his mission, whereupon he explained his purpose. He had then to wait there between one and two hours until

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Things new to them which we showed

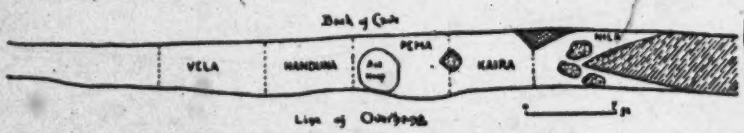
152 them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and
[522] most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character, but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous, and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman, but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela, half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well as the other men. Kaira, *baena* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *baena* to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives, keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately, it did not seem that any food was private property. One other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely, that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own division, but always put them all together in a particular

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251



[342] [423] 592

Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [595] 837

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. 'What would you do,' I asked a Veddah once, 'if your bow were stolen?' 'No one could steal it,' he replied, 'the dog would not let him.' 'But if anyone killed your dog?' His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 435

"And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic[1]. He never attempted to deny what he had done. 'It is true,' he said at the coroner's inquest, 'I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted for my support[2].'" 231 674

The following is a list of the names of dogs and bitches obtained from the Henebedda Veddas: 552

Dogs. Kapura, Kadiya (*kadi*, black ant), Muranduwa (obstinate), Hudena (white), Pandina (spotty), Dimbula, Boriya, Taniya, Tambula, Senba, Katakaluwa (black mouth), Bahira, Pulana, Kambiliya, Komiya (a Sinhalese corruption of "come here," the name of a dog belonging to the Korale of Nilgala).

Bitches. Pandi (spotty), Katakalu (black mouth), Handani (white), Dassi (clever), Dimbile, Makedi (like iron), Bosari, Hudu Valli, Mukulu.

The following list represents the usual property of an elderly Vedda, that is, of one of the influential men of the group, and actually records the property of Poromala (Walaha) the "senior" of the Henebedda Veddas; one axe, bow and arrows, three pots, a deerskin, a "flint and steel" and supply of tinder, a gourd for carrying water, a betel pouch containing betel cutters and some form of vessel or small box, perhaps of metal (e.g. an old brass covered cartridge case), for holding lime. Most Veddas also possess a certain amount of cloth besides that actually in use on their person, and Handuna was no exception to this rule. 422

Kaira of Henebedda had only two pots, but otherwise the list of his property is identical with that already given. Handuna

[1] "The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance."

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.*, pp. 186—187.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

422 of Sitala Wanniya had three dogs, an axe, bow and arrow, one pot, betel bag, betel cutters, "flint and steel" and gourd for carrying tinder.

428 It seemed that adult sons inherited most of their fathers' personal property, but certainly the sons-in-law had the right to receive something. We have no doubt that what actually occurs, or until recently occurred, is that the adult children and the sons-in-law talked over and decided who should have each article of property, the whole being fairly shared; or if the sons-in-law were well provided with goods the whole of the dead man's property might go to his sons; thus Poromala (Walaha) told us that when his father died, leaving an axe, a bow and arrows, a deerskin, "flint and steel" and a betel bag with accessories, he took the axe and bow and arrows, leaving the other articles to his brother Handuna. Poromala added that as elder brother the division of the property was his affair. When Poromala dies his property will be divided among his children, and it appeared that his eldest child, his daughter Tuti and her husband, would take the leading part in the distribution of his personal property. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya says that his property will be divided as follows; he has three dogs, each of his two sons and his *baena* will take one of these; his axe and bow and arrows will be divided between his sons; his son-in-law will take his strike-a-light and his wife his betel bag and its appurtenances and probably his pots. Handuna added that his landed property would naturally go to his sons, but pointed out that his *baena* had a right to demand any personal property he cared to have, though no *baena* would behave unfairly or badly to his father-in-law's sons.

At Godatalawa, where Handuna the "senior" of the group had no adult sons, it was said that his dog, axe and bow and arrows would be divided between his sons-in-law; his betel bag and his deerskin would go to his son, a boy of eight or ten, who would also take his rice mortar and divide his father's pots with his *baena*. From these examples, it will be clear that a man's personal property is fairly equally divided between his children, the daughters' shares being often nominally given to their husbands.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

422

In concluding these remarks on property we may refer to the list given by Rutimeyer (*Globus* 1903) of Vedda objects of personal property in the Basle Museum, these are:

(i) Bow and ordinary arrows with iron heads of different sizes.
(ii) Elephant arrows (i.e. ceremonial arrows or *aude*).
(iii) Simple sharpened wood arrows.
(iv) Boy's bow with wooden arrows, being an exact facsimile of the iron tipped arrows.
(v) Axes.
(vi) Digging sticks.
(vii) Drill for producing fire.
(viii) Apron made of the bast of *Antiaris toxicaria* (*riti* bark).
(ix) Tortoise shell from the Danigala used as a dish.
(x) Disc of wax from wild bees (trading asset).
(xi) Ball of bast cord for bow strings.
(xii) Fire lighting appliances with hollowed areca nut for keeping tinder.
(xiii) Earthenware pot hanging in a bast net.
(xiv) Pouch made of squirrel skin.
(xv) Kilt made of leaves.

To this Rutimeyer would add a *riti* bark bag, the message stick referred to in the anonymous report of 1820, printed by Le Mesurier[1], and clay figures and marbles mentioned by Stevens, in order to have "a rather complete inventory of all utensils of the 'Nature Veddas.'" This list, however, omits dried deer skins and the skin and wooden honey-collecting utensils described in Chapter XI. Further, no mention is made of beads, which are certainly much appreciated by even the wilder Veddas (cf. Chapter XI).

[1] "The Veddas of Ceylon," by C. J. R. Le Mesurier, *Journal Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, Vol. IX, 1886. The statement referred to will be found on p. 347 and runs as follows:—"They are totally unacquainted with letters, but the different tribes hold a rude correspondence with each other with small pieces of wood cut into different shapes. Fugitives used to be furnished with passports of this kind, when they removed from one tribe to another, and the treatment they received depended on the recommendation which the talisman conveyed."

202
211

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 422 [685]

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days. 648 685 [754]

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in goal, he might carry back with him some little civilization to his own people. 648

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist. [301]

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguano, and pengolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, 262

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Samba deer (*rusa Aristotelis*). [136]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakhan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *waruge*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirakodoi*, "nothing," is said

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Things new to them which we showed

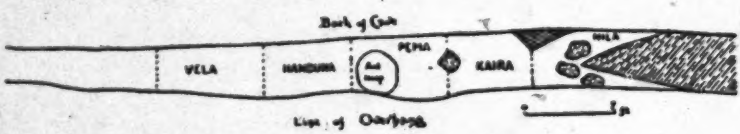
them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and
152 most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by
[522] a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character, but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous, and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman, but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela, half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well as the other men. Kaira, *baena* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *baena* to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives, keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately, it did not seem that any food was private property. One other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely, that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own division, but always put them all together in a particular

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251



[342] [423] 592

Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [595] 837

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER V

PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

421 ALL Veddas have a keen sense of ownership, and this is equally developed with regard to the hunting land of the group and the possessions of the individual. It was clear that of old the boundaries of the former were accurately known to all the men of the group and were seldom disregarded except in pursuit of a wounded animal, a contingency especially provided for by the Vedda game laws, and many writers have borne testimony to the unwillingness of Veddas to trespass on the territory of another group.

423 609 This was noted by Knox, whose remarks on this subject have already been quoted on p. 7. The next mention of this important feature in the organization of the Veddas is made by the Dutch Governor of Ceylon, Ryklof van Goens (1664—1675), the following account being taken from the Drs Sarasin: "The jungle is so divided among the Veddas that every one can easily recognise his boundary...they leave, however, comfortable roads through the interior of their country, for their own purposes as well as for strangers who are obliged to travel from the hills to the plains and vice versa. Don Juan de Costa has told us of such a journey made in the service of Rajah Singha. It was 45 years ago (consequently in 1630) that he descended from the mountains to these Veddah districts. There he was stopped by an archer who was accompanied by others who, armed in a similar manner, stood under the trees. The first enquired his business, whither he intended travelling and what was his mission, whereupon he explained his purpose. He had then to wait there between one and two hours until

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

word arrived from the elder of the district. Then one of the archers accompanied him to the boundary which took between two and three hours' walking. Here he had once more to wait until word arrived from the elders of this district, whereupon the first guide handed him over to a second and then returned. In this way the second guide brought him to a third, and the process continued until he had had more than twelve guides, being over seven days on the way before he reached the province of Batticaloa and the flat district which extended to the coast, and is inhabited by Tamils. He and his ten or twelve companions never suffered any want on the way, as the Veddahs supplied them with food, consisting of good dried venison which was preserved in honey, ground nuts (probably yams) and fruit. But none of the Veddahs spoke a word with him or his companions because it was so prescribed by their customs[1]."

423 609 [574]

Nevill's account of the life led by both the wilder and the more sophisticated "forest" Veddas has been quoted on pp. 81 and 82, in the chapter on Family Life. Nevill's experience was chiefly gained among the Veddas of the Bintenne, but if rather less emphasis be laid on the hut built "close to a place where water can be got," and it be realised that even during the hot dry season rock shelters are the common homes of the wilder Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road, all that he says on this subject can be implicitly accepted.

Commenting upon Nevill's account, the Sarasins point out that since trespassing on land belonging to another group leads to fierce quarrels, the condition described by Nevill must be taken to imply that the territory of each group includes the whole or a part of one considerable hill or rock *massif*. Our experience enables us to confirm this suggestion, and it will be shown later that not only are hills the property of particular groups, but that subject to the rights of the group there is also personal property in hills. Text figure 4 is a sketch map of the territory of the Henebedda Veddas, and roughly shows the position of their caves, which are named Bendiyagalge, Pattiavelagalge, Hitibeminigalge, Punchikiriammagalge, Uhapitagalge, Maladeniyagalge and Kirawanbalagalge. The last is almost

423 423 361 [103]

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 479.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423
361

too small and too exposed to be called a shelter, consisting as it does of a small space under an overhanging slab which offers scarcely any protection from the weather, for which reason it seemed that it was never used. Bendiyagalge, situated about the centre of the Henebedda territory, consists of two rock

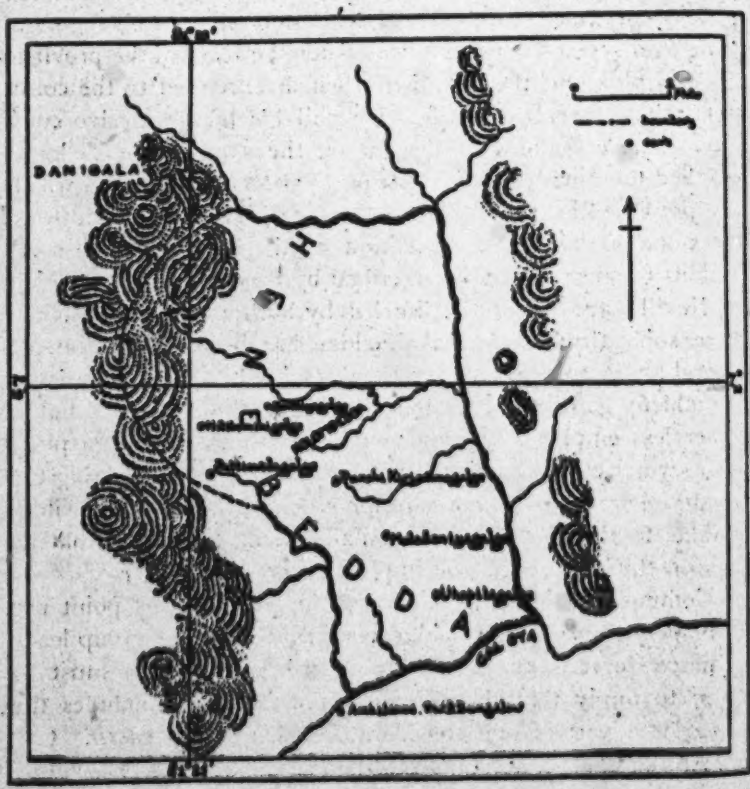


Fig. 4. Plan of the Henebedda territory.

shelters formed by a single mass of rock, broadly speaking, rectangular in shape, with its long axis running roughly from north to south. The rock mass is somewhat tilted so that its southern edge is high above the *talawa* towards which its northern extremity slopes, and the whole rock somewhat resembles an immense wedge. Its eastern face has weathered

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so as to form two rock shelters, each of which has a well-cut drip ledge in no respect differing from those admittedly cut by the Sinhalese about the time that Buddhism was introduced to the island, and the lower cave has in addition two square sockets cut in its roof resembling those discovered by Mr F. Lewis at Nuwaragala and figured by him[1]. Further, there are three steps cut in the solid rock shelters, and other smaller steps and signs of ancient working are to be found in the caves, though there are no inscriptions on the rocks of either of these caves, as there are below the drip ledge of Uhapitagalge.

Pattiavelagalge lies at a distance of rather less than an hour's walk to the S.W. of Bendiyagalge, at the base of the rocky hills forming the boundary of the territory of the Henebedda community. It was said that the name of this cave was derived from *pattia*, a place where cattle were tied, and *vela*, a field, the reason for the name being that about 100 years ago a Sinhalese chief, recognised by the Veddas as being partly of Vedda descent, was allowed to come and live here and pasture his cattle. This man may have been a fugitive during the rebellion of 1818, but this could not be determined with certainty. Hitibeminigalge lies a short distance due west of Bendiyagalge.

Punchikiriammagalge is a small shelter situated almost due south of Bendiyagalge and near the main track across the country. At the present day it is often used by Tamil gall-nut gatherers. Maladeniyagalge, about two miles from Ambilinne rest-house, is also much used by gall-nut collectors. Uhapitagalge, shown in Plate XVII, figure 2, has a well-carved drip ledge, beneath which is the inscription in Brâhmi characters referred to on p. 22.

The natural boundaries of the Henebedda territory as well as the fact that they still have as neighbours the Danigala Veddas, who exercise a jealous supervision of the border on that side on which there is no well-marked natural boundary, made this particularly easy territory to map out. The Sitala Wanniya territory, which we have attempted to delimit in text figure 5 was more difficult and its boundary is only an approximation.

[1] *Proc. Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, Vol. XIX, 1907.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423
361

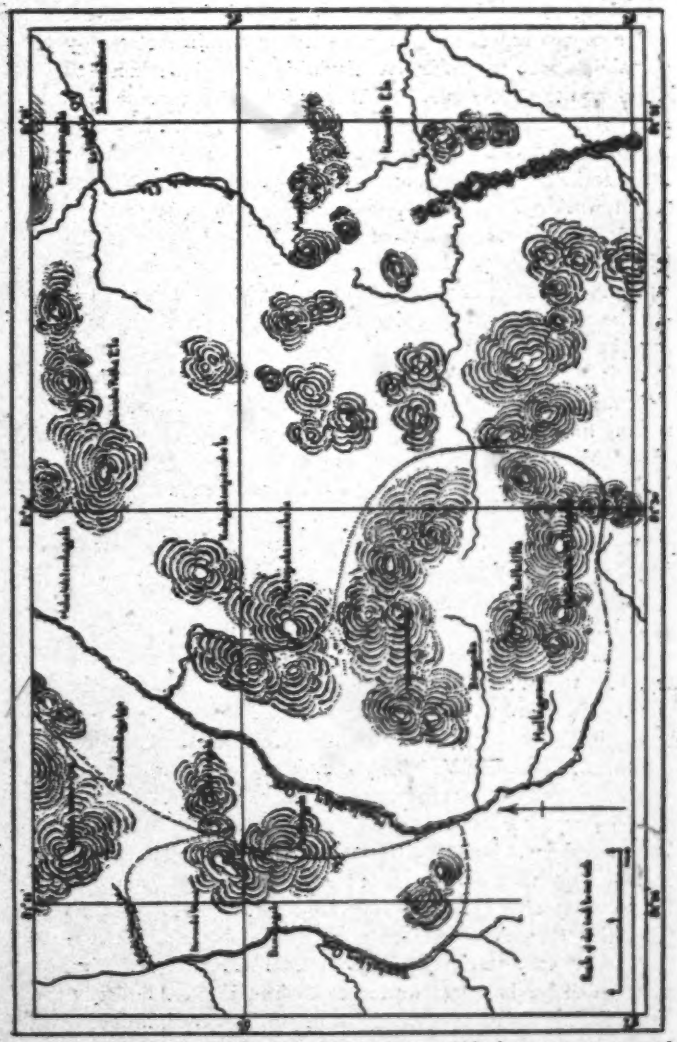


Fig. 5. Plan of Sitala Wanniya territory. All the country to the west of the dotted and broken lines is the property of the Sitala Wanniya community. The land belonging exclusively to Handuna and Nila is outlined !—|—|—, their common boundary line passing through Marinagala and the western portion belonging to Handuna. The land claimed by Kaira is indicated by —··—··, and where the boundary is doubtful by ·····. The country to the east is the property of the Veddas of Kovil Vanamai (Bandaraduwa).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nevill has pointed out that besides the territory of the group which is common land, every Vedda has "within this...a subdivision of his own which compares with the manor." In this he is no doubt right, though it was only at Sitala Wanniya that we were able to trace even approximately the hunting grounds belonging to individuals, which are theirs for the whole of their life, and descend to their heirs unless voluntarily alienated with the full consent of the group. So well is private ownership in a portion of land belonging to the group recognised in this community, that a man would not hunt even on his brother's land without the latter's permission; and if game started and wounded on his own land were killed on another man's domain, the man on whose territory the animal died would be given a portion of the flesh, apparently that side of the animal which touched the ground as the animal lay dead. Among other Veddas it was said half, or more generally a quarter, of the animal belonged to the man on whose land it died.

At Sitala Wanniya we not only found particular hills regarded as the property of individuals, but besides the big cave Pihilegodagalge, which was the property of the whole group of five families, there were smaller caves which were the property of the heads of individual families to which no others would have been welcomed, even had they thought of intruding. An exception was, however, made in the case of a man's *baena* (son-in-law), who we were told would naturally come and go as he pleased.

As has been shown in the chapter on Family Life, presents are often given at marriage, and these may take the form of personal property or hills or pools. In this section we shall deal with such transfers of real property, which in normal circumstances were made only to children and sons-in-law, and even then were not made over without the assent of every adult male member of the group. As this difficult subject does not lend itself to a general description, we shall limit ourselves to giving actual instances of land transfer with which we became acquainted.

When Vela of Sitala Wanniya married a woman of Bingoda his father-in-law gave him a piece of land in Marniye *pangua*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425 with a hill on it containing a cave called Marniyegalge and a
431 number of *bambara* colonies. He was also given a number of
583 pools in a river in Damenegama[1].

Handuna of Godatalawa on his marriage was given a hill with a cave in it called Balatgalagalge. This was handed over to him by his father-in-law and the gift carried with it the sole right to take rock honey on the hill, which was known to be the home of six swarms of *bambara*. Kaira Hudubandar son-in-law of Handuna of Godatalawa received on his first marriage a big pool in the Tota Oya river.

When Kumi the sister of the Vidane of Bandaraduwa married Tissahami, the bride's parents made over to her the hill Rajahele near Walimbagala, upon which there were about ten *bambara* colonies. Kumi also received Nalle Kotanwala, a stretch or pool—we could not determine which—in the Kalugal Oya. They also gave her husband the hill called Kuda Rasahele upon which six combs of the rock bee were known.

When Badapisi married, her father gave her husband Sinawa a hill called Bala Attahele on which there were known to be eight *bambara* colonies and a pool called Adanewala in the Kalugal Oya.

Tissahami the Vidane of Bandaraduwa received on his marriage the hill Maha Yakini Hela, upon which there were over twenty known *bambara* colonies[2].

With regard to these gifts of land we must record that although a man divides his landed property equally between his children in preparation for his death, property given at marriage to a son-in-law is counted as the daughter's share when the time comes for a man to make his final disposition.

When the land belonging to a Vedda group was not defined
423 by natural features, such as a stream or hill, a mark representing a man with a drawn bow was cut upon the trunks of trees along the boundary line. It is doubtful whether these marks are

[1] We believe this was a small stream, and the right to fish in it was not highly valued, partly perhaps because not many fish were caught, but also because Veddas do not often eat fish when they can get other flesh.

[2] The numbers of colonies of rock bees mentioned in these accounts are probably inaccurate, except perhaps in the case of the Bandaraduwa hills, for most Veddas became confused when attempting to count above five or six.

[602]

423
[342]

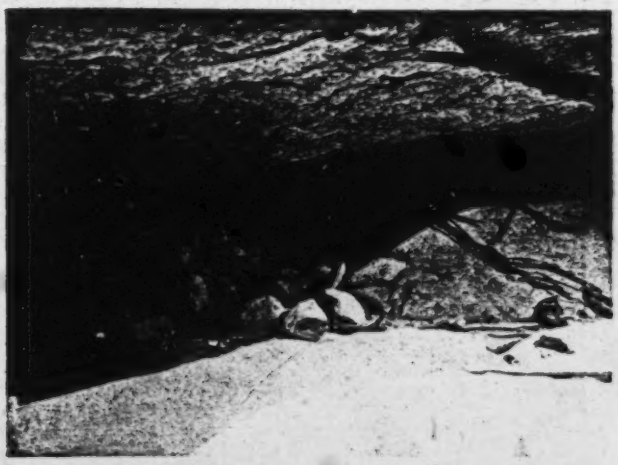


Fig. 1. Portion of Pihilegodagalge belonging to Kaira

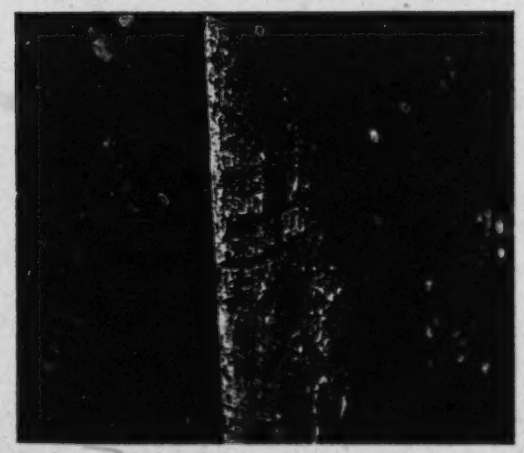


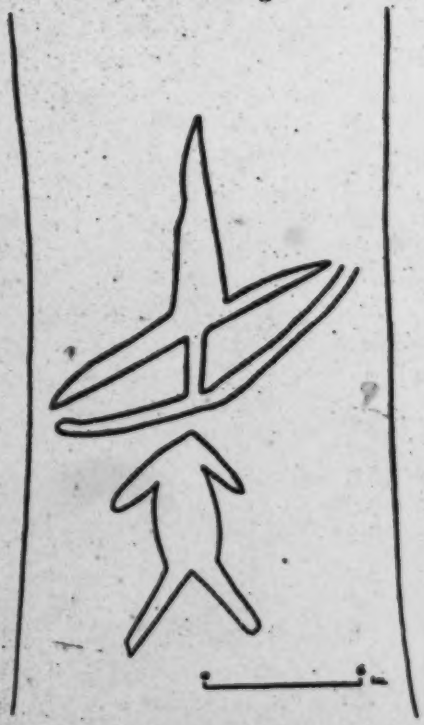
Fig. 2. Boundary mark cut by Handuna of Sitala/Wanniya

[facing p.112]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

made at the present day, but Handuna readily cut with his axe the mark shown in Plate XXII, figure 2, and of which a drawing to scale is given in text figure 6. 423

The sign of transfer of a hill, pool, or piece of land, was a stone; we heard of this from so many independent sources that we have no doubt that this was formerly the universal custom, 425



[423]

Fig. 6. Boundary mark.

but it was not until we reached Sitala Wanniya that we found people among whom this sign of land transfer was still in vogue. Here Handuna showed us a stone—a water-worn quartz pebble about the size of a filbert—which he assured us represented the "seisin" of his hunting ground. Besides one or more stones a tooth was commonly given to the new owner by the man handing over the land, but this was not essential, and if the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The near relations, including sons-in-law of the dying man, would come to him when death was expected, and it was a matter of duty for the sons or other near relatives to send information of a man's dangerous illness to his sons-in-law, and the latter would be justly angry if this information were withheld from them. We were never able to determine whether a son-in-law actually benefited by being present at his father-in-law's death, we believe that his presence was only an act of pious duty, and that he derived no increased right to the dead man's property by this. Certainly the land which came to a man at his marriage from his father-in-law would not be given to anyone else by the latter on his deathbed; we have, however, some reason to think that the unmarried sons of a man's sisters might, as the result of their attendance at their potential father-in-law's death-bed, be given land which otherwise would not have come to them until their marriage, or perhaps not at all. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya thought that a sick man might sometimes give his son-in-law a lock of his hair, but unfortunately it was not possible to discover under what circumstances, if any, this occurred. That land was commonly given to sons and not to sons-in-law by a dying man was clear from the very explicit statement made by Handuna, "My sons will naturally take my stones as evidence of their right to possess my land." With regard to the division of land between a man's children, it was pointed out that most people made their wishes on this point clear during their lifetime and it must always be remembered that no landed property passed without the consent of the grown men of the group.

It seemed that the borders of each group's territory were so well known to all the members that quarrels concerning land were very rare, trespassing upon another man's domain was almost unknown, though when it did occur it was strongly resented. Knox's account of something very like a pitched battle between two parties of Veddas which has already been quoted on p. 7 shows this, and we were everywhere told that until a few years ago a man trespassing on the territory of others might have been shot without fear of this provoking reprisals.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423 The care with which the seclusion of the rock-shelter is still maintained probably belongs to a different category of ideas, and is an example of the jealousy with which Vedda women are guarded.

423 At Sitala Wanniya we heard of the following method of settling disputes concerning boundaries, though Handuna my informant had never known of any example of a difficulty of this kind arising, and had only heard of the method of settling them from his father and father-in-law. When two Veddas, or groups of Veddas, are not satisfied as to the position of a boundary, the disputants each bring their "seisin" stone to the land over which the quarrel has arisen. Here the stones are placed in pots upon supports of the kind used in the Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandarasduwa (Plate XXXVI, figure 1). When this has been done the disputants invoke certain spiritual agencies, but who these are my informants could not tell me. As a result of this, a wild animal, usually an elephant, would come and destroy the pot set up by the party wrongfully claiming the tract of land.

231 Every Vedda has one or two dogs with which he does not readily part, though with characteristic generosity he is ever willing to give away pups to any of his friends or relatives. Vedda dogs are invariably well fed and well treated, and it was clear that the warmest feelings exist between a man and his dogs. As evidence of the importance of dogs in the community we may cite their use as wedding gifts and refer to the process of anointing them with a part of the offering dedicated to the *yaku* described in Chapter VI. Bailey's account of the relation of Vedda dogs to their masters brings out so much of this feeling that it is quoted here at length. "They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued....

"But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his 231 possessions he values most his bow, which is placed under his 435 head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. [361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in [241] wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; [224] and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gâté, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticalao boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 According to my authority the Veddas indulged in no games, unless, indeed, the custom of tossing dry leaves in the air and speculating on their position when they fell back upon the ground could be called a game. This, I am told, was only an occasional recreation, and indulged in by boys alone.

423 614 628 The limits of the hunting ground were jealously guarded by the Veddas, and anything like poaching by the members of one clan in the area recognized as belonging to another was punishable by death. Should a hunter lose his way and fall into the hands of a neighbouring clan, he would be closely watched, remaining for the time being in a sort of captivity. If the man's conduct during that time was such as to disarm suspicion he was permitted to go, and might even be accompanied to the confines of the clan's hunting ground, but he would have to proceed at once without looking back, or his conduct might lead to the belief that he was a spy, with fatal consequences.

226 The method of fishing was to hem in a piece of water by closely fencing in both ends of the stream. People would then enter the enclosed piece of water, armed with slender sticks, thrashing the water therewith till a fish was actually struck, when it would be captured. I saw this actually done in one pool on the Kumbukkan.

173 My informant told me that the Veddas were at one time harassed by a race of pygmy people, called the Nittawo, who lived in the country known as Lenama, that extended from Bagura in the Panawa Pattu in the east to the confines of the Kattaragama hills on the west.

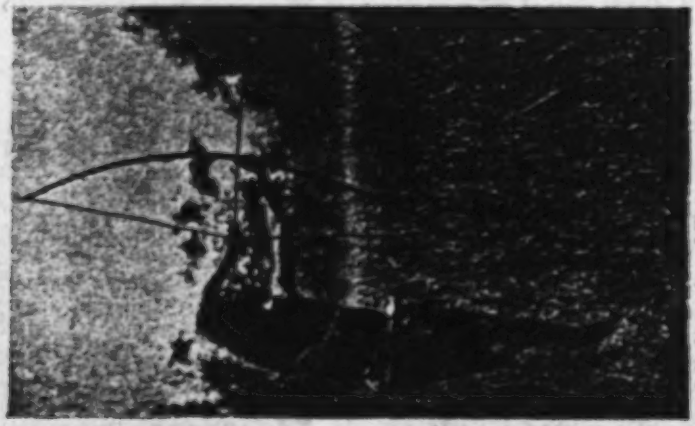
According to him, these people lived in small troops of from 10 to 40, inhabiting caves, hollow trees, and crevices of precipices. They were about 3 feet or a little more in height, exactly like normal human beings, only in miniature. Their legs were hairy like those of the Wanduroo; they walked erect, and had no tails.

Their arms were short and very powerful, with strong hands, and talon-like finger-nails with which they tore and disembowelled whatever they captured. These generally were small animals, such as hare, mouse-deer, monkeys, iguanas, and tortoises. Their method of attack was by surrounding

423
614

Boundary tree marked with bow mark or *dhuss hena*. ((Page 79)

411



A Vedda archer of Bintenne. (Page 76)

[Facing p.77]

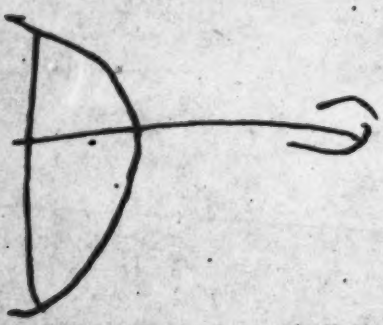
4. VEDDA JUNGLES

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them

ISAIAH.

THE forests we were now in were the immemorial haunts of the Veddas of Bingoda, Galmede and Sittala Wanniya. They stretched from Bingoda to Newaragala, and included such famous Vedda hills as Walimbe (Friar's Hood) and Bandaradua. The Magalavatan Aar cleaves this country on its way to Unichi tank. The jungle is virginal, but one is surprised to find here an occasional guava bearing luscious fruit, and much wild cinnamon. *Palu* and *veera*, so abundant in the more southern forests, is wanting here. 131 [137]

Nowhere is the Vedda more at home than in this wilderness, intersected by game trails only known to him and wild animals, and studded with the rocks that hold his caves. This land is all their wealth. By old Vedda law it is divided into *panguas* or shares, marked off by such natural landmarks as streams, rocks, or conspicuous trees scored with the *dhunu hena* (bow mark) distorted beyond recognition with age. The *panguas* of the Bingoda Veddas are six:—(1) Madana-gama; (2) Marana-pangua: (3) Kumburu-wella-gama (kuda and maha): (4) Bingoda: (5) Kakalana-bokke: (6) Bandaradua. Of these, the first three are included under the name Galmede and are now the property of Suthu Banda; the last three are Kaurala's. Each of these divisions, in days of greater prosperity, had its own chieftain. 423 614



Dhunu-hena or bow mark drawn by Vedda

It is to the credit of these Veddas that they alone of all the Veddas in Ceylon can still name their shares, indicate their boundaries, and observe the traditional law of non-transgression, hunting only in their allotted spheres. Suthu Banda, for instance, would not take the swiftlets' nests on Walimbe because they were Kaurala's by right; nor would he break the hives beyond Newaragala because those lands, once Vedda, have now lapsed to the Sinhalese.

Land goes to the eldest child whether son or daughter; failing them to the nephew. In the old days the proofs of inheritance were a white stone (*kirivanagala*) and molar tooth, bound together with a wisp of human hair; later the *ola* supplanted it; and still later a paper document issued by Government, and so carefully hidden away that it was invariably eaten by termites! These people, it would appear, were wiser than Government in their choice of a seizin. 428

[p. 79]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

423 But what irony is all this talk of chiefs and clans and possessions, where
656 only a mere handful of spiritless people is concerned. The Veddas alone recognise their boundaries, Government does not. Quite rightly they are not permitted to fell their forests without sanction, or to give their lands away; for what would be easier than to cozen such simple folk. These Veddas may cultivate *chenas* with permission from Government but without tax; a privilege they are impotent to avail themselves of, and are still hunters enough to disregard, whether under encouragement or compulsion. "What lands have the Veddas now?" lamented Kaurala "Our rightful lands! Why should we be deprived of them? The earth of our land is honey to us". And in those words he spoke the doom of his race.

Let us leave the last of the Veddas alone, and not try to fashion them to our ways; for that would kill them the sooner. Let them die out, scattered in their lonely jungles, the hunters they have always been. A few decades hence and the Vedda will be but a name.

651 Not every Vedda is exempt from taxation. I believe those in the Eastern Province are taxed, while those of Uva are not. Why this distinction, it is hard to understand; except for the plea that nowadays it is difficult to say who is a Vedda and who not. But, in cases of doubt, the conditions of life that characterise a particular community should be the criterion that influences the decision, favourably or otherwise. It does seem hard that these poor people, who never handle a single cent from one year's end to another, and have barely a rag with which to cover their nakedness, should have to pay a tax of two rupees with the richest in the land! In default of payment, a penalty of some ten days' work on the roads is imposed; an equitable provision on the face of it; but what of the family with the bread-winner thus engaged? After all, these people only live from day to day; and even sickness very often means starvation.

241 As for *chena* cultivation,* there can be little doubt that it is the one form
311 of agriculture, best suited to the primitive folk of the arid forests; but a serious attempt should be made to better the wasteful methods now in
656 vogue. I remember once travelling through a Province where a progressive, but misguided policy—as applied to these parts—prevailed: *chena* licences had been with-held that year with a view to enforcing paddy cultivation; (in such forests! and among such folk!). The result was disastrous. It was heart-rending to see the starved, emaciated villagers Sinhalese and Veddas alike, digging out wild, unsavoury yams from
261 the baked ground. They would have given their lives for a little *kurrukhan* or maize, which was nowhere to be had.

Chenas represent a very primitive and wasteful form of agriculture. In June of each year an area of jungle is leased by several families. The trees are felled, and burnt two weeks later. The land is then cleared, except for a residue of charred trunks. Temporary huts are suitably disposed, and the whole surrounded by a fence-work of burnt logs, so strong that it must be proof against elephants, so tall that it must top the sambur's leap, so close that it must keep out the hare. By August this work is completed.

In September the crops are sown :—Maize or *irinda* which takes 4 months, and manioc which takes a year to mature; vegetables such as pumpkins, melons and beans (*pukul, wattaka, thimbiri, kakiri, leema*); yams such as *kuhul-alla, wal-alla, watapol, kodol*. In October and November, *kurrukhan*, chillies, green-gram, and perhaps a little paddy is planted.

During February, March, and April the *kurrukhan* and maize crops are harvested—or rather what is left of them when the elephants and drought have had their say

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nevill has pointed out that besides the territory of the group which is common land, every Vedda has "within this...a subdivision of his own which compares with the manor." In this he is no doubt right, though it was only at Sitala Wanniya that we were able to trace even approximately the hunting grounds belonging to individuals, which are theirs for the whole of their life, and descend to their heirs unless voluntarily alienated with the full consent of the group. So well is private ownership in a portion of land belonging to the group recognised in this community, that a man would not hunt even on his brother's land without the latter's permission; and if game started and wounded on his own land were killed on another man's domain, the man on whose territory the animal died would be given a portion of the flesh, apparently that side of the animal which touched the ground as the animal lay dead. Among other Veddas it was said half, or more generally a quarter, of the animal belonged to the man on whose land it died.

At Sitala Wanniya we not only found particular hills regarded as the property of individuals, but besides the big cave Pihilegodagalge, which was the property of the whole group of five families, there were smaller caves which were the property of the heads of individual families to which no others would have been welcomed, even had they thought of intruding. An exception was, however, made in the case of a man's *baena* (son-in-law), who we were told would naturally come and go as he pleased.

As has been shown in the chapter on Family Life, presents are often given at marriage, and these may take the form of personal property or hills or pools. In this section we shall deal with such transfers of real property, which in normal circumstances were made only to children and sons-in-law, and even then were not made over without the assent of every adult male member of the group. As this difficult subject does not lend itself to a general description, we shall limit ourselves to giving actual instances of land transfer with which we became acquainted.

When Vela of Sitala Wanniya married a woman of Bingoda his father-in-law gave him a piece of land in Marniye *pangua*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425 with a hill on it containing a cave called Marniyegalge and a
431 number of *bambara* colonies. He was also given a number of
583 pools in a river in Damenegama[1].

Handuna of Godatalawa on his marriage was given a hill with a cave in it called Balatgalagalge. This was handed over to him by his father-in-law and the gift carried with it the sole right to take rock honey on the hill, which was known to be the home of six swarms of *bambara*. Kaira Hudubandar son-in-law of Handuna of Godatalawa received on his first marriage a big pool in the Tota Oya river.

When Kumi the sister of the Vidane of Bandaraduwa married Tissahami, the bride's parents made over to her the hill Rajahele near Walimbagala, upon which there were about ten *bambara* colonies. Kumi also received Nalle Kotanwala, a stretch or pool—we could not determine which—in the Kalugal Oya. They also gave her husband the hill called Kuda Rasahele upon which six combs of the rock bee were known.

When Badapisi married, her father gave her husband Sinawa a hill called Bala Attahele on which there were known to be eight *bambara* colonies and a pool called Adanewala in the Kalugal Oya.

Tissahami the Vidane of Bandaraduwa received on his marriage the hill Maha Yakini Hela, upon which there were over twenty known *bambara* colonies[2].

With regard to these gifts of land we must record that although a man divides his landed property equally between his children in preparation for his death, property given at marriage to a son-in-law is counted as the daughter's share when the time comes for a man to make his final disposition.

423 When the land belonging to a Vedda group was not defined by natural features, such as a stream or hill, a mark representing a man with a drawn bow was cut upon the trunks of trees along the boundary line. It is doubtful whether these marks are

[1] We believe this was a small stream, and the right to fish in it was not highly valued, partly perhaps because not many fish were caught, but also because Veddas do not often eat fish when they can get other flesh.

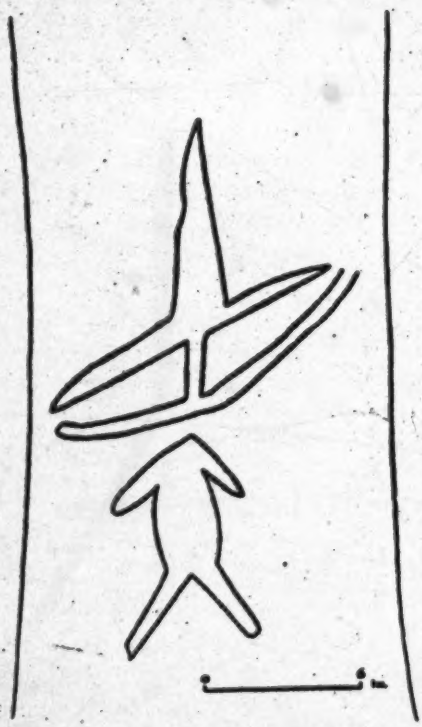
[2] The numbers of colonies of rock bees mentioned in these accounts are probably inaccurate, except perhaps in the case of the Bandaraduwa hills, for most Veddas became confused when attempting to count above five or six.

[602]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

made at the present day, but Handuna readily cut with his axe the mark shown in Plate XXII, figure 2, and of which a drawing to scale is given in text figure 6. 423

The sign of transfer of a hill, pool, or piece of land, was a stone; we heard of this from so many independent sources that we have no doubt that this was formerly the universal custom, 425



[423]

Fig. 6. Boundary mark.

but it was not until we reached Sitala Wanniya that we found people among whom this sign of land transfer was still in vogue. Here Handuna showed us a stone—a water-worn quartz pebble about the size of a filbert—which he assured us represented the "seisin" of his hunting ground. Besides one or more stones a tooth was commonly given to the new owner by the man handing over the land, but this was not essential, and if the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425 donor had not kept his old teeth as they fell out no attempt was made to find a substitute[1].

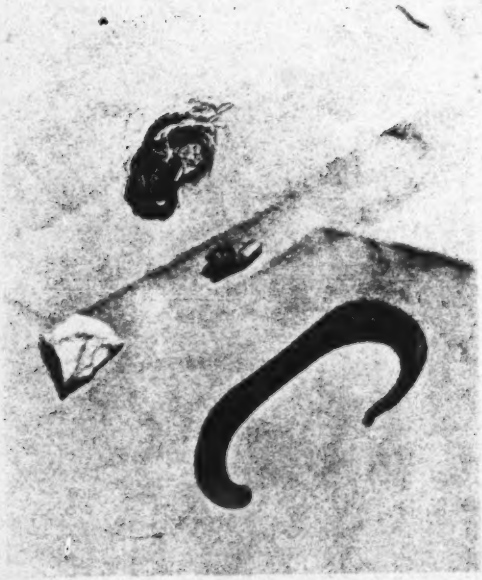
425 428 It was said that sometimes the donor would add his flint and steel to the stone and tooth; we believe, though we are not certain, that this was only done when land was passed as the result of a death, in which case a lock of hair from the head of the dying man was added to the other objects and became a most important part of the "seisin." The lock of hair would only be cut from the head of the sick or dying man at his own request by the man to whom his land would pass, who would cut the lock with an arrow. It was necessary that the sick man should be conscious and that he should himself give the lock to his heir, to whom he might say, "If there is any dispute after my death show this to whoever gives you trouble." Plate XXIII represents the "seisin" of certain land at Damenegama given by the last Vedda of the group to whom the land in question belonged, to the father of Tissahami the Vedda Arachi referred to on p. 41. The "seisin" here shown consists of a lock of hair, a tooth, a metal strike-a-light and a piece of milky quartz. All these objects were sent for our inspection in an old Kandyan embroidered betel bag in which it was said they were always kept, but we had no opportunity of discussing their significance with the Arachi and thus cannot say whether the quartz stone belongs to the strike-a-light or is an essential part of the "seisin." It was explained that a Vedda would not give land to a Sinhalese under ordinary circumstances, but only when a Vedda is the last of his folk and knows not where to turn for food and shelter. The father of the Arachi only obtained the Damenegama land because the last of the local Veddas was a very old man, so forlorn and feeble that he could no longer provide for himself and his wife. He accordingly made over his land to the father of the Arachi, in return for food and shelter for the rest of his and his wife's days. Probably the fact that the man who took over the land had Vedda blood in his veins and had always associated with the Veddas made the transaction easier.

[1] Teeth are generally kept. Some of the older Veddas were literally very "long in the tooth"; as the gums recede in old age the teeth loosen and fall out (*pyorrhœa alveolaris*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425
428
372

Plate XXIII



Seisin consisting of hair, tooth, quartz fragment, and strike-a-light

[facing p. 114]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425 donor had not kept his old teeth as they fell out no attempt was made to find a substitute[1].

425 It was said that sometimes the donor would add his flint and steel to the stone and tooth; we believe, though we are not certain, that this was only done when land was passed as the result of a death, in which case a lock of hair from the head of the dying man was added to the other objects and became a most important part of the "seisin." The lock of hair would only be cut from the head of the sick or dying man at his own request by the man to whom his land would pass, who would cut the lock with an arrow. It was necessary that the sick man should be conscious and that he should himself give the lock to his heir, to whom he might say, "If there is any dispute after my death show this to whoever gives you trouble." Plate XXIII represents the "seisin" of certain land at Damenegama given by the last Vedda of the group to whom the land in question belonged, to the father of Tissahami the Vedda Arachi referred to on p. 41. The "seisin" here shown consists of a lock of hair, a tooth, a metal strike-a-light and a piece of milky quartz. All these objects were sent for our inspection in an old Kandyan embroidered betel bag in which it was said they were always kept, but we had no opportunity of discussing their significance with the Arachi and thus cannot say whether the quartz stone belongs to the strike-a-light or is an essential part of the "seisin." It was explained that a Vedda would not give land to a Sinhalese under ordinary circumstances, but only when a Vedda is the last of his folk and knows not where to turn for food and shelter. The father of the Arachi only obtained the Damenegama land because the last of the local Veddas was a very old man, so forlorn and feeble that he could no longer provide for himself and his wife. He accordingly made over his land to the father of the Arachi, in return for food and shelter for the rest of his and his wife's days. Probably the fact that the man who took over the land had Vedda blood in his veins and had always associated with the Veddas made the transaction easier.

[1] Teeth are generally kept. Some of the older Veddas were literally very "long in the tooth"; as the gums recede in old age the teeth loosen and fall out (*pyorrhœa alveolaris*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425
428
312

Plate XXIII

Seisin consisting of hair, tooth, quartz fragment, and strike-a-light

[facing p. 114]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The near relations, including sons-in-law of the dying man, would come to him when death was expected, and it was a matter of duty for the sons or other near relatives to send information of a man's dangerous illness to his sons-in-law, and the latter would be justly angry if this information were withheld from them. We were never able to determine whether a son-in-law actually benefited by being present at his father-in-law's death, we believe that his presence was only an act of pious duty, and that he derived no increased right to the dead man's property by this. Certainly the land which came to a man at his marriage from his father-in-law would not be given to anyone else by the latter on his deathbed; we have, however, some reason to think that the unmarried sons of a man's sisters might, as the result of their attendance at their potential father-in-law's death-bed, be given land which otherwise would not have come to them until their marriage, or perhaps not at all. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya thought that a sick man might sometimes give his son-in-law a lock of his hair, but unfortunately it was not possible to discover under what circumstances, if any, this occurred. That land was commonly given to sons and not to sons-in-law by a dying man was clear from the very explicit statement made by Handuna, "My sons will naturally take my stones as evidence of their right to possess my land." With regard to the division of land between a man's children, it was pointed out that most people made their wishes on this point clear during their lifetime and it must always be remembered that no landed property passed without the consent of the grown men of the group. 763 428

It seemed that the borders of each group's territory were so well known to all the members that quarrels concerning land were very rare, trespassing upon another man's domain was almost unknown, though when it did occur it was strongly resented. Knox's account of something very like a pitched battle between two parties of Veddas which has already been quoted on p. 7 shows this, and we were everywhere told that until a few years ago a man trespassing on the territory of others might have been shot without fear of this provoking reprisals. 423 685

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

422 of Sitala Wanniya had three dogs, an axe, bow and arrow, one pot, betel bag, betel cutters, "flint and steel" and gourd for carrying tinder.

428 It seemed that adult sons inherited most of their fathers' personal property, but certainly the sons-in-law had the right to receive something. We have no doubt that what actually occurs, or until recently occurred, is that the adult children and the sons-in-law talked over and decided who should have each article of property, the whole being fairly shared; or if the sons-in-law were well provided with goods the whole of the dead man's property might go to his sons; thus Poromala (Walaha) told us that when his father died, leaving an axe, a bow and arrows, a deerskin, "flint and steel" and a betel bag with accessories, he took the axe and bow and arrows, leaving the other articles to his brother Handuna. Poromala added that as elder brother the division of the property was his affair. When Poromala dies his property will be divided among his children, and it appeared that his eldest child, his daughter Tuti and her husband, would take the leading part in the distribution of his personal property. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya says that his property will be divided as follows; he has three dogs, each of his two sons and his *baena* will take one of these; his axe and bow and arrows will be divided between his sons; his son-in-law will take his strike-a-light and his wife his betel bag and its appurtenances and probably his pots. Handuna added that his landed property would naturally go to his sons, but pointed out that his *baena* had a right to demand any personal property he cared to have, though no *baena* would behave unfairly or badly to his father-in-law's sons.

At Godatalawa, where Handuna the "senior" of the group had no adult sons, it was said that his dog, axe and bow and arrows would be divided between his sons-in-law; his betel bag and his deerskin would go to his son, a boy of eight or ten, who would also take his rice mortar and divide his father's pots with his *baena*. From these examples, it will be clear that a man's personal property is fairly equally divided between his children, the daughters' shares being often nominally given to their husbands.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

slipping. Such ceremonial arrows are generally heirlooms, not necessarily passing from father to son but rather being handed down in apostolic succession from shaman to shaman, and among the village Veddas of Bintenne I have handled one such blade with a history running back for five generations.

Figure 8 shows two ceremonial arrows which we were able to collect. Besides these we saw similar *aude* at Omuni and were told at Sitala Wanniya that Handuna had formerly possessed one. Rutimeyer has figured one of these ceremonial arrows about 14 inches long, obtained from Kaira the "senior" of the Danigala Veddas. These arrows are carefully preserved by the shaman, and just as he himself observes certain dietetic rules, avoiding eating pig and fowl which are supposed to be particularly repulsive to the *yaku*, so among those more sophisticated communities who believe in the periodical uncleanliness of women, special precautions are taken to avoid the possible contamination of the *aude*[1]. This is generally done by keeping them in some comparatively remote spot such as a cave or in the roof thatch. It is necessary that the shaman should hold one of these arrows in his hand when invoking Kande Yaka; he should also have one for Bilindi Yaka, though as a matter of practice Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were often invoked using the same *aude*, another *aude* being reserved for invoking the *Nae Yaku*. Both arrows were, however, commonly held in the hands during the whole of the *Nae Yaku* ceremony, but in spite of this no confusion seemed to arise nor had the onlookers the least difficulty in saying which *aude* belonged to Kande Yaka whenever they were asked.

The offering of rice in the pot would be stirred with the *aude*, and betel leaves might be ceremonially transfixed with it. Among the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula the testing of the quality of the food provided for the *yaku* was performed with the help of the *aude*, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka using the *aude* to remove from the pot a few grains of rice which the *yaku* in the person of the shaman several times examined before expressing his approval of the offering provided.

[1] The belief in the periodical uncleanliness of women has been borrowed from the Sinhalese. It did not exist in the "wildest" group we met with, on the other hand we found it among all the more sophisticated Veddas, attaining a maximum where these had come under foreign influence.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ignorant—the evidence for the use of jewellery or personal ornaments worn for their own sake is limited to the former wearing of ear ornaments by the Vedda women. Bailey states that the women "have their ears pierced and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory[1]," and this was confirmed by our old Sinhalese informant, whose evidence as to the former condition of the Veddas has been given in Chapter II. It seems that men did not wear ear ornaments, although we met some village Veddas (Dambani) who wore earrings, and a few men in other communities were seen with pierced ears. This point of view is confirmed by Nevill who wrote, "Men occasionally wore a few large beads on their waist string, if they could afford it, but no other jewels," and he describes the women's ear ornaments as "ear-jewels, the size of a man's thumb made of ivory, white horn, or bone, and carved or etched...worn through the lobe of the ear[2]."

At the present time among the wilder Veddas neither men nor women wear beads or ornaments of any kind, though the women are pleased to accept beads as presents.

It is otherwise among the more sophisticated Veddas of the Bintenne. At Omuni all the women and girls wore beads, and though they could not account for their origin, we were able to ascertain that they had been in their possession at least five generations. They descended usually from grandmother to granddaughter, some strings being given to each girl-child at birth, the rest being usually given when the girl married, or on the death of the grandmother. These beads are of glass, mostly red though some are green and a few white. They have been identified by Mr C. H. Read as 17th century Venetian beads, and were doubtless a present from some notable who required assistance from the Veddas as he passed through their country.

This summarises all we have been able to learn concerning the use of personal ornaments among the Veddas, and though Nevill states, presumably of the Veddas of the Bintenne, that they "delight to deck their hair with bright or fragrant flowers," we were unable to find any trace of this practice occurring

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 184. [2] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

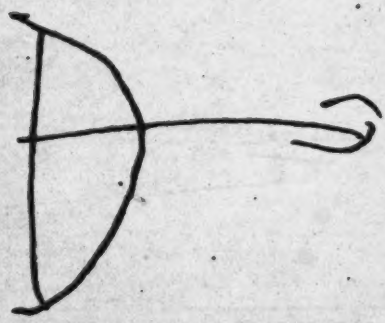
4. VEDDA JUNGLES

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them

ISAIAH.

THE forests we were now in were the immemorial haunts of the Veddas of Bingoda, Galmede and Sittala Wanniya. They stretched from Bingoda to Newaragala, and included such famous Vedda hills as Walimbe (Friar's Hood) and Bandaradua. The Magalavatan Aar cleaves this country on its way to Unichi tank. The jungle is virginal, but one is surprised to find here an occasional guava bearing luscious fruit, and much wild cinnamon. *Palu* and *veera*, so abundant in the more southern forests, is wanting here. 131 [137]

Nowhere is the Vedda more at home than in this wilderness, intersected by game trails only known to him and wild animals, and studded with the rocks that hold his caves. This land is all their wealth. By old Vedda law it is divided into *panguas* or shares, marked off by such natural landmarks as streams, rocks, or conspicuous trees scored with the *dhunu hena* (bow mark) distorted beyond recognition with age. The *panguas* of the Bingoda Veddas are six:—(1) Madana-gama: (2) Marana-pangua: (3) Kumburu-wella-gama (kuda and maha): (4) Bingoda: (5) Kakalana-bokke: (6) Bandaradua. Of these, the first three are included under the name Galmede and are now the property of Suthu Banda; the last three are Kaurala's. Each of these divisions, in days of greater prosperity, had its own chieftain. 423 614



Dhunu-hena or bow mark drawn by Vedda

It is to the credit of these Veddas that they alone of all the Veddas in Ceylon can still name their shares, indicate their boundaries, and observe the traditional law of non-transgression, hunting only in their allotted spheres. Suthu Banda, for instance, would not take the swiftlets' nests on Walimbe because they were Kaurala's by right; nor would he break the hives beyond Newaragala because those lands, once Vedda, have now lapsed to the Sinhalese.

Land goes to the eldest child whether son or daughter; failing them to the nephew. In the old days the proofs of inheritance were a white stone (*kirivanagala*) and molar tooth, bound together with a wisp of human hair; later the *ola* supplanted it; and still later a paper document issued by Government, and so carefully hidden away that it was invariably eaten by termites! These people, it would appear, were wiser than Government in their choice of a seizin. 428 [p. 79]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1908
AX5 Vedda AX5

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had actually been to the village. They had been sent for often to see others at Wewatte and Alutnuwara bungalows, and for even greater folk had been taken to Kandy. And so they had learnt to shake hands and had picked up exaggerated ideas of their own importance and the value of their information, and expected a present for every remark they vouchsafed. It was a horrible change from the courteous behaviour of the Sitala Wanniya cave Veddas. 574 609 431

As the Dambani folk were so very unfriendly we began to hope the carriers would not come at all that night, there was nowhere for them to sleep, and we thought the Veddas might resent their presence. They told us repeatedly that "Sinhalese men would not dare to come to their village," in spite of the fact that there were two petty Sinhalese traders in the village at the time, who did not even trouble to go away before dark, but seemed naturally to expect a night's lodging, which was granted them without any fuss, and there appeared to be no difficulty about language with them. About six o'clock our servants and the carriers arrived, and curiously enough instead of resenting the intrusion the Veddas seemed very impressed by their number, and presumably our importance, in having so many dependents, for they became much more friendly. 609

The next morning early, we set the phonograph going with a Vedda song: immediately the whole village crowded round us, intensely interested. They recognised the song and said it was very good. The Vidane then sang a song into the machine and was quite excited to hear it repeated, but again began his demand for presents although besides a rupee we had now given white cloth to him and the other men from whom we had got vocabularies. Having obtained records we realised that it was impossible to do any good work among such spoilt people and decided to go to Belligala. We offered some beads to the headman's wife, but she said the string was not long enough; this annoyed us and we asked her if she would prefer not to have any, and on her repeating they were not enough we put them away. 126

The Dambani men said they did not know to which *waruge* 614

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

105 on their chena. We waited here a little while and two Veddas
.621 passed, one carrying a gun; we asked them to return to their chena and fetch some of the other villagers. Soon some twenty
[431] men and about as many women and children arrived bringing us presents of honey, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. Scarcely any of them presented the Vedda type, they were all distinctly larger and more heavily built. Except their knowledge of their *waruge* and recognition of the Nae Yaku all remains of Vedda customs seemed to have been lost.

Yakure. The inhabitants of Yakure, a village about six miles from Kalukalaeba, call themselves Veddas, though physically (Plate XVI, figure 1) they would pass as Tamils or mixed
[194] Tamils and Sinhalese, and show even less evidence of Vedda blood than do the Kalukalaeba people. Their village consists of about 40 mud houses and is compactly built; a great number of cattle was seen grazing outside the confines of the village. Like the Kalukalaeba folk they know their *waruge* and invoke the Nae Yaku, but they have a temple, a simple mud hut, and worship a number of Sinhalese gods. Some men (Plate XVI, figure 2) from a village called Ulpota near Gunner's Quoin were
[197] seen here who also appeared to have mixed blood; they knew the "Vedda language," that is to say we were able to get from them about the same number of words as we obtained at Dambani. When one of them was asked when this dialect was used he replied "only when we are sent for by the Government agent or any other white man." Among themselves they speak
[191] Sinhalese though they can also speak Tamil as it is largely the language of Tamankaduwa.

Rotawewa. There is a settlement of alleged Veddas at Rotawewa about six miles from Minerriya tank. Concerning these we were told that they cultivated rice, and were in no respect different from the neighbouring Sinhalese, while Mr Jayawardene writes: "There is only one village of Veddas in Sinhala Pattu of Tamankaduwa District, and that village is Rotawewa, about six miles from Minerriya. These Veddas lived on the chase and subsequently took to chena clearings, and when the place began to be frequented by the low-country Sinhalese and other traders, some of them were able to sell their meat to them and

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

father's sister's daughter. The children of two sisters or of two brothers could not marry, and such a connection would be considered incestuous. The man goes to his future father-in-law with a present of honey, yams, grain or dried deer's flesh tied to his unstrung bow which he uses as a carrying stick. Whether he generally repeats this visit or receives his bride immediately was not clear, and probably the custom varies in this particular. Handuna of Godatalawa told us that he did not take his bride away until he had twice taken a present of food to his mother's brother (father-in-law). The bride gives her spouse a waist string of her own making which he never removes until it is worn out, when he replaces it with another made by his wife. In these particulars the marriage ceremony was essentially similar fifty years ago when it was described by Bailey. "The bachelor Veddah who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgement to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest 'delicacies of the season,' for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguano, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and bind it round him[1]."

When a girl married, her father usually made over to his son-in-law a tract of land, generally a hill known to be inhabited by colonies of the *bambara* or rock bee (*Apis indica*), or gave him a piece of personal property such as a bow or one or two arrows. The instances in which land was given are described in the section on land transference, so that here it is only necessary to mention instances in which personal property was given. Handuna received a bow and one arrow from his father-in-law who when presenting them accompanied his gift with the remark "With this bow you must get food for my daughter." Sometimes a dog is given, and Knox was certainly right when he

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 293.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

583 431 said "For portions with their Daughters in marriage they give hunting Dogs." Among the village Veddas of Bintenne we heard that an axe or catty was sometimes given, though the Arachi of Belligala, who has been much in contact with the Dambani Veddas, stated that these sometimes presented land to their sons-in-law.

In one settlement of village Veddas, Bulugahaladena, we were told that the bridegroom takes a first present to the bride's father and leaves his bow and arrow in his hut until his second visit with further presents some four days later. At the same place the waist string is sometimes charmed to ensure constancy. Among many of the village Veddas the custom of the gift of the waist string is dying out, and the bridegroom gives the bride a cloth as is the custom among the Sinhalese.

Another custom now dying out appears to be the gift from the bridegroom to the bride of a lock of hair, presented at the same time as the food to the girl's father.

We discovered at Bendiyagalge that it is a common practice 302 for women to wear false hair. Here we were told that it was merely worn in order to make the knot look important, but only by married women. It is improbable that the habit should have arisen among a people so careless of personal appearance as are the Veddas had it no other significance than adornment, for it must be remembered that these folk never brush or oil their hair, or even wash it; indeed, some consider the last operation extremely dangerous, so that the ornamental value of a very small wisp of hair may reasonably be doubted. Extra locks of hair are worn by Sinhalese women, and we have seen some hanging in the verandah of a mud hut in a small jungle village, but among them it is a very different matter. They are usually, and very rightly, proud of their masses of long glossy hair, which they comb and oil carefully. A naturally large knot is considered a beauty, especially when stabbed with a jewelled pin, and girls as well as married women will wear an extra lock to produce this effect, but that the custom should have been introduced from the Sinhalese with no other object than that of personal adornment, about which the Veddas seem to care so little[1], seems as improbable as does the

[1] The Vedda attitude towards ornament generally is treated on p. 205.

Plate XXI

302
431
585

Locks of hair presented to brides at marriage

[Facing p. 98]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

hypothesis that it should have arisen among them solely for 302
that object.

We believe that a lock of hair, either from his own head or 302
from his sister's, was a customary present from the bridegroom to 431
the bride, and therefore to be considered part of the wedding 585
ceremony. The evidence obtained at Bendiyagalge, though not directly bearing out this point of view, supports the hypothesis when considered in conjunction with the information given us at Sitala Wanniya. The wife of old Poromala at Bendiyagalge wore a piece of hair which Poromala had given her. He had not cut it off his own head but had saved the hair which had come out when combing his hair with his hands, and Handi his wife considered this tail of hair as a valuable possession and said she would leave it to her eldest married daughter when she died. She told us that a woman would burn her lock of hair if she had no daughters. She also said that women would only wear hair from their husbands' heads and laughed at the idea of a man wearing an extra piece of hair, although the men usually wear their hair in the same way as the women.

At Sitala Wanniya each married man was questioned separately.

Handuna, the oldest man and our best informant, said that 302
in former days a lock of hair was always given by the bridegroom 431
to the bride, and if he did not offer it, the young girl might ask 585
for it and insist upon having it. In that case the prospective 593
bridegroom would have to cut it off his own head, if his sister happened to be away at the time or if he had no sister, for it was her duty to give one to her brother if she knew that he wanted it for a wedding gift. A man would always be loath to cut his hair, and there are special regulations against this for shamans, so if the girl is willing to accept him without his present, and he is unable to obtain it from his sister or *naena*, the gift will be allowed to lapse. This happened when both Handuna and Vela married. No man would give hair to anyone except his wife. Kaira gave his wife a lock of hair when he was married, and he obtained it in the following way. He said that when discussing the matter of his future marriage at home, and feeling sore at having no hair to give his bride, his younger

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

302 sister said, "Don't be sorry, I will give you a lock of my hair."
431 She cut a lock from her own head, which he kept until his
585 marriage when he gave it to his wife while she was still at her
593 father's cave. Then he took her to his own cave where she made him a waist string on the second or third day after marriage. To his sister who was then unmarried he gave an axe out of gratitude. Nila cut a lock from his head to give his wife, as his sister was away at the time he was married, otherwise she would have given him one. Pema did not give his wife any hair as her mother had given her some.

302 Among the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula the custom
431 of giving hair as a wedding gift was not known, yet the shaman's
585 wife had a lock which her mother had given her. She assured
184 us that only married women might wear it.

Anything like a formal divorce is unknown, but we heard of
586 one instance occurring three generations ago, in which a woman who had gone to live with her husband left him and returned to her parents. The daughter of a Bingoda man, whose nickname Kupunkarea is still remembered, was given to a boy nicknamed Kankuna "Sore Eyes." As he was lazy and took no trouble to support his wife, so that she was frequently obliged to go to her parents for food, they kept her with them. Kankuna was very angry, but he did not threaten violence or attempt to bring back his wife by force. Later she was given to a Vedda of Bandaraduwa and after his death she went to live with a Sinhalese. It was said that she was an unusually pretty girl.

It is quite certain that polyandry never existed among
595 uncontaminated Veddas, but at Henebedda we met with one case that must, we think, be called by this name. Before relating this we may, however, call attention to the fact that polyandry is a tolerably common practice among the Sinhalese peasants of the Vedirata, as it is among the less educated classes in other parts of the island[1].

[1] Cf. *Papers on the Custom of Polyandry as practised in Ceylon*, Government Record Office, Colombo, in which Mr R. W. Ievers, speaking of the Kegalla district, says:—"Having been for six years in charge of a Kandyan district (Kegalla), and having to deal with land cases involving rights of inheritance, and having, as Registrar of Kandyan Marriages, to hear divorce cases, I have found that the custom of polyandry was almost universal; and that in the case of a marriage registered under

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nevill has pointed out that besides the territory of the group which is common land, every Vedda has "within this...a subdivision of his own which compares with the manor." In this he is no doubt right, though it was only at Sitala Wanniya that we were able to trace even approximately the hunting grounds belonging to individuals, which are theirs for the whole of their life, and descend to their heirs unless voluntarily alienated with the full consent of the group. So well is private ownership in a portion of land belonging to the group recognised in this community, that a man would not hunt even on his brother's land without the latter's permission; and if game started and wounded on his own land were killed on another man's domain, the man on whose territory the animal died would be given a portion of the flesh, apparently that side of the animal which touched the ground as the animal lay dead. Among other Veddas it was said half, or more generally a quarter, of the animal belonged to the man on whose land it died.

At Sitala Wanniya we not only found particular hills regarded as the property of individuals, but besides the big cave Pihilegodagalge, which was the property of the whole group of five families, there were smaller caves which were the property of the heads of individual families to which no others would have been welcomed, even had they thought of intruding. An exception was, however, made in the case of a man's *baena* (son-in-law), who we were told would naturally come and go as he pleased.

As has been shown in the chapter on Family Life, presents are often given at marriage, and these may take the form of personal property or hills or pools. In this section we shall deal with such transfers of real property, which in normal circumstances were made only to children and sons-in-law, and even then were not made over without the assent of every adult male member of the group. As this difficult subject does not lend itself to a general description, we shall limit ourselves to giving actual instances of land transfer with which we became acquainted.

When Vela of Sitala Wanniya married a woman of Bingoda his father-in-law gave him a piece of land in Marniye *pangua*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425 with a hill on it containing a cave called Marniyegalge and a number of *bambara* colonies. He was also given a number of
●431 pools in a river in Damenegama[1].
583 Handuna of Godatalawa on his marriage was given a hill with a cave in it called Balatgalagalge. This was handed over to him by his father-in-law and the gift carried with it the sole right to take rock honey on the hill, which was known to be the home of six swarms of *bambara*. Kaira Hudubandar son-in-law of Handuna of Godatalawa received on his first marriage a big pool in the Tota Oya river.

When Kumi the sister of the Vidane of Bandaraduwa married Tissahami, the bride's parents made over to her the hill Rajahele near Walimbagala, upon which there were about ten *bambara* colonies. Kumi also received Nalle Kotanwala, a stretch or pool—we could not determine which—in the Kalugal Oya. They also gave her husband the hill called Kuda Rasahele upon which six combs of the rock bee were known.

When Badapisi married, her father gave her husband Sinawa a hill called Bala Attahele on which there were known to be eight *bambara* colonies and a pool called Adanewala in the Kalugal Oya.

Tissahami the Vidane of Bandaraduwa received on his marriage the hill Maha Yakini Hela, upon which there were over twenty known *bambara* colonies[2].

With regard to these gifts of land we must record that although a man divides his landed property equally between his children in preparation for his death, property given at marriage to a son-in-law is counted as the daughter's share when the time comes for a man to make his final disposition.

423 When the land belonging to a Vedda group was not defined by natural features, such as a stream or hill, a mark representing a man with a drawn bow was cut upon the trunks of trees along the boundary line. It is doubtful whether these marks are

[1] We believe this was a small stream, and the right to fish in it was not highly valued, partly perhaps because not many fish were caught, but also because Veddas do not often eat fish when they can get other flesh.

[2] The numbers of colonies of rock bees mentioned in these accounts are probably inaccurate, except perhaps in the case of the Bandaraduwa hills, for most Veddas became confused when attempting to count above five or six.

[602]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423 The care with which the seclusion of the rock-shelter is still maintained probably belongs to a different category of ideas, and is an example of the jealousy with which Vedda women are guarded.

423 At Sitala Wanniya we heard of the following method of settling
627 disputes concerning boundaries, though Handuna my informant had never known of any example of a difficulty of this kind arising, and had only heard of the method of settling them from his father and father-in-law. When two Veddas, or groups of Veddas, are not satisfied as to the position of a boundary, the disputants each bring their "seisin" stone to the land over which the quarrel has arisen. Here the stones are placed in pots upon supports of the kind used in the Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa (Plate XXXVI, figure 1). When this has been done the disputants invoke certain spiritual agencies, but who these are my informants could not tell me. As a result of this, a wild animal, usually an elephant, would come and destroy the pot set up by the party wrongfully claiming the tract of land.

231 Every Vedda has one or two dogs with which he does not
431 readily part, though with characteristic generosity he is ever willing to give away pups to any of his friends or relatives. Vedda dogs are invariably well fed and well treated, and it was clear that the warmest feelings exist between a man and his dogs. As evidence of the importance of dogs in the community we may cite their use as wedding gifts and refer to the process of anointing them with a part of the offering dedicated to the *yaku* described in Chapter VI. Bailey's account of the relation of Vedda dogs to their masters brings out so much of this feeling that it is quoted here at length. "They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued....

"But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his
231 possessions he values most his bow, which is placed under his
435 head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena*; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house"; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned:

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain: it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good!

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes: *Gona-peruma* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-peruma* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Gon-thel-peruma* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423 The care with which the seclusion of the rock-shelter is still maintained probably belongs to a different category of ideas, and is an example of the jealousy with which Vedda women are guarded.

423 At Sitala Wanniya we heard of the following method of settling disputes concerning boundaries, though Handuna my informant had never known of any example of a difficulty of this kind arising, and had only heard of the method of settling them from his father and father-in-law. When two Veddas, or groups of Veddas, are not satisfied as to the position of a boundary, the disputants each bring their "seisin" stone to the land over which the quarrel has arisen. Here the stones are placed in pots upon supports of the kind used in the Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa (Plate XXXVI, figure 1). When this has been done the disputants invoke certain spiritual agencies, but who these are my informants could not tell me. As a result of this, a wild animal, usually an elephant, would come and destroy the pot set up by the party wrongfully claiming the tract of land.

231 Every Vedda has one or two dogs with which he does not readily part, though with characteristic generosity he is ever willing to give away pups to any of his friends or relatives. Vedda dogs are invariably well fed and well treated, and it was clear that the warmest feelings exist between a man and his dogs. As evidence of the importance of dogs in the community we may cite their use as wedding gifts and refer to the process of anointing them with a part of the offering dedicated to the *yaku* described in Chapter VI. Bailey's account of the relation of Vedda dogs to their masters brings out so much of this feeling that it is quoted here at length. "They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued....

"But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his 231 possessions he values most his bow, which is placed under his 435 head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. 'What would you do,' I asked a Veddah once, 'if your bow were stolen?' 'No one could steal it,' he replied, 'the dog would not let him.' 'But if anyone killed your dog?' His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 435

"And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic[1]. He never attempted to deny what he had done. 'It is true,' he said at the coroner's inquest, 'I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted for my support[2].'" 231 674

The following is a list of the names of dogs and bitches obtained from the Henebedda Veddas: 552

Dogs. Kapura, Kadiya (*kadi*, black ant), Muranduwa (obstinate), Hudena (white), Pandina (spotty), Dimbula, Boriya, Taniya, Tambula, Senba, Katakaluwa (black mouth), Bahira, Pulana, Kambiliya, Komiya (a Sinhalese corruption of "come here," the name of a dog belonging to the Korale of Nilgala).

Bitches. Pandi (spotty), Katakalu (black mouth), Handani (white), Dassi (clever), Dimbile, Makedi (like iron), Bosari, Hudu Valli, Mukulu.

The following list represents the usual property of an elderly Vedda, that is, of one of the influential men of the group, and actually records the property of Poromala (Walaha) the "senior" of the Henebedda Veddas; one axe, bow and arrows, three pots, a deerskin, a "flint and steel" and supply of tinder, a gourd for carrying water, a betel pouch containing betel cutters and some form of vessel or small box, perhaps of metal (e.g. an old brass covered cartridge case), for holding lime. Most Veddas also possess a certain amount of cloth besides that actually in use on their person, and Handuna was no exception to this rule. 422

Kaira of Henebedda had only two pots, but otherwise the list of his property is identical with that already given. Handuna

[1] "The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance."

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.*, pp. 186—187.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

away more frightened than you. A scratching noise under your pillow may lead to the discovery of a scorpion or a centipede. Beetles, moths, biting ants, and insects of all descriptions investigate and experiment with you. But you soon learn to ignore these little draw-backs and drowse to the lullaby of some wood-land songster.

Tropical Nature is a stern mistress; her favours are never unalloyed. For him who would seek her she holds grievances in store, grievances that enhance the very joy they encumber; toning down ecstasy lest it pall with surfeit; giving to the contemplation of foregone experience that unfettered pleasure the reality denies, prompting us in after years to say, forgetful of all the hardships, "those were happy days we had".

The Verugal where it joined the Mahaweli was at this season an insignificant stream. Quite a colony of tobacco growers flourished here. Very picturesque are these settlements or *thethes* as they are called. Four to six huts stand some distance apart in clearings along the bank, most of them beautifully overspread with melon-creepers. Every hut has its vegetable garden; and standing before them, like sentinels, are the draw-wells, usually in couples, that feed the tobacco plots direct from the river. The lowing of cattle under the superb trees that stud the clearing, the crowing of cocks, the sound of human voices complete the atmosphere of rural domesticity in this wild land and furnish scenes which would rejoice the heart of a painter.

Putting up one evening in a coconut grove owned by a Moor we found an unkempt ill-clad fellow seated on his haunches staring at some simple wares a pedlar was displaying. They told us he was a Vedda from a village some miles away. Becoming restless under our scrutiny he walked off. I followed him to his miserable shelter, where I found his daughter, a puny girl of four, covered with ulcers. Edging up towards her father she stared at us distrustfully with the eyes of a startled doe. A few broken pots were their sole belongings. The bond of tender solicitude that united these human derelicts, of no consequence except to each other, was indeed a touching sight. I asked the man what he did for a living. He said he "earned a rupee for two months work". He knew neither his nor his daughter's age, and when pressed for an answer said irritably, "What do I know of age? Am I a man who knows anything about age?" Blessed mortal!

We gave him a coin which he at first refused, and only accepted with persuasion; he had evidently never handled one like it before, for he looked at it puzzled and suspicious; and when the amount it represented was explained to him he was not enlightened.

"He knows nothing," said the Moor vociferously. "Ask him to count six and see if he can. He's a real bull. What does he know? He's a Vedda. For thirty-six cents he will bring a kerosene-tinful of *bambara** honey, and," he added chuckling with subtle satisfaction, "he does not know what thirty-six cents is!"

The next day we saw in the distance the blue contours of Gunner's Quoin, the goal of our journey. The river had now become considerably shallower with broad stretches of its sandy bed exposed. As we punted along the shady border, we suddenly came upon a most realistic piece of ancient sculpture—the life-sized head of an elephant carved out of a

*Rock-bee, *Apis dorsata*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

away more frightened than you. A scratching noise under your pillow may lead to the discovery of a scorpion or a centipede. Beetles, moths, biting ants, and insects of all descriptions investigate and experiment with you. But you soon learn to ignore these little draw-backs and drowse to the lullaby of some wood-land songster.

Tropical Nature is a stern mistress; her favours are never unalloyed. For him who would seek her she holds grievances in store, grievances that enhance the very joy they encumber; toning down ecstasy lest it pall with surfeit; giving to the contemplation of foregone experience that unfettered pleasure the reality denies, prompting us in after years to say, forgetful of all the hardships, "those were happy days we had".

The Verugal where it joined the Mahaweli was at this season an insignificant stream. Quite a colony of tobacco growers flourished here. Very picturesque are these settlements or *thethes* as they are called. Four to six huts stand some distance apart in clearings along the bank, most of them beautifully overspread with melon-creepers. Every hut has its vegetable garden; and standing before them, like sentinels, are the draw-wells, usually in couples, that feed the tobacco plots direct from the river. The lowing of cattle under the superb trees that stud the clearing, the crowing of cocks, the sound of human voices complete the atmosphere of rural domesticity in this wild land and furnish scenes which would rejoice the heart of a painter.

Putting up one evening in a coconut grove owned by a Moor we found an unkempt ill-clad fellow seated on his haunches staring at some simple wares a pedlar was displaying. They told us he was a Vedda from a village some miles away. Becoming restless under our scrutiny he walked off. I followed him to his miserable shelter, where I found his daughter, a puny girl of four, covered with ulcers. Edging up towards her father she stared at us distrustfully with the eyes of a startled doe. A few broken pots were their sole belongings. The bond of tender solicitude that united these human derelicts, of no consequence except to each other, was indeed a touching sight. I asked the man what he did for a living. He said he "earned a rupee for two months work". He knew neither his nor his daughter's age, and when pressed for an answer said irritably, "What do I know of age? Am I a man who knows anything about age?" Blessed mortal!

We gave him a coin which he at first refused, and only accepted with persuasion; he had evidently never handled one like it before, for he looked at it puzzled and suspicious; and when the amount it represented was explained to him he was not enlightened.

"He knows nothing," said the Moor vociferously. "Ask him to count six and see if he can. He's a real bull. What does he know? He's a Vedda. For thirty-six cents he will bring a kerosene-tinful of *bambara** honey, and," he added chuckling with subtle satisfaction, "he does not know what thirty-six cents is!"

The next day we saw in the distance the blue contours of Gunner's Quoin, the goal of our journey. The river had now become considerably shallower with broad stretches of its sandy bed exposed. As we punted along the shady border, we suddenly came upon a most realistic piece of ancient sculpture—the life-sized head of an elephant carved out of a

*Rock-bee, *Apis dorsata*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

on serener days, it flamed through the Island making it its permanent 000
home, while in India, the land of its birth, it dwindled away.

We had undertaken this trip with the object of visiting Meminigallagolla 114
where we learned the wildest Veddas of the Eastern province lived; but on coming to Omuna we found that that place, only twelve miles away, was quite unknown to the present folk of Omuna, a pathless barrier of dense jungle intervening. We made the best of a bad job; and, abandoning our original project, struck west for Dolagalwella.

At evening we camped by a desolate pool called *Havan-kapane-mulle* 103
(rush-cutting nook). There is barely a spot in these jungles, however lone, that has not its name, thanks to the nomadic Veddas. Here was a glade in which they hunted, or a pool at which they drank, there a hole in which an axe was found (*Poro-thutu-walle*).

The only indications of the track we followed were the barely recog- 000
nisable prunings, fifteen years old, of saplings. The forest was ideal for travel; in the shelter of the great trees the morning air was cool and refreshing. Coming to the Maduru Oya we walked a mile up-stream and climbed the mimosa-covered bank, soon to be lost in a wilderness of trees. A leader monkey yelled a warning to his clan, a surprised sambur belled startlingly close; but after that a silence prevailed unbroken by the song of a single bird. We spent the night by a rocky streamlet close-hugged by dense forest walls. Heavy clouds crept over us to the rumblings of thunder. The blurred crescent of the moon struggled for freedom. Our campfires crackled in the ghostly gloom, and quiet human voices pervaded the forest's deadly stillness save for the melody of the trickling water.

> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

Deserted Mahaella marked the limit of our westward journey. Here 361
we struck at right angles the northern track to Yakkure, but, before taking it, deviated south to the village of Dolagalwella. For three days we had followed uncertain game trails, and seen no human beings besides those of our company. The path now began to show signs of use: there were chipped trees, polished stones on which axes had been whetted, and fire-places where monitors were roasted. Obviously we were nearing civilisation! Indeed, here it was.

Scaling a strong stockade we found ourselves in a *chena*, some twelve 241
acres in extent, in which nestled the half dozen huts of the closely related families of a Vedda patriarchy. The maize and *kurrukkan* crops had been taken, and the place was now rank with a catch-crop of vegetables and fruit: beans, brinjals, melons, cassava, plantains and papaws. Chillies luxuriated; there was not a compound but had its vermilion heap, not a hut but had a section partitioned off with frame and fire-place for drying [436]
them during the rains; chillies were the current coin with which these folk traded with the pedlar Moors.

The males of the settlement were away in quest of food, and only the 609
women and children remained. No folk on earth, perhaps, are shier than Vedda women; in the presence of the stranger they are dumb. Some of them were relatively fair-complexioned, presumably from 301
Kandyan admixture; all wore an abundance of bead ornaments, finger

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 There were both "wild" and "village" Veddas even in the days of his youth, and the only difficulty experienced with the old man was in keeping the two classes perfectly distinct in his mind. The following facts were elicited in the course of three interviews, each lasting somewhat less than an hour. He stated that he was just able to walk when he came to the Eastern Province, and that as he grew up he spent much of his time with the Veddas hunting and collecting honey. The [156] Veddas of those days were a merry people, and with a most eloquent gesture the old man showed how they would throw dry leaves into the air and shout and dance for happiness; he said also that they were absolutely truthful. Every Vedda carried a bow and arrows and an axe; more arrows than one were 411 carried, but it was not clear that they only carried two; it seemed that *tudadi*, a word that the old man said was used to describe the number of arrows carried, may have meant a small quantity or may have been a hunting term corresponding to "brace" or "leash." The old man had seen Veddas shoot lying on their backs and holding the bow with their feet, but this was only for amusement and to show their skill, no serious shooting was done in this way. The feathers of peacocks, herons and hawks were especially used in feathering arrows; any of these birds would be shot with an ordinary arrow, and peacock was [262] eaten as was jungle fowl, though no one would eat porcupine or buffalo; for these abstinences he could give no reason. Traps 226 were not used. Fish were eaten, being caught by poisoning the water of pools with the bark of *damba*, *mahapata*, *puselpata* 278 (? *Entada scandens*) and the fruit of *timbiri* (*Diospyros embryopteris*) and *kukuruman* (*Adenanthera bicolor*). Pots and bark 415 cloth bags were made and betel pouches of monkey skin, though even then some village Veddas had cloth betel bags, and these occasionally reached the wilder Veddas. Among the village 304 Veddas both sexes bored their ears and the women wore ivory 301 studs in them; whether the women of the wilder groups bored 184 their ears and wore these ornaments was not clear, certainly 372 the men did not. Fire was obtained from two pieces of wood by drilling.

342 The wilder Veddas of those days built no houses but lived
437

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves.

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantako*.

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls.

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cloth of the *riti* (*Antiaris innoxia*) of which material the Sinhalese still make rice bags. Men wear a rag of "white" cotton about 9 inches wide passed between their legs, and held in place by each end being passed over a waist string. This cotton material they prefer to anything else for two reasons, firstly, it very soon becomes a dull brown, and hence is less obvious when hunting than a coloured cloth would be, secondly, it is thin machine-made material from which they can easily tear narrow strips for tinder, when they make fire. The women wear coloured cotton cloth of the kind that is woven at Batticaloa, it is a strong material and is not easily torn. A single width forms the length of their skirt from waist to knee and is fastened round their waists like a sarong. Thus, the men's preference for "white" and the women's for coloured cloth is purely economical, depending on the kind of material it has been the pedlar's habit to bring. These pedlars visit the wilder Veddas once a year after the honey collecting season; they never approach the caves, but when within about a quarter of a mile of them they shout till a Vedda comes to them, then they expose their wares and the Vedda returns to the cave to fetch as many pots and gourds of honey and as much dried flesh as he is willing to exchange. The "silent trade," mentioned by Knox[1], is now a legend among the Sinhalese of which no tradition lingers among the Veddas. We have Bailey's evidence that it had ceased before 1863, and the old Kandyan we met (see p. 31) remembered it only as a tradition in the days of the rebellion in 1818. "They are not now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough

Fig. 3. Toy mallya × $\frac{1}{10}$ (about).

[1] Cf. p. 6.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

437 with the Sinhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, 439 are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests[1].

"I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The 'wilder sort' have had too little communication with Sinhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessities of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrowheads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax, and honey, elk flesh and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Sinhalese, or 'the ubiquitous Moors'[2]."

881 There are no puberty ceremonies for either sex, except among certain Veddas who have been much influenced by Tamils or Sinhalese, among whom the girls are isolated for a short time at puberty. Thus although the following ceremony is observed at puberty by the Uniche Veddas, there is no doubt that it has [177] been borrowed from the local Sinhalese who have a similar ceremony, though according to our information the latter people do not break the pot. When a girl becomes unwell for the first time one of her *naena* places a pot of water on her head and goes with her to some place where there is a *nuga* tree. Here the *naena* takes the pot from the girl's head and dashes it on the ground so that the pot breaks. The girl is then secluded in a specially built shelter in which she stays until the end of the period, when she washes and returns to her parents' house. [602] During her seclusion she is attended by a girl, always one of her *naena*, who brings her food in a vessel set apart for this purpose but which is not cooked at a special fire. Among the 841 wilder Veddas no special measures are taken when a woman menstruates, she is allowed to eat the ordinary food, and to [184] sleep in the cave as usual. But among all the village Veddas, 177 and most of those who have mixed at all with the Sinhalese, the menstruous women are strictly isolated, a little shelter being built for them a few paces from the family hut (Plate XX). At Bendiyagalge, where the Henebedda and Kolombedda people were staying at the time of our visit, menstruous women stayed apart at one corner of the cave, they were fed from the pot in

[1] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285—286. [2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 291.

The Dola Yaka Ceremony.

222 437 Collecting honey is almost as important to the Vedda as hunting, for not only is honey valuable as food but it is one of the most important articles of barter, and every year at the end of the honey season the Moormen pedlar[1] penetrates into the wildest parts of the jungle with iron, cloth, pots and beads to exchange for the highly prized jungle honey.

222 776 796 Nor is honey collecting without risk, for the "Little People of the Rocks" can be very angry, and their sting is deadly. Hence the Veddas ask for success in honey collecting from their natural protectors the *yaku*, and Dola Yaka is especially invoked for this purpose. Although there is no tradition concerning his actions or his dwelling place his aid is invoked for success in collecting *bambara* honey from trees, and for the more dangerous task of cutting the combs from the craggy hill tops and rock faces in which the colonies of the rock bee make their homes. The successful invocation of Dola Yaka can only take place in the early afternoon at the time when the bees are most active in visiting flowers.

796 778 A *maesa* with a single platform about 4 ft 6 in. from the ground was built, and two arrows were fixed in the centre of the space cleared for the dance (Plate XLVII). A betel leaf was placed on the top of each and pressed down on the shaft so that it rested on the feathers, and a small bead necklace was looped over the head of each arrow and rested on the betel leaf. These leaves were said to represent the large bundles of leaves which the Veddas use to smoke the bees from the comb, and the necklaces represent the creeper by which the twigs would be tied together and by which it would be lowered over the cliff edge. It was noted that one arrow was taller than the other, and we were told that the taller arrow was the one which would be used in cutting the comb, and that when the honey was taken it would be thrust through the withy binding the bundle of leaves used

[1] The term Moormen is applied to the numerous Mohammedans who make their living as shopkeepers and pedlars. Many of them are proud of their alleged Arabic descent, but it is only in a minority that skin colour or features suggest Arab blood, and the appearance of the majority of Moormen scarcely differs from that of the Tamils of the East Coast, among whom their most considerable settlements are found.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

[531 177] [172]

Tools and Weapons.

411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

[437]

411 322 No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *kobbevel* (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained, it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the tinbari tree (Diospyros embryopteris).

[283 314]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from trees. Besides the *bambara* other species including the 222
small stingless bee supply a considerable quantity. The first two months of our sojourn in the Vedda country (January and February) was at a time when honey was particularly scarce, and even at the end of March and in April it was not abundant, yet such was the courtesy of the Veddas that each community managed to make us a small present of honey, though this often entailed a long search and the combs were frequently full of grubs. In two communities only, which were better off than the others, namely Danigala and Kulukalaeba, were we given large pots of strained honey, the remains of the previous year's store.

The manner in which *bambara* colonies are regarded as 262
property has been discussed in Chapter V. Writing in 1886 251
Nevill says, "Honey forms a great part of their diet. It is eaten fresh in large quantities, wax and all; combs with young bees in them being considered especially wholesome. It was also the practice formerly to store strips of dried meat in honey, filling in a cavity of some tree with it, the cavity being first lined with clay. At present they barter away their surplus [437] meat and honey, during the hunting season, and keep no store for the rainy season. This often brings privation and is one cause of the rapid decrease in their numbers.

"They tell me their health is never so good as when their 262
food largely consists of yams and honey.

"To procure honey they rapidly cut open hollow trees, even 222
of the hardest wood; and to take the hives of the large black bambara bee, they make long ladders of cane, called 'rang [417] kendiya,' by which they descend precipices, and cut off the combs adhering to their sides.

"They do this at night, generally, as the bees are not so savage then; and smoke them with a sort of resin. The hives are often cut off with a sort of wooden sword, made for the [413] occasion. These frail ladders swing fearfully, and the task is so dangerous, only the boldest and most athletic attempt it. While engaged on the task they sing lustily, songs specially 222
made, which appease the spirit of the rock, and prevent him 533
from dashing the hunter off the ladder. They also go about

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Uriapana *waruge*, like all the other *waruges*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *waruge* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *waruge* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *waruge* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *waruges* after similar occurrences under *nabudu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gamana*). 614 173 [551]

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season. 177 178

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *kanava* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukhan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukhan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukhan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter, he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more." [437]

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas. 161 186 731

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *kodai*, *tiru* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure 1) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *marage* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *marage* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Arachi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to
439 take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on
141 which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 m.[a] (60½ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 m.[a] (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they
609 stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and
576 did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

166 Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately
115 pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very
651 poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

[a] [Errata; see p. xx. — Analyst]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 was a game which they encouraged. A lad of about thirteen
857 collected some green leaves and tied them together with creeper,
868 then taking an arrow, a toy *masliya*, and a broken gourd tied with creeper, which hung over his arm, for a *maludema*, he set fire to the leaves and climbed the ladder[1]. While lowering the smoker and letting the smoke blow into the crevice in the rock where the comb was supposed to be, he pretended to cut round its sides with an arrow and thrust at it with his *masliya* (figure 3), from which he transferred the honey into the gourd. As he descended from the ladder he beat his chest and sides as though driving off the bees, and directly he reached the ground rushed into the jungle to escape from them, all the smaller children imitating him with great glee. Obviously this was a well-known and favourite game, for even the elders took part in it, throwing their cloths over their heads and running into the jungle.

524 At Henebedda (which we visited before Pihilegodagalge)
857 there were no children present when we spoke about honey getting, but four young men were eager to show us how it was done and acted the scene with great spirit. They took from our camp a piece of white and a piece of brown paper, and fastened them with some wax to the roof of their cave, then as there was no tree above the cave around which to fasten a creeper, one man crouched on the top of the rock and held the ends of the ladder in his hands, another stood above and lowered a smoker of green leaves while a third climbed the ladder and collected the honey from the white paper and the grubs from the brown. Afterwards the collector divided the spoil equally and amid much laughter they all sat down and pretended to eat, one actually going through the pantomime of washing his hands after the meal. They eat the grubs as well as the honey.

[439] As regards clothing, pedlars have brought them cloth for so
291 long that no Vedda living knows what was done when they could not buy it, but it is generally stated that they made bark

[1] The *maludema* is the vessel made of deerskin in which honey should be collected and the *masliya* the wooden four-pronged implement with which the comb is broken up and transferred to the *maludema*. For figures of *maludema* and *masliya*, see Plate LXV and figure 3 (p. 93) respectively.

[412 415]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cloth of the *riti* (*Antiaris innoxia*) of which material the Sinhalese still make rice bags. Men wear a rag of "white" cotton about 9 inches wide passed between their legs, and held in place by each end being passed over a waist string. This cotton material they prefer to anything else for two reasons, firstly, it very soon becomes a dull brown, and hence is less obvious when hunting than a coloured cloth would be, secondly, it is thin machine-made material from which they can easily tear narrow strips for tinder, when they make fire. The women wear coloured cotton cloth of the kind that is woven at Batticaloa, it is a strong material and is not easily torn. A single width forms the length of their skirt from waist to knee and is fastened round their waists like a sarong. Thus, the men's preference for "white" and the women's for coloured cloth is purely economical, depending on the kind of material it has been the pedlar's habit to bring. These pedlars visit the wilder Veddas once a year after the honey collecting season; they never approach the caves, but when within about a quarter of a mile of them they shout till a Vedda comes to them, then they expose their wares and the Vedda returns to the cave to fetch as many pots and gourds of honey and as much dried flesh as he is willing to exchange. The "silent trade," mentioned by Knox[1], is now a legend among the Sinhalese of which no tradition lingers among the Veddas. We have Bailey's evidence that it had ceased before 1863, and the old Kandyan we met (see p. 31) remembered it only as a tradition in the days of the rebellion in 1818. "They are not now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough

Fig. 3. Toy machya × $\frac{1}{11}$ (about).

[1] Cf. p. 6.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

with the Sinhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests[1].

"I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The 'wilder sort' have had too little communication with Sinhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessities of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrowheads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax, and honey, elk flesh and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Sinhalese, or 'the ubiquitous Moors'[2]."

There are no puberty ceremonies for either sex, except among certain Veddas who have been much influenced by Tamils or Sinhalese, among whom the girls are isolated for a short time at puberty. Thus although the following ceremony is observed at puberty by the Uniche Veddas, there is no doubt that it has been borrowed from the local Sinhalese who have a similar ceremony, though according to our information the latter people do not break the pot. When a girl becomes unwell for the first time one of her *naena* places a pot of water on her head and goes with her to some place where there is a *nuga* tree. Here the *naena* takes the pot from the girl's head and dashes it on the ground so that the pot breaks. The girl is then secluded in a specially built shelter in which she stays until the end of the period, when she washes and returns to her parents' house. During her seclusion she is attended by a girl, always one of her *naena*, who brings her food in a vessel set apart for this purpose but which is not cooked at a special fire. Among the wilder Veddas no special measures are taken when a woman menstruates, she is allowed to eat the ordinary food, and to sleep in the cave as usual. But among all the village Veddas, and most of those who have mixed at all with the Sinhalese, the menstruous women are strictly isolated, a little shelter being built for them a few paces from the family hut (Plate XX). At Bendiyagalge, where the Henebedda and Kolombedda people were staying at the time of our visit, menstruous women stayed apart at one corner of the cave, they were fed from the pot in

[1] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285—286. [2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 291.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

element as they are in the midst of a civilized crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear.

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back.

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made," and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not

---

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonoomadala (*stereospermum chelonoides*), the kekala (*cyathocalyx zeylanicus*), a creeper called kobbéwel, or the pandôro tree.

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zeylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the areloowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

439 now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough with the Singhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests.

224 411 They have the reputation of being expert with bow and arrow, and as it is only the larger game, such as elk, deer, etc., which they pursue, it is very probable that with their remarkable power of creeping stealthily through the jungle, they may be able to come upon their prey unawares and do execution. But they are miserable shots at a mark. I never saw more than two 411 decent hits made at several small "archery meetings," which I have, from time to time, got up for my own amusement and their pecuniary advantage. And with regard to the latter, I must con- [177] fess that I never saw that contempt for money which Tennent supposes is still existing.*

The practice of drawing the bow with the feet to which Tennent also alludes as still in use, has so long ceased, that in all my inquiries—and I was very particular on this point—I could not find a single Veddah who ever witnessed it, but it is undoubted that such a mode of archery once existed, as is traditional among them.†

224 They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no 231 distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued. Knox tells us, that dogs were given "for portions with their daughters in marriage;"‡ and Percival relates, that "before the last war broke out between us and Holland, a Dutch officer sold a couple of Weddah dogs at Surat, for 400 rix dollars, about £30."§

---

them not, they will do him a mischief one time or another by shooting in the night. If the smith make the arrows, he leaves them in the same place where the Veddahs hung the flesh." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 62. *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, and note; also vol. i, part. v, chap. ii, p. 568, 2nd edition.

* "Money to them is worthless." *Vide* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 440, 2nd edit. I had been told that they would refuse silver, not knowing what it was, and would accept copper. But I never had a rupee refused when I tendered it; and the word "rupee" is by no means unintelligible to them. A good many years ago, I can well believe money was worthless to them, but that was long before Tennent's time.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part iv, chap. iii, p. 139. Some wild Veddahs of the Batticaloa district shewed Mr. Birch, when making some inquiries among them at my request, how the bow was drawn with the foot, but said it was never so drawn now.

‡ Knox, part iii, chap. i. § Percival, chap. xiii.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 bears, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.*

They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of those beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries, I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross-examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh.

They do not scruple to eat animals which have died a natural death, and have (in common with the Kandyans) a decided preference for their game "high"—if so mild a term can describe the exceedingly advanced condition, in which venison should be to suit the palate of a Veddah (or Kandyan) epicure.

226 They are fond of fish, which they catch by mixing with the water the juice of particular fruits and barks of trees, which stupify them. A similar practice is common among the Singhalese.

224 Their arrows procure for them the flesh of the animals they eat, and I can find no trace of pit-falls or traps being in use among them. In Bintenne, some of them employ the hunting buffalo to enable them to approach their game unseen.† Their dogs track out the wounded animals, and are also trained to catch the iguano,

223 Tennent is wrong in saying that they procure birds with the bow. They are not good enough shots for that. They catch them with bird-lime, made from the juice of the bo-tree (*ficus* [824] *religiosa*)—and also watch them to their nests, and take them at night. Their skill as marksmen is most indifferent, and they never exercise it at small objects.

224 The most choice food, in their estimation, is, of land animals, the flesh of the pengolin, or of the iguano; and, of fish, the eel. [262] Though they eat no part of the elephant, yet he is the object of their pursuit, both for their own protection and on account of [439] the ivory, so valuable to them as an article of barter. They will steal up to an elephant, and, as he is in the act of stepping for-

* It is curious that, while in the Batticaloa district Veddahs are said to eat bats, those of the Badulla district—certainly of Nilgala—reject them.

† The use of the hunting buffalo is common all over the island. The manner in which the animal is trained is curious. When its horns are young and tender, a string is tied tightly round the base of one of them. The pain thus produced is so acute, that the poor animal is easily guided by the cord, and answers to the slightest touch. The ligature is gradually relaxed; and, when the buffalo is full grown, the recollection of the pain it occasioned is so vivid that he will answer readily to a thin string tied loosely to his horn. With an animal so trained, the hunter can easily approach the deer unseen at night. The buffalo leads; the hunter crouches under his lee; a touch will guide him, and the hunter advances under cover.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 to catch the hum of bees, which so instantaneously struck his ear. Their forest life naturally quickens their powers both of seeing and hearing, and renders them, in these respects, far superior to those whose more civilized lives do not compel them to rely on those faculties for their daily food.

They take honey in the manner common to the Singhalese. The bee-hunter enlarges with his small axe the hole in the tree at which the bee enters, and putting his mouth to the aperture, blows into it. This has generally the effect of making the bees fly out; or, at least, of making them vacate the comb, and retire into the innermost recesses of the hollow tree, when the honey can be taken with the hand. If this do not succeed, however, a second puff, after the bee-hunter has chewed some aromatic substance, has the desired effect.

Taking the honey of the bambera (*apis Indica*), a large and
222 very venomous bee, is a much more serious affair. This bee hives
283 on very lofty trees, or in clefts of precipitous rocks. If on a
481 tree, the hunter ties tendrils to it, and armed with a bundle of blazing faggots, climbs to the vicinity of the comb and smokes the bees out, being often severely stung during the operation. If in a cleft of rock, he will, if he cannot otherwise approach it, lower himself with ropes made of creepers, and take the honey by the same process.

To the Veddahs, honey is not only favourite food, but valuable
439 as an object of barter, for the Kandyans prize it greatly for medicinal purposes. They use it, too, as Knox tells us, for pre-
251 serving flesh. "They cut a hollow tree and put honey in it, and then fill it with flesh, and stop it with clay, which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want."* And when they are short of food, they mix honey with decayed wood, and so eat it. It
261 satisfies their craving more readily than plain honey. Davy properly describes the practice, as "not so much for nourishment as to distend the empty stomach and to allay the distressing feelings of emptiness and the pains of hunger." It is curious that Tennent should have entirely omitted all allusion to this remarkable custom. "Romba" is the term used by the Veddahs, for this decayed wood, and the practice I have described may have given rise to the epithet, which Knox applies to the "wild sort" called "Ramba Veddahs," who, he says, "never shew themselves" —but no "sort" is so called now, nor is the name remembered.†

---

* Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63.

† Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63. The wood so used is chiefly that of the
[824] ariminia creeper (*zizyphus œnophlia*, Mill.), the ettamba—wild mango (*mangifera Indica*, Quin.), the weera (*hemicyclia sepiaria*, W. and A.), the rêna, the nooga, a species of fig; any wood, indeed, not poisonous, is used. They reject the wood of the kaduru (*cerbera odallum*, Gaertn.), the goda

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.); the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *elenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

5: Spittel B-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

115 On our return journey, passing the ruins of a remarkable aqueduct of stone—the Watawala Kandiya—beside the remains of a crumbling 173 bund, we arrived at Kurunduwina where we met a doddering ancient who claimed to have been alive when the British took Ceylon a hundred 439 years ago. It is not often one meets old folk in these unhealthy lands. Here, I thought, was one who could tell us something about Veddas of a type we could not hope to see; for within view of his hut were the Sittala Wanniya hills, the immemorial homes of the Veddas. But his decrepit mind needed much jogging.

"Are there Veddas here?" I shouted twice into his deaf old ears.

"Now none," he said.

"Did they live on the rocks yonder?" I asked. He nodded affirmatively.

"Did they come here to barter?" I persisted. His tired lack-lustre eyes flashed to a memory as he answered with surprising alacrity, "Yes they came. When they had no food they came to exchange honey and hides for food. The Vedda would sit there, place his bow there, his arrows there, and his axe there, and he would ask for betel. If any one stepped over his weapons by chance, he would leap up in anger, bite the piece of human liver he carried in his betel-bag, and ask, 'Who's this that dares to defy me?' The gleam faded from the old man's eye, his weary look returned and he uttered not another word, question as I might.

The shifting *chenas* scattered about these parts make it very difficult to say where a village begins or ends. We were resting on the banks of the Rambukkan, (a course parallel to which we had so far followed) somewhere on the confines of Payile and Idambowa, when to our surprise we saw a Buddhist priest accompanied by the inevitable *abithaya** and a tall, wild, naked fellow. A Vedda of Bingoda the latter was said to be. [609] We tried to engage him in talk, but he would have none of it; seated on his haunches he stared at us with a hang-dog apathy eloquent of hunger; this melted away in a broad grin as he left us, greedily chewing the handful of muscatels and biscuits we gave him.

The usual route from here to Potuliyadda lay through the village of Mullagama. As this involved a detour we decided on a more direct if less used track; a decision we afterwards regretted as it lost us the interesting Veddas of Bingoda, and incidentally a clue to the discrepancy between Seligmann's statement and local report regarding the Veddas of the "Nuwaragala hills"—a missed opportunity the full significance of which we were only to realise some five years later after miles of [621] arduous and unnecessary travel. For the present we were told that the Veddas of Bingoda consisted of only three families, and that, though they forsook their huts for caves during the honey season, they were, if anything, less of the real Vedda than those of Henebedde.

Our journey was now an uncertainty; for the guides were doubtful both of the route and the likelihood of water. The jungle, hitherto dense, gave place to an occasional glade. Late in the evening we found ourselves in a spacious *talawa*, rank with tall grass that quite obliterated our path. Here we were benighted, just as we found a pool adequate to our needs. It was an interesting place, a veritable sanctuary, hill-encircled; an ideal

*A neophyte, attendant on a priest.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

5. NESTS AND HIVES

This is the time to climb the steep;
Up through the shadowy woods to grope,
Over the stones where the lichens creep,
On to the crag that crowns the slope;
To the wild bees stronghold hushed in sleep.

J. STILL

NESTS

136 222 IN dark fearsome caverns, and down the sides of dizzy ravines, the little edible-nest swiftlet builds its dainty nest fashioned of hardened saliva and moss. Those who think they know better will tell you that the all but invisible specks, sometimes seen high away in the empyrean at dusk, are flights of these birds on their way to the sea to gather salt foam with which to build.

222 One of the favourite pursuits of the Veddas is the collecting of these nests for barter. They call the birds *kudukarayas* (nest-makers) and their [439] nesting caves *kudu galges*. These caves are often deep gloomy recesses only entered with lighted candles (made by squeezing a column of bees-[373] wax round a central wick of cloth or bark) to scare away the scores of poisonous snakes (*karawalas* and *mapilas*) that gather there to eat the [417] eggs and young. Sometimes the nests stud the steep sides of narrow gorges, and are then taken by the aid of cane ladders let down from above.

The nesting-places are a secret the Veddas guard closely. When they took me on one of their expeditions it was on the condition that no bearers came. A hard climb brought us to near the summit of the tree-covered mountain side. "*Cho-ho-ho*," shouted the Veddas as a warning to possible bears. The approach to the cave was over-run with *avalu-wel* (used for bows) and *niyande* (of which waist strings are made). The cave itself, surmounted by an enormous rock the fall of which seemed imminent, was dark and stifling; and it was quite a time before one could discern the cup-shaped nests that clung in clusters to the vaulted roof. A Vedda handed me a parent bird he had trapped, a tiny-beaked, brownish thing, with sweeping wings, black feet and unswallow-like tail. It was quite a time too before one realised that there was a commotion in the air, and that little wraith-like forms were flitting in and out in sore distress "Swish, swish; wing, wing; twit, twit; kisiri, bisiri; takara, takara; kata, kata, kata," as from fairy castanets, came the barely audible sounds. Outside, these were louder, "Chara-chiris, chara-chiris; che-week, che-week, che-week," they twittered in futile resentment. But to these sounds the ruthless despoilers were deaf, as, mounted on heaps of stones, they scraped away with knife or arecanut cutter the trim nests from their tenacious attachments, leaving only those with eggs behind, lest the colony be killed outright. On a boulder near by [252] was a fire-place where the young had been roasted, as Kauwa of Divulana had described.

[p. 86]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

HIVES

There are five varieties of honey bee in Ceylon :—The large *bambara* (*Apis dorsata*) that builds huge combs of very pure wax on bare hill sides and the large branches of lofty trees ; the *mee massa* (*Apis indica*) sweetest honey bee of all, whose combs are to be found in hollow trees, rock-clefts and within ant-hills ; the *dandual massa* (*Apis florea*), the smallest honey-bee in the world, that hives on rocks and boughs ; the *kanava massa* (Rosin or Dammar bee) a docile, stingless, friendly little creature whose long black combs within tree crevices yield a delicious, if heady, honey ; the *kotha massa*, an even smaller species, whose puny comb is hardly worth the taking. 222 136

Kanava and *kotha* combs are available all the year round ; they are the *pathinchikarayas* or stayers. If the Vedda is hungry it is for one of these he goes at a pinch. The *bambara* and *mee massa*, the most abundant honey makers, are seasonal in their habits ; and June and July are the great honey months ; the fruit season synchronising with this, marks these months as the festive time of the jungle ; then the Veddas leave their homes for caves and stream beds, take their fill, and have a surplus for barter. 222 [439]

On the flavours of honey the Veddas are connoisseurs. They can tell by tasting a comb the flower or medley of flowers that contributed to its making. That honey is relished most which prevails when the *mora*, *veera* and *galseembela* are in bloom. [151 262]

Honey gathering is the master art of the Vedda. Supreme as he is in other jungle crafts, he is supremest in this. As he travels through the forest he is alive to the faintest hum, and no hive, however concealed, escapes him. His adroitness in tracking a bee to its lair is well described in a delightfully euphonious song they have (beginning, *Thomba, thomba Gomba me-na-na*), that tells of a Vedda Thutha who goes on the honey quest with his brothers Gomba and Naga. Thutha leads in the trail of a particular bee ; and as he goes he sings to his brothers, indicating various trees in which bees are busy ; but not decoyed by these, and with his eye steadily on the bee he first sighted, he follows it, till eventually it guides him to its hive within the skull of an elephant—*kolanathe gatche* (tree without leaves) as he quaintly describes. [533]

The taking of any hive, other than that of the rock *bambara*, is a very simple thing for the Vedda. All he does is to climb the tree, steady himself at the hole containing the comb, and blow into it to drive the bees away. Then with his axe he enlarges the opening sufficiently to enable him to introduce a hand and secure the cache, stopping every now and then to blow inside or to slap an offending bee. He eats the comb at his perch, grubs and all, throwing down fragments to those below.

The *bambara* comb is quite a different proposition. These great bees build high on the precipitous sides of rocks ; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only. A dangling cane at Westminster Abbey gave us some idea of the daring of the enterprise. To reach the combs ladders of vines are lowered from the summit of the rock ; and down these the collector descends ; as this does not bring him within arm's length of the hives, he has usually to rely on the use of a long stake. Sometimes [417 481]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222 And as he works he sings the cutter's song* and many a vulgar song besides. For this is the epic event of the Vedda's life, and never is he so happy as when engaged in the perilous work. Wild is the jungle night and the rocks around re-echo to his song.

[533: 152]

The honey-gatherer at work

[439]

When the "devil's mouth" is full, he releases it from the ladder and shouts "*adapo*" (lift) to those above; they pull on the attached rope. With a series of short jerks, the cutter climbing and helping from below, the honey is lifted. As each pull brings the vessel to the level of the cutter's head he calls out "*ho-ho*," and the hauling is stopped; then, climbing a rung or two he gives a helping hand and cries "*adapo*" again. And so, with "*adapo..... ho-ho*" following each other in quick succession, the precious freight is safely hauled over the edge of the cliff. It may be that the cutter has to descend to his work again. With the last load he climbs over the top, a figure to behold—sweating, exhausted, honey-bedaubed, bereft of all the stamina that has sustained him so long. He throws himself down. Nor have all his arts availed him against the bees, for he is covered with stings. Solicitously his wife and a friend or two group round him, and with pitying words pick off the stings. But, impatient of this, he besmears himself with sand that the ants may not worry him, and is soon asleep.

Such is the story behind the potful of *bambara* honey the Vedda offers for a trifle of grain or a fragment of cloth.

**Borri, borri, borri, borri,*
Borri, borri, borri, borri.
Ama, ama,
Aramaya, aramaya, aramaya, aramaya,
Thalung hadonage adung padung hothei hayya
Kuda harala palang anda kanthulang
Gagung thoagana yanna
Alutta Vannivu!

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave.

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men.

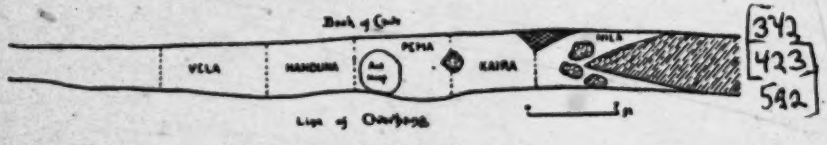


Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]."

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity,

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177 primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553 name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they had been called upon to pay a chena tax as well as 1·50 Rs. per adult male road tax. Of course they were unable to collect this money and they dreaded the ensuing penalty, that of serving on the roads, for should the two young men leave the settlement the old man and woman and the girl must starve, the first being too old to work and the woman a cripple. Their plight would have been just as bad had the young man gone to work on some Sinhalese rice fields in order to earn the money[1].

Degenerate Veddas in the neighbourhood of the main Badulla-Batticaloa road[2]. The main road from Badulla to the east coast passes through country that was once the centre of the Vedirata, and on either side of it at a distance of some 2—6 miles are various settlements of half-bred and degenerate Veddas who will soon be entirely lost among the Sinhalese. Plate XIV, figure 1, represents two men of this class: it is obvious that the young man would pass for a Sinhalese, indeed in spite of his bow and arrows and traditional scanty Vedda garb the condition of his hair shows that he has at least been following a Sinhalese mode of life. It is possible that the whole Vedda get-up may have been assumed for our benefit, though in view of the comparative skill with which he handled his bow we do not think this likely. The old man was doubtless one of the last degenerate Veddas of the district.

Before passing to village Veddas a word must be said concerning the Omuni folk and those of Unuwatura Bubula. Sir James Emerson Tennant, in his work *Ceylon* published in 1859, states that Mr Atherton, A.G.A., in conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, attempted to civilise the Veddas[3]. In 1838 "cottages were built for them in their own district, rice land assigned to them, wells dug, coconuts planted, two communities were speedily settled at Vippammadvo." A

[1] This is a not uncommon practice at the present day.

[2] This road is only some forty or fifty years old, Mr Warren tells me that "the old road from Badulla to Batticaloa joined the road from Alutnuwara. It crossed the present cart road about Kallodi and must have worked its way in the neighbourhood of the present road to Tumpalancholai and so to the ferry into Batticaloa." Part of this track is still used as a short cut. "There was another road from Passera through Medagama past Makakandiyaweva to Mandur; *tavilam* travel that way now."

[3] Tennant, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 447.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukhan* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) · 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

away more frightened than you. A scratching noise under your pillow may lead to the discovery of a scorpion or a centipede. Beetles, moths, biting ants, and insects of all descriptions investigate and experiment with you. But you soon learn to ignore these little draw-backs and drowse to the lullaby of some wood-land songster.

Tropical Nature is a stern mistress; her favours are never unalloyed. For him who would seek her she holds grievances in store, grievances that enhance the very joy they encumber; toning down ecstasy lest it pall with surfeit; giving to the contemplation of foregone experience that unfettered pleasure the reality denies, prompting us in after years to say, forgetful of all the hardships, "those were happy days we had".

The Verugal where it joined the Mahaweli was at this season an insignificant stream. Quite a colony of tobacco growers flourished here. Very picturesque are these settlements or *thethes* as they are called. Four to six huts stand some distance apart in clearings along the bank, most of them beautifully overspread with melon-creepers. Every hut has its vegetable garden; and standing before them, like sentinels, are the draw-wells, usually in couples, that feed the tobacco plots direct from the river. The lowing of cattle under the superb trees that stud the clearing, the crowing of cocks, the sound of human voices complete the atmosphere of rural domesticity in this wild land and furnish scenes which would rejoice the heart of a painter.

Putting up one evening in a coconut grove owned by a Moor we found an unkempt ill-clad fellow seated on his haunches staring at some simple wares a pedlar was displaying. They told us he was a Vedda from a village some miles away. Becoming restless under our scrutiny he walked off. I followed him to his miserable shelter, where I found his daughter, a puny girl of four, covered with ulcers. Edging up towards her father she stared at us distrustfully with the eyes of a startled doe. A few broken pots were their sole belongings. The bond of tender solicitude that united these human derelicts, of no consequence except to each other, was indeed a touching sight. I asked the man what he did for a living. He said he "earned a rupee for two months work". He knew neither his nor his daughter's age, and when pressed for an answer said irritably, "What do I know of age? Am I a man who knows anything about age?" Blessed mortal!

We gave him a coin which he at first refused, and only accepted with persuasion; he had evidently never handled one like it before, for he looked at it puzzled and suspicious; and when the amount it represented was explained to him he was not enlightened.

"He knows nothing," said the Moor vociferously. "Ask him to count six and see if he can. He's a real bull. What does he know? He's a Vedda. For thirty-six cents he will bring a kerosene-tinful of *bambara** honey, and," he added chuckling with subtle satisfaction, "he does not know what thirty-six cents is!"

The next day we saw in the distance the blue contours of Gunner's Quoin, the goal of our journey. The river had now become considerably shallower with broad stretches of its sandy bed exposed. As we punted along the shady border, we suddenly came upon a most realistic piece of ancient sculpture—the life-sized head of an elephant carved out of a

*Rock-bee, *Apis dorsata*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chaufleur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukhan* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 the work with songs, so as to get up a certain degree of excitement, necessary to carry them through the task. A song is chanted, and a little honey sprinkled for the spirits, before the combs are cut off the rock[1]."

533

222
413
415

Before honey collecting as many pots as possible are made and old pots and gourds are overhauled. The wooden sword which Nevill mentions is probably the *masliya* (fig. 12). This is a stout stick about 2¼ metres long with four prongs at one end, which the Vedda carries hanging by a loop from his forearm and which he uses to detach the comb and convey it into the vessel called a *maludema* in which the honey is collected. This is also carried hanging from the forearm and should be made of deer's hide so that it may not be broken against the rocks as the honey collector swings to and fro. Plate LXV shows a *maludema* collected at Sitala Wanniya. An arrow is also carried and is largely used in detaching the combs from the rock.

222
476

Before taking the honey a bundle of green leaves is set alight and lowered in order to stupefy the bees. The smoker is called *odiya* (Sin. *kula*) and the creeper attached to it *yotwella*[2]. Several men of the community join together to collect rock-honey, the whole spoil being equally divided without any special consideration for the owner of the land, though it seemed that the owner would decide when the honey should be collected. The women accompany their men to crags and gulleys where the *bambara* build their combs. They hold torches and sing while the honey is being collected.

231

Plate LXVI shows a gourd, used as a hive for a colony of the stingless bee, hanging outside one

Fig. 18.
Masliya × $\frac{1}{10}$.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

[2] For the use of these see Chapter IV where the pantomime of honey getting is described.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XVI

THE SENSES OF THE VEDDAS

THE extraordinary skill displayed by the Veddas in discovering game and honey led us to test their senses as far as the time at our disposal would allow. Before recording the results of these tests in detail we may state the impression produced by certain incidents of our intercourse with the Veddas. We several times had Vedda guides and invariably noticed that, however difficult the ground, they walked quickly and noiselessly without apparently paying any attention to their footsteps. Nor did they ever seem even momentarily at a loss as to the direction to take in order to reach any part of their territory, in spite of the absence of obvious tracks. We do not think that they depended to any considerable extent on the sun; indeed, the conditions under which our most striking experience of this kind took place puts that out of the question. We left our camp at Sitala Wanniya early one morning with Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira to walk to a cave which proved to be about four miles distant. Our course lay through dense jungle, it rained intermittently and the glimpses of the sky which we obtained showed that it was completely overcast during the whole of the time. There was no sign of a track, and except once for about a couple of hundred yards we did not follow any stream though we crossed several. Nevertheless Handuna led us at a rapid walk straight up to the rock shelter which was our destination. This faculty is shared by another people inhabiting Ceylon, the Wanniya, the inhabitants of the Wanni, a large forest tract in the North Central Province. The life led by these hunters in some respects resembles that of the

151
[481]
[A 395]

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

element as they are in the midst of a civilized crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear. 181 [481]

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back. 411 [412]

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡ [147] [283]

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made, and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes still to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not 439

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, dooncomadala (*strychnos chelonoides*), the kahala (*cynthocalyx zeylanicus*), a creeper called kohbówel, or the pandéro tree. [314]

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zeylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the ara[illegible]wel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night; and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 to catch the hum of bees, which so instantaneously struck his ear. Their forest life naturally quickens their powers both of seeing and hearing, and renders them, in these respects, far superior to those whose more civilized lives do not compel them to rely on those faculties for their daily food.

They take honey in the manner common to the Singhalese. The bee-hunter enlarges with his small axe the hole in the tree at which the bee enters, and putting his mouth to the aperture, blows into it. This has generally the effect of making the bees fly out; or, at least, of making them vacate the comb, and retire into the innermost recesses of the hollow tree, when the honey can be taken with the hand. If this do not succeed, however, a second puff, after the bee-hunter has chewed some aromatic substance, has the desired effect.

Taking the honey of the bambera (*apis Indica*), a large and
222 very venomous bee, is a much more serious affair. This bee hives
283 on very lofty trees, or in clefts of precipitous rocks. If on a
481 tree, the hunter ties tendrils to it, and armed with a bundle of blazing faggots, climbs to the vicinity of the comb and smokes the bees out, being often severely stung during the operation. If in a cleft of rock, he will, if he cannot otherwise approach it, lower himself with ropes made of creepers, and take the honey by the same process.

To the Veddahs, honey is not only favourite food, but valuable
439 as an object of barter, for the Kandyans prize it greatly for medicinal purposes. They use it, too, as Knox tells us, for pre-
251 serving flesh. "They cut a hollow tree and put honey in it, and then fill it with flesh, and stop it with clay, which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want."* And when they are short of food, they mix honey with decayed wood, and so eat it. It
261 satisfies their craving more readily than plain honey. Davy properly describes the practice, as "not so much for nourishment as to distend the empty stomach and to allay the distressing feelings of emptiness and the pains of hunger." It is curious that Tennent should have entirely omitted all allusion to this remarkable custom. "Romba" is the term used by the Veddahs, for this decayed wood, and the practice I have described may have given rise to the epithet, which Knox applies to the "wild sort" called "Ramba Veddahs," who, he says, "never shew themselves" —but no "sort" is so called now, nor is the name remembered.†

---

* Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63.

† Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63. The wood so used is chiefly that of the
[824] erimina creeper (*zizyphus oenoplia*, Mill.), the vitamba—wild mango (*mangifera Indica*, Quin.), the weera (*hemicyclia sepiaria*, W. and A.), the rena, the noora, a species of fig; any wood, indeed, not poisonous, is used. They reject the wood of the kaduru (*cerbera odallum*, Gærtn.), the goda

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

I remarked that while walking through the jungle, though provided with a knife, Dissan Hamy rarely used it to cut away any intercepting branch or creeper, these being invariably bent to one side by the hand. 481

I observed this custom many years ago when travelling through a distant village called Uda Wellawey at the foot of the Haldummulla hills, and I understand it is to prevent persons from finding a hunter's trail.

I made inquiry, in addition to direct observation while exploring the Vedda country, as to the prevailing diseases among the inhabitants, and what was done as regards remedies. The result of my investigation led me to conclude that the commonest disease among adults was fever, but I could get no statistics on which I could rely to form an opinion as to the percentage this particular disease afforded as compared with others. 164

It was, however, difficult to discriminate in what proportion of fevers typhoid was to be regarded, as I found in many cases the people did not know the difference. Dysentery appears to be well known, and is locally called "Le-pachchane," but I was told that it was not nearly so common as fever. Fever is not common as compared with the prevalence of that disease in the Tamankaduwa District.

Venereal, I am told, is unknown, and probably for reasons I gave earlier in this Paper. It occurs, however, more in the neighbourhood of civilized centres. I did not see a single instance of goitre, or of elephantiasis, though I cannot suppose the latter is unknown. I found numerous cases of sores on the feet and legs of both adults and children, but these were explained as being in all cases due to accidental injuries. Bronchitis, however, is common, more especially in children, who also appear to be commonly troubled with anæmia, which may or may not be directly due to intestinal parasites.

As regards treatment, I found that the remedy was invariably based on the theory that diseases may be divided into two great classes—heating or inflammatory, and the opposite—therefore the cure was to be found in those specifics which were opposed to these two heads of causation. For example, if a man had a violent cold, the "milk" of the coconut could 753 757

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as *na* leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [825] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in 222 families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 252 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 757 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 262 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all 164 were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This [757] his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: 000 those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothuru-pathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree
that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of
the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of
brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pine-
apple.

The height was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the
superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then
the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There,
crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadina-
gala; to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thanagoda* (breast
mounds) and behind them *Thanakirigoda* (breast milk mound) with
wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks
driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the
summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach
of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale:
A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a
ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing
daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by
just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within
reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it.
When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep
into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards
it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge
collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year.
On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor
fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife
who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena kalangkal-
angma popehorai*," which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 535
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were
hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with
slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose
and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that
these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted
by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with
great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that [534]
studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch
perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For
a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step
dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they out-
distance us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

A [the hill called Westminster Abbey. – Analyst]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

In their inhospitable forests, the most wild and arid in the Island, where food is scarce and only attained with great hardship, the Vedda is king. His lifelong apprenticeship to the harsh conditions fits him superbly to the mercile s task. He knows season and place and is sensitive to the slightest clue. How ill-fitted for this life are we of the towns who would starve by a tree with a honey-comb or with a succulent yam under foot. They make us feel like children, in that environment, these admirable Crichtons of the jungle, and our urban refinements as dross compared with their simple skill and hardihood. 311

It is truly a delight to travel with the Vedda and watch his ways. Moving silently, speaking no word except to "hum" an animal call to attract each other's attention, they allow nothing to escape them, and read the ground like a book, indicating spoor where you see nothing. Becoming sceptical of such claims I thought I would test the skill of Suthu Banda, also known as Poromola. Telling him to turn his face away, I tip-toed lightly on the bed of leaf that carpeted our path, and asked him to indicate my foot-prints. 151 224

"Here they are, and here," he said without a moment's hesitation. "Why, it's easy; don't you see the leaves turned?" (I certainly did not, demonstrate as hard as he might). "What is the difficulty for us to see a human foot-print here," he continued, "who have to follow a mouse-deer's trail on ground that shows less than this."

We had halted by a tree of great height and enormous girth, branchless for quite forty feet from the ground—as awkward a proposition for a climber as one could wish. I asked Suthu Banda whether he could climb it. "Why not," he said; and, without so much as putting down the axe hitched to his shoulder, he mounted the rock beside which the tree stood, and looked up a second or two. Then, shinning up an adjacent sapling that shot high, swung on to the slender extremity of the big tree's lowermost branch that sagged under his weight, and moved along with a carelessness painful to watch. He was soon among boughs no bigger than a man's wrist, and from the dizzy height wished to know whether we wanted him to go higher! None of your artificial aids, such as loops, for the Vedda; he is a veritable quadrumana, with feet as prehensile as hands. 481

They have a sure method of killing sambur. In the rainy months, and also, more rarely, in the drought, these animals climb to the tops of solitary hills. The Vedda, always watchful for the opportunity, is quick to detect this by the spoor. Cautiously attaining the summit, one or two of them guard with guns the only path by which the sambur must 224

Yams, chillies and melons survive a few months longer. After one to one and a half years the *chena* is abandoned as worthless, and a fresh acreage leased; for *kurrukkan* especially, is reputed to take such heavy toll of the soil, that this must be allowed to lie fallow for some ten or twelve years before being fit for recultivation! A terrible consumption of forest land results, unless controlled; harmless enough where a few families exist in vast forests; but sadly devastating in places at all populous. [241]

Irrigation, as these people know it, is solely what heaven bestows. Water may lie to hand but is not seriously utilized. A drought brings ruin, and scatters the folk far in quest of food. It is time a more economic system of agriculture was introduced to the Vanni, and the people taught, by the institution of model *chenas*, at least the value of forest leaf mould as a manure, and the advantages of some simple system of irrigation from available streams or wells, such as the Tamils of Jaffna and the Moors of the Eastern Province exploit so well.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222
417
● 481

"Over the edge." (Page 89)

222
373

Honey-gatherer, girt with torches and stake, ready to descend. (Page 89)

[FACING p. 87]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

HIVES

There are five varieties of honey bee in Ceylón :—The large *bambara* (*Apis dorsata*) that builds huge combs of very pure wax on bare hill sides and the large branches of lofty trees ; the *mee massa* (*Apis indica*) sweetest honey bee of all, whose combs are to be found in hollow trees, rock-clefts and within ant-hills ; the *dandual massa* (*Apis florea*), the smallest honey-bee in the world, that hives on rocks and boughs ; the *kanava massa* (Rosin or Dammar bee) a docile, stingless, friendly little creature whose long black combs within tree crevices yield a delicious, if heady, honey ; the *kotha massa*, an even smaller species, whose puny comb is hardly worth the taking. 222 136

Kanava and *kotha* combs are available all the year round ; they are the *pathinchikarayas* or stayers. If the Vedda is hungry it is for one of these he goes at a pinch. The *bambara* and *mee massa*, the most abundant honey makers, are seasonal in their habits ; and June and July are the great honey months ; the fruit season synchronising with this, marks these months as the festive time of the jungle ; then the Veddas leave their homes for caves and stream beds, take their fill, and have a surplus for barter. 222 [439]

On the flavours of honey the Veddas are connoisseurs. They can tell by tasting a comb the flower or medley of flowers that contributed to its making. That honey is relished most which prevails when the *mora*, *veera* and *galseembela* are in bloom. [151 262]

Honey gathering is the master art of the Vedda. Supreme as he is in other jungle crafts, he is supremest in this. As he travels through the forest he is alive to the faintest hum, and no hive, however concealed, escapes him. His adroitness in tracking a bee to its lair is well described in a delightfully euphonious song they have (beginning, *Thomba, thomba Gomba me-na-na*), that tells of a Vedda Thutha who goes on the honey quest with his brothers Gomba and Naga. Thutha leads in the trail of a particular bee ; and as he goes he sings to his brothers, indicating various trees in which bees are busy ; but not decoyed by these, and with his eye steadily on the bee he first sighted, he follows it, till eventually it guides him to its hive within the skull of an elephant—*kolanathe gatche* (tree without leaves) as he quaintly describes. [533]

The taking of any hive, other than that of the rock *bambara*, is a very simple thing for the Vedda. All he does is to climb the tree, steady himself at the hole containing the comb, and blow into it to drive the bees away. Then with his axe he enlarges the opening sufficiently to enable him to introduce a hand and secure the cache, stopping every now and then to blow inside or to slap an offending bee. He eats the comb at his perch, grubs and all, throwing down fragments to those below.

The *bambara* comb is quite a different proposition. These great bees build high on the precipitous sides of rocks ; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only. A dangling cane at Westminster Abbey gave us some idea of the daring of the enterprise. To reach the combs ladders of vines are lowered from the summit of the rock ; and down these the collector descends ; as this does not bring him within arm's length of the hives, he has usually to rely on the use of a long stake. Sometimes [417 481]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

his mother so should he treat his *mama*. A man's father and his father's brothers are less important than his *mama* who receive the largest share of all game killed by their actual or potential sons-in-law. 606

The love and comradeship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law was often very marked, and sometimes the voice of Handuna of Sitala Wanniya took on a special tone of tenderness when speaking of his *baena*; indeed, the importance of the relationship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law is shown in many ways. Thus not only do they very generally hunt and move about together, but whereas when a girl marries she is often given pots and gourds by her mother, a man receives wedding gifts, which—as is shown in the chapter on land transfer—often consist of tracts of land, not from his father but from his father-in-law, who should be his mother's brother.

Again, although a man presents part of his kill to his father's brothers and mother's sisters, a larger share is given to his actual or potential father-in-law and mother-in-law, and before marriage these may get a specially large share. A man would assist his potential father-in-law and mother-in-law in house building and chena cultivation as a matter of course, but he would only help his other uncles and aunts if asked. When hunting, a son-in-law will usually carry his father-in-law's kill, but he would show the same consideration for his own father and probably for any older man. [482]

We may perhaps fairly sum up this matter by saying, that whereas before marriage a man paid at least as much regard to his future father-in-law as to his own father (and in theory he should pay more), after marriage his father-in-law becomes more important, and the association between father-in-law and son-in-law becomes far closer and more intimate than that existing between father and son. There are, however, certain matters in which father and son are more closely associated than *mama* and *baena*: a boy's bringing up is essentially a matter to which his father attends, and in which the *mama* takes no great part unless the father dies. Again, in theory, sons should take at least as large a part in looking after their aged and infirm fathers as do the latter's sons-in-law. 593 606

Plate XLIII

535
79L

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the bow of Dunne Yakini (Sitala Wanniya)*

[482]

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Kaira dances with the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXVIII

142
291

Fig. 1. Coast Veddas.

[534
482
516]

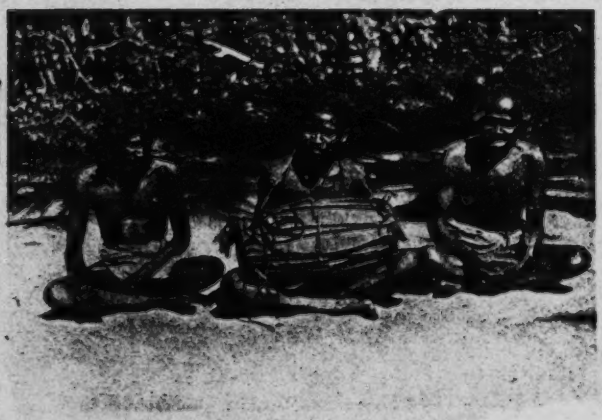


Fig. 2. Coast Veddas of Vakarai

[facing p. 332a]

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
411
311
412
482
622

Handuna strings his bow (Page 16)

The best of the Hennebedda Veddas.—Poromola and Handuna (Page 16)

[facing p. 16]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854

Handuna's household. (Page 13)

142
291
224
411
482

Hennebedde Veddas (Page 16)

The iguana hunter. (Page 17)

[facing p. 17]

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854

"Sedate, wistful children." (Page 36)

[facing p. 36]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 342 114 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *hurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aratchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 224 482 142 609 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

600 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

267 There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
224 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

252 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his
[482] shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent
824 to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251 252] little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle like meat.

222 Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galsembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *kibutoo*, *bulunga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *katuala*, *kirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261] various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galsembela*, *mora*, *kabatha*, *muga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up
752 with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapatho*, *angulue*, *lulo*, *kalukanao*, *kanupatho*, *antho* (eels), *magaro*, *kunge*, *kheliyo*, *pethy*, *walikondo*, *ethalu*, *kadapathalo*, *walihairiyo*, *piniwaliyo*, *kowalayo*, *galpandurao*.

† *Kaharumang-gedir*, *kalo-mul*, *thimbiri-gedir*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
224

An ape for dinner. (Page 82)

342

Ala-galge, a Vedda cave. (Page 84)

[facing p. 86]

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Veddas AX5

142
291
411
415
482

The finest Veddas we saw in Bintenne. (Page 95)

[facing p. 95]

1,Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the huts in the Morane chena settlement at Henebedda. It was shown us with pride by Handuna who said he was keeping it for his twelve year old son. He told us that in the old days the hollow branches, the homes of colonies of these bees, were frequently kept in the rock-shelters. 231

The ladder with the help of which *bambara* honey is collected consists of a greatly elongated loop of cane, apparently derived from a species of *Calamus*, across which rungs of creeper are stretched. In Plate LV (p. 290) there can be seen the bottom of the ladder some fifty feet long, used for training the young, hung from the top of the cliff across the face of the rock mass at Sitala Wanniya. In spite of the fact that honey is usually gathered at night the Veddas do not travel or hunt at night and know only two stars by name. One of these is a star or more probably a planet which often appears close to the moon and is called *pantaru* which, we were told, is the name by which the Sinhalese know it. The other named star appears soon after sunset, always in the same place and before the other stars, and is almost certainly Venus; this is called *irabada tarua*, i.e. "side of sun star." Although the Veddas hunt in the dusk of the dawn the idea that anyone would roam about at night seemed absolutely ludicrous to them (Sitala Wanniya), they roared with laughter at it, "why should one go into the jungle? it would be too dark to see to shoot, besides bears are about, absurd idea," they laughed again, in fact it was quite ten minutes before Kaira had forgotten the joke. 222 417 821 [484] 821 522

MASTICATORIES.

All Veddas chew eagerly, but as they can rarely obtain a supply of areca nuts they commonly use instead of these the bark of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) and the *dawata* tree (*Carallia integerrima*). Concerning the other plants that they use as masticatories Nevill says, "They occasionally chew the leaves of several aromatic herbs, particularly *Anisochilus suffruticosus*, a sort of sage that grows on rocks. The areca does not grow wild in the Eastern Province, but Veddas are very fond of the seeds of the lakada bush, *Gardenia carinata*, a 261 276

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

He left the group and seated himself before me—a sinewy, handsome, bearded man of perhaps forty. /15

"Those Veddas," he said contemplatively, when I told him how we stood; "who can say where they are? In one cave to-day, in a another to-morrow. They said they came from Dhik-galge, did they? But you can never take a Vedda's word for that. If they are not there—what then? All our trouble will be in vain. I cannot say I know the caves in those hills very well. I have only been among them once, and that many years ago, when I took my wife from her people. She and I wandered about there. How well she knew the trails, she who had trodden them but once as a little child; for her home, like mine, was elsewhere. I would see a track and point to it saying, 'This must be the way to the cave.' 'No,' she would say 'that leads to the wilderness; there should be a path by that tree yonder'; and she would always be right. I remember well the *hong* tree by the Alu-galge; I shot two monkeys and we ate them there." And so his thoughts rambled amid honey-moon scenes he loved to recall. 114

But, as this meandering led nowhere, I offered a reward of five rupees to anyone who would show me the Veddas in their caves on the morrow, and took to bed. For long I lay pondering what manner of man was the Chetty who could live in this wilderness with a Vedda woman for wife. He seemed to know intimately every Vedda in the district, and had sometimes even shared their caves. He remained an enigma, as also that smile of his, no more than a mere display of the teeth, which imbued the knit, pathetic cast of his features with an expression whether of saintliness or villainy, it was hard to tell. Ostensibly he was here to rear cattle; but why come so far for that?

The next morning, accompanied by Meenemaruwa, the Chetty and a half-Vedda of Galmede, we set out on our quest. The plan was this; we were to travel to a spot where a certain stream crossed the path: there we would probably find foot-prints; if these led to the hills we would follow, if in the opposite direction, pursuit would be useless, as that would imply that the Veddas had returned to their homes in Bingoda fifteen miles away; for at this season the Veddas did not live in their caves, and the party we were in search of must have come on a few days hunting. I now understood the reticence of these people to take me on what might prove a wild goose chase; and learnt, what was more important, that the Veddas of Galmede were the Veddas of Bingoda. 114

We came to the stream; the foot-prints were there. Our guides bent down eagerly examining them. "This is Suthubanda's," they said "and this Badapissa's; this other is a woman's; no, it's a boy's." The tracks pointed towards the hills! The chase began.

Meenemaruwa led, for he alone could decipher that trail, three days old, on the hard dry ground. Once we left the stream there was apparently not the faintest indication of a foot-mark; but our guide moved rapidly along, and soon involved us in an enforested labyrinth of hills. Very occasionally a broken twig would furnish a clue. Indicating one of these Meenemaruwa said, "Now, that would never have been done had old Handuna been alive. 'Hu,' he would have said, slapping the errant one, 'do you want to show everybody the way to our caves; then where would we go if people came after us?' To the rock, the cave and the hive there must be no clue; that is the Vedda law. 114 B6 487

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 342 114 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aratchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 224 482 142 609 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

000 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL

THE Vedda country at the present day is limited to a roughly triangular tract lying between the eastern slopes of the central mountain *massif* and the sea. This area of about 2400 square miles is bounded on the west by the Mahaweli Ganga, from the point where, abandoning its eastern course through the mountains of the Central Province, the river sweeps northwards to the sea. A line from this great bend passing eastwards through Bibile village (on the Badulla-Batticaloa road) to the coast will define the southern limits of the Vedda country with sufficient accuracy, while its eastern limit is the coast. So defined it includes the greater part of the Eastern Province, about a fifth of Uva and a small portion of that part of the North Central Province known as Tamankaduwa, and is traversed by a single high road capable of taking wheeled traffic. This runs from Badulla, the capital of Uva, lying at the foot of the central mountain mass of the island, to the coast a few miles to the north of Batticaloa, the capital of the Eastern Province. 131. [491]

Excepting only the mountain scenery of Upper Uva and the Central Province, the Vedda country even in its present diminished form presents every variety of scenery met with in Ceylon, including alike the magnificent Uva park lands and the sandy mangrove-fringed flats of the Eastern coast. Within its borders is situated Mahayangana (Alutnuwara) the ancient assembling place of the Yakkas where, according to the Mahawansa, Buddha appeared and struck terror into their hearts before propounding his doctrines to the hosts of *deva* who 133

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they had been called upon to pay a chena tax as well as 1·50 Rs. per adult male road tax. Of course they were unable to collect this money and they dreaded the ensuing penalty, that of serving on the roads, for should the two young men leave the settlement the old man and woman and the girl must starve, the first being too old to work and the woman a cripple. Their plight would have been just as bad had the young man gone to work on some Sinhalese rice fields in order to earn the money[1].

Degenerate Veddas in the neighbourhood of the main Badulla-Batticaloa road[2]. The main road from Badulla to the east coast passes through country that was once the centre of the Vedirata, and on either side of it at a distance of some 2—6 miles are various settlements of half-bred and degenerate Veddas who will soon be entirely lost among the Sinhalese. Plate XIV, figure 1, represents two men of this class: it is obvious that the young man would pass for a Sinhalese, indeed in spite of his bow and arrows and traditional scanty Vedda garb the condition of his hair shows that he has at least been following a Sinhalese mode of life. It is possible that the whole Vedda get-up may have been assumed for our benefit, though in view of the comparative skill with which he handled his bow we do not think this likely. The old man was doubtless one of the last degenerate Veddas of the district.

Before passing to village Veddas a word must be said concerning the Omuni folk and those of Unuwatura Bubula. Sir James Emerson Tennant, in his work *Ceylon* published in 1859, states that Mr Atherton, A.G.A., in conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, attempted to civilise the Veddas[3]. In 1838 "cottages were built for them in their own district, rice land assigned to them, wells dug, coconuts planted, two communities were speedily settled at Vippammadvo." A

[1] This is a not uncommon practice at the present day.

[2] This road is only some forty or fifty years old, Mr Warren tells me that "the old road from Badulla to Batticaloa joined the road from Alutnuwara. It crossed the present cart road about Kallodi and must have worked its way in the neighbourhood of the present road to Tumpalancholai and so to the ferry into Batticaloa." Part of this track is still used as a short cut. "There was another road from Passera through Medagama past Makakandiyaweva to Mandur; *tavilam* travel that way now."

[3] Tennant, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 447.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
193 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *warugi*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

241 The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
342 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
415 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from
534 that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
● 505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

166 in one instance there had been intermarriage with Sinhalese,
563 and we suspected this in other cases, though the majority appear to be reasonably pure-blooded.

361 These people make chenas[1] on which they live temporarily
231 in bark-covered huts; Plate X, figure 1, represents the chena settlement of the local group of the Namadewa *waruge*, some of the members of which are shown in Plate X, figure 2. They gather honey and hunt, several of them possess guns, and some
[223 of them rear cattle for the Sinhalese villagers. Indeed, for
224] Veddas their lot is singularly happy, since they live in the heart of the park country where game is still abundant. Bailey first induced some Veddas in the Nilgala district to make chenas about the middle of the last century, before which all the Veddas in this district were probably living their natural hunting, honey-gathering life.

361 It is not often that a community that has taken to the semi-
511 civilised life of chena cultivation is seen, in which its members are so healthy and well fed, for Veddas dislike settling down and do not generally do so until they find they can no longer subsist on the game in the country, when they either drift into Sinhalese settlements, or make extremely rough chenas for themselves, the produce of which is seldom sufficient to feed the community. Besides which, as is the case with the Sinhalese peasants themselves, the crop is often pledged to Moormen pedlars before it is reaped. The poor Veddas then subsist
[164] as best they can on yams, honey and berries, and usually fall a prey to fever. Several Veddas in this wretched condition were seen between Namal Oya and Bandaraduwa, while those at Godatalawa were scarcely better off.

In the Nilgala district the conditions are different. Chena making and cattle rearing had been introduced while game was still abundant, families are still able to leave the chena settlement and hunt and gather honey, living during such times in rock shelters within their own hunting boundary. However, the

[1] Bailey defines a chena as "a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again: it is reclaimed again after intervals of from five to ten years," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.* Vol. II, 1863, p. 181.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

231 for the Sinhalese of Potuliyadde, receiving every fifth calf that is born. The community has, or recently had, ten or more head of cattle of their own and have sold bulls to the brother-in-law of our *tavalam*[1] leader for as much as 30 Rs., indeed, our *tavalam* leader stated that he had himself visited the Danigala chena and had also seen the cattle. On this occasion Kaira and his sons 291 wore a coloured cloth as the Sinhalese do and their women wore a *kambaya* and coloured breast handkerchief. Mr Bibile was 621 able to confirm some of these statements from his own know- 177 ledge and on making investigations among the local villagers 609 discovered that there was a whole community living on the chena settlement, some of whom had married Sinhalese. Indeed it appeared that not only have members of this community learnt to play the part of professional primitive man, but there has even been specialisation, for as far as we could learn, the men we met at the look-out hut are those who always receive visitors or come to Bibile when sent for, while the others whom we did not see do not pose as wild Veddas. Probably the part they now play had only recently crystallised into a professional rôle, but it must be remembered that so long ago as 1863 Bailey discussing these Veddas, or their fathers, says "they were brought in from the forests to be 'looked at'" and he adds, "I never saw that contempt for money which Tennant supposes is still existing[2]."

101 **Kovil Vanamai.** In the Eastern Province in the neighbourhood of Devulani tank the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are found, this term being applied to a number of groups of Veddas living in this neighbourhood. The name Kovil Vanamai means temple [346] precincts and seems to have arisen from there being one or more temples in this part of the country, while some of these shrines are traditionally associated with Veddas, apparently with old settled coast and village Veddas, for we have no reason to think that the ancestors of the folk we saw at Bandaraduwa, or the other wilder Veddas of fifty years ago, were in any way guardians of the temples or dependent on their bounty. Although at the present day the Kovil Vanamai 511 Veddas are represented by scattered groups, for the most part

[1] A *tavalam* is a train of pack bulls.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 283.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

badly off and in varying conditions of ill health and malnutrition, 511
there is abundant evidence that only a generation back these communities were composed of a large number of families who, although they made chenas, led a healthy hunting life for a great part of the year. Plate XI, figure 2, represents some men and children of the Bandaraduwa chena settlement; from 144
this photograph it is evident that in spite of their prosperity even twenty-five years ago, there must have been much miscegenation, and the appearance of a couple of old grey-headed men alleged Veddas whom we saw in this neighbourhood certainly suggested that they possessed only a fraction of Vedda blood[1].

The following account of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas as they 115
existed some 20 or 25 years ago was given us by Tissahami, Arachi[2] of Potuliyadde, a man who on account of his long association with Veddas is often spoken of as the Vedda Arachi. This man though presenting the appearance of a typical Kandyan
Sinhalese has Vedda blood in his veins, for his ancestors were [144]
Veddas of Moranegala in the Eastern Province, his great grandfather being a Vedda shaman who settled at Damenegama in Uva Province. Although this man's descendants intermarried with the local Sinhalese (who are themselves in part the descendants of Veddas) and adopted the Sinhalese mode of life, one man at least in each generation continued to act as shaman (S. *kapurale*), and the father of the Arachi was a devil dancer and *wederale* (native doctor) of some note. This man's son, the Arachi, now a man of between 40 and 50, exerts a great deal of influence over the peasants in his neighbourhood, who all recognise that he is in more or less constant communication with the spirits, to which fact his neighbours attribute much of his success. In this manner was explained the quickness with which he recently learnt blacksmith's work. We had not heard of his re-

[1] Some of the "Veddas" living in the neighbourhood of Bandaraduwa and the sea are comparatively tall, stoutly built men with no appearance of Vedda ancestry. Two men from Uhene in Nadukade Patta measured 65 and 65½ inches respectively. Two men, who looked like Tamils but called themselves Veddas, lived on big Sinhalese chenas at Kotelinda; one of them said that his wife's parents had belonged to the Galmada group.

[2] *Arachi* is the title applied to the headman of a Sinhalese village settlement.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *kodoi*, *tiru* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure 1) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *maruge* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *maruge* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Arachi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 439 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 141 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 mm. (60½ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 mm. (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 609 576 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

166 115 651 Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

[Remarkably; see p. 16. — Analyst]

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 school was founded and two other settlements fromed at
621 Oomany and Villengelavelly. However, the enterprise was soon
797 abandoned owing to the misconduct of some of the teachers. "But," continues Tennant, "the good effects of even this temporary experiment were apparent; not one of the Veddas returned to his cave and savage habits... The other colony at Oomany continues to the present day prosperous and successful, twenty-five families are resident around it, rice and other grains are produced in sufficiency and coconuts are planted near the cottages. The only desertions have been the departures of those in search of employment, who have removed to other villages in quest of it. The school was closed in 1847 owing to there being no more children at the time requiring instruction..."

177 The colony can no longer be called "prosperous and success-
62 ful," indeed, we found it in a state of semi-starvation. Before 1838, when these people were induced to settle, there can be little doubt that they were living in a somewhat similar condition to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas of the present day, but since then there has been a considerable infusion of foreign blood, for it has long been the habit of criminals and others desirous of concealment, to seek refuge with the village Veddas, who usually receive them kindly and accept them as members of their community. Since the artificial origin of this settlement is known it cannot be regarded as belonging to the village Veddas, but rather to a colony of degenerate settled Veddas.

511 Omuni. At Maha Oya three half-bred Veddas from Omuni
687 were seen who had been brought in by the Sinhalese headman to work on the road as they had not paid their "road tax." It was unnecessary for them to plead they were poor and hungry, for their miserable condition showed this all too clearly. Happily Mr. S. W. Woodhouse, the district judge, was then in Maha Oya and realising that while these men were absent from their village, their women and children would be in a worse plight than ever, he excused them their tax and sent them back to
511 Omuni. About a week later we visited Omuni and although we were met with the customary gift of honey to which were added a few berries, it was obvious that the settlement was really short of food and this in spite of a number of families having left some

months previously to wander into Tamankaduwa where they hoped to get yams and perhaps some game. A number of women left the village immediately after our arrival, explaining that if they did not go and find some yams they and their children would get nothing to eat that night. Some of the men possessed bows and arrows but game was scarce, and their living was obviously precarious, yams, monitor lizards, honey and berries forming their staple diet. Fowls were kept and were taken down to the road (10 miles distant) to sell. Like all Veddas they possessed dogs, invaluable to them in catching monitor lizards when there is no bigger game to hunt, and their care for them was shown by a small shelter which they had built in order to shade a bitch with a litter of puppies. 511 [262] 231

In physical characters these Veddas somewhat resembled the neighbouring Sinhalese, but were less stoutly built; this appearance may however in part have been due to malnutrition. Their headman is a short, well-nourished, exceedingly active and intelligent individual, whose only Vedda characteristic is his short stature. Plate XIV, figure 2, represents a number of Omuni women. 142

Unuwatura Bubula. The position of the Unuwatura Bubula Veddas is extremely difficult to understand, they occupy two small groups of huts (one of which is shown in Plate XV, figure 1) a little distance from the huts of some peasant Sinhalese. They formerly lived at Mudugala and have doubtless been in close contact with the Sinhalese for many generations, but whether they are the remains of village Vedda settlements or are settled wild Veddas cannot be stated with certainty, though the latter seems more probable. It must be explained that though this community has mixed much with the Sinhalese and has doubtless been much influenced by them, they have their own shamans and they perform their own rites quite apart from their Sinhalese neighbours. Unfortunately the shaman of these people who knew most about the customs and rites of this community was ill, having overtaxed his strength at the first ceremony performed for us, and was not able to talk much, but he was present at most of our conversations and was thus a check on the younger man, but for the reason indicated many 101 177

[i.e. Veddas of Omuni - Anthy]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

these village Veddas, though they seem to be of a somewhat 157
morose disposition. He also said they take no interest in things unknown to them. However, the phonograph attracted as much attention and interest as it always had from Veddas and Sinhalese alike, and we distinctly saw one Vedda smile when his song was reproduced.

The chena settlement at Wallampelle was seen, but here it 144
appeared that much intermarriage had taken place with the Sinhalese.

Malgode. There are a number of people very mixed blooded, 144
but calling themselves Veddas, living at Malgode on the shores 177
of Horaborawewa, a beautiful tank traditionally associated with 361
the Veddas. They have dropped their old Vedda customs so entirely that the local Sinhalese no longer look upon them as true village Veddas, an attitude that has perhaps been fostered by the fact that here in Uva where the Veddas are exempt from all taxation these people pay road tax. Such at least was [651]
the point of view of the Arachi of Alutnuwara, "how can these people be Veddas?—they pay road tax." In spite of this there 516
is no doubt that they are largely of Vedda descent and in many instances remember their *maruge*. They live in very poorly built houses and depend largely on the seeds of the lotus for food. They still pose as pure-blooded Veddas to white visitors, and have been recently described by Drs H. M. Hillier and W. H. Furness, 3rd. "We followed the jungle path along the eastern shore of the lake, sometimes over outcrops of granite, or down by the lake side...and after following our guide through thick undergrowth for half-an-hour, suddenly, and without warning, we came out into a cleared space, where there was the merest excuse for a hut, and beside it a man and woman squatting side by side and cooking something in a blackened earthen pot, which rested on a fire of twigs and branches; a little beyond them were more huts and more women and children—lo! the Village Veddaha. The elderly man and woman whom we first saw had between them scarcely a yard of coarse cloth as clothing, their hair hung loose in dishevelled twists and strings about their faces, and they both squatted so low that their knees stood up above their shoulders. But the most impressive thing about

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 them was their unhuman apathy and utter lack of interest.... Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

"At the time of our visit there were but three men and 511 seventeen women and children in Makulugulla; these were 362 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but [184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like 622] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any [356 shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

"The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place 511 consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by [352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the 359] Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry 364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were food, but the place was free from smells, and really 361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they saved a little money and bought a patch of land of about 11 acres from Government, which land they now cultivate with paddy.... There are sixteen houses in the Vedda Settlement of Rotawewa, and the householders in every case are descendants of Veddas. They are Sinhalese without any signs of Tamil admixture." 105 121

They say they are of the Moraane *warage*, and they seem not to know any other *warage*. Mr Horsburgh however states that "there is one other Vedda village in Sinhala Pattuwa besides Rotawewa, viz. Gallinda, with about three families who are the same people as those of Rotawewa." [619]

As a matter of convenience we have prepared a tabular summary of the conditions prevailing at the various settlements of wild and village Veddas that we visited. Besides those mentioned, many other families and even isolated individuals exist scattered throughout the Vedirata, especially in the neighbourhood of the Badulla-Batticaloa road near Maha Oya and Kallodi. These folk are in the last stage of degeneration, having given up their own wandering life and habits; they have mostly drifted into Sinhalese villages there to die out miserably. 105 177 511

105
147
511

[p.58]

Place	Health	Game	Chena	Cattle	Foreign Influence	Remarks
Henebedda	Good	Plentiful	Good	Kept for Sinhalese	Slight among the old men, considerable among the young	A thriving and vigorous community
Danigala	Good	Plentiful	Good	Kept for themselves	Considerable	Live much as Sinhalese, but pretend to live by hunting and honey alone
Kovil Vanamai	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Considerable	Fast dying out, or at the best losing their Vedda identity; all live on chenas and always we believe in association with Sinhalese
Uniche	...	Scarce	?	?	Foreign influence is principally Tamil	We did not see these people in their own settlement
Sitala Wanniya	Good	Plentiful	None	None	Very slight	The older men of this community had never made chena
Galmeda	Poor	Scarce	Very poor	None	Probably slight	We only saw a colony of this group who had settled at Godatalawa
Omuni	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Dominant	A few chickens were kept for sale, these people were wretchedly poor and most of them decidedly ill-nourished
Unuwatura Bubula	Poor	Scarce	Poor	None	Dominant	
Village Veddas						
Dambani &c.	Good	Scarce	Good	Many tame buffalo	Considerable	An anomalous but thriving group (cf. pp. 49 to 53)
Elakotaliya	Good	Scarce	Good	Cattle	...	These groups live in well built mud huts on flourishing chenas and appear to be prosperous and comfortable. They appear to possess more Tamil than Vedda blood
Kalukalaeba	Good	Scarce	Good	Cattle	...	
Yakure	Good	Scarce	Good	Large herds of cattle	...	These people live in well built huts in a compact settlement which might almost be called a town. They have a Sinhalese headman.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave.

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men.

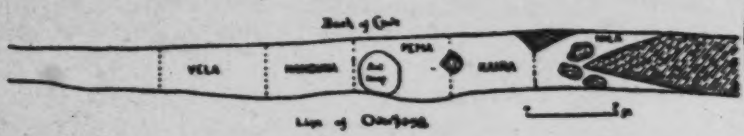


Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]."

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity,

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

front of it is a much chipped *opulu* tree from which the Veddas every now and then renew their chew. Throughout the day the surrounding woods echo to the voices of food-gatherers or the blows of axes, as combs are cut out of hollow trees. At fiful intervals the *kolong kokka* (stork-billed king-fisher), lord of the rocky stream, raises a clamorous cry, or the wood-pecker startlingly proclaims to the world that it sees the great she-demon (*maha yakkini*). As evening comes, the *kotaha* (gekko) that shares the cave, drawls in quaint imitation of his name, "ko-tak-ko." The night is ushered in by the solemn notes of the night jar* and bell-like sounds of frogs. The crescent moon shines through the trees, peopling the forest with mysterious shadows. Strange noises are heard around, a breaking branch perhaps, a dropping stone, or an animal's foot-falls. Then the little one creeps to its mother whispering, "Mother, the *hetha*"; and she, fondling, replies, "Yes, it is the *hetha*, child; be still." Now fires are stirred, and the Veddas, couched on leaves, and doubled up under their meagre rags, lie as close to them as they dare. For the caves are cold at night even on the hottest day. And every now and then throughout the dark, one or other of them groans with the chill, gets up, pokes the fire, and snuggles nearer to it. Is it a wonder that ash is the morning mark of the Vedda and *Alu galge* a favourite name of his cave? By six, the morning mists have melted and the cave begins to warm.

261 825 354 513

*At dusk, and all through the night, Horsfield's night jar gathers into its rich liquid notes the silence and mystery of the forest. There is no jungle, however desolate, in which this ever welcome music is not heard. It is at once the curfew of the jungle, the embodiment of all the stealthy, nocturnal life in it, and the destiny and doom of it.

Puthu-hath-pevum (seven-sons-axe) is the Sinhalese name of the bird in perfect imitation of its cry; and the following story explains it.—A woman once sent her seven sons into the jungle to fell trees. One of the trees falling in their direction, the brothers attempted to shoulder it off and were all killed. The mother, having cooked the evening meal, waited at home for her sons. But as they did not return she went out to look for them, and found them all dead beside the fallen tree. Taking up an axe she killed herself and became this bird; and now from dusk till dawn she cries *puthu-hath-pevum* through the lonesome woods. [539]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

boar wounded by the companions of Bandura, as is related in the Bambura Yaka dance.

The Henebedda Veddas washed before performing or assisting at the *kirikoraha* seen by us, and every Vedda who invoked the *yaku*, either let down his hair before beginning to dance or while dancing, in the latter instance presumably as he felt "possession" coming upon him. Many Veddas put on the *hangala* before dancing, this being a length of white cloth worn round the waist as is shown in many of the photographs reproduced in this chapter. Presumably this was not worn for the arrow dance, which is especially performed by unsuccessful hunters without any special preparation. We do not think that a leaf girdle was ever worn as a ceremonial garment when dancing. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya said that at some time, which he put more than three generations ago, there were Veddas, whom he called *Attukola Veddo*, who lived so remote from the Sinhalese that they had no cloth and so always wore leaf girdles, but he was quite confident that no Veddas who had cloth ever wore such girdles especially to invoke the *yaku*. This agrees with Nevill's conclusions[1] and does not conflict with the experience of the Sarasins.

The Roman numbers in parentheses after references to invocations in the accounts of the ceremonies described in this chapter refer to the invocations given in Chapter X.

The Arrow Dance.

This, the simplest of the Vedda dances, has been described at length by the Drs Sarasin who saw it danced by "Veddas of the Nilgala district[2]." We have already quoted Bailey's account of the arrow dance as he found it danced by the ancestors of these Veddas two generations ago, and Monsieur Emile

[1] "I have especially questioned the best informed Vaeddas whether leaves were worn, either at ceremonies or otherwise. They all say yes, they were worn once, when cotton cloth was hard and dear to get, by those who lived where there were no Rest trees. They were only worn by the poorest, and from necessity, not choice. The leaves chosen were those of shrubs, the branches of which ended in rather pendulous sprays of foliage, and these were tucked under the waist string as a sort of apron." (*Op. cit.* p. 188.)

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 387—389.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 512—514.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

157 ness; in others, that perplexed manner common in people of weak intellect. The women appear sharper and quicker than the men, unless it be that they have less *mauvais honte*, and acquit themselves better before company, but they are the most ordinary specimens of the sex I ever saw.*

The Veddahs bear a very striking resemblance to each other—
142 both in feature and expression. And this is especially remarkable among those of Nilgala, who have preserved their ancient customs more completely than their brethren of Bintenne, who live in a less secluded country, have been able to do.

Their clothing—so to speak—is the most scanty conceivable.
291 A scrap of dirty cloth, scarcely larger than the paper on which I write, supported in front by a string round the waist, being a complete Veddah suit for male or female; for the rag that does duty for crinoline, is scarcely less diminutive than that which represents the male garments.† Indeed, almost the only difference
[304] in the costume of the men and women is, that the latter have
[301] their ears pierced, and wear in the lobes round studs of ivory.

Neither sex is remarkable for personal cleanliness, and with
515 their rugged unkempt locks half obscuring their features, the Veddahs certainly realize all one's preconceived notions of the most barbarous savages.

Knox's picture of "a Vadda, or Wild Man" is a fancy portrait,
302 and decidedly flattering. They do not "tye their hair on their
114 crowns in a bunch", nor do they indulge in nearly so much drapery or beard as is worn by that stout well-to-do-looking gentleman, who is placidly smoking an imaginary pipe, for smok-
[276] ing is a luxury at which the Veddahs have not yet arrived. The contrast between Knox's idea of the wild men, and their actual appearance, is amusing.

When brought in from their forests to be "looked at," they
181 huddle themselves together like a herd of wild and timid animals driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Attract their attention by a present of rice or cloth, and in an instant they become like eager children, scrambling for a new toy,—forget the presence of strangers, and intent only on what is before them, jostle each other, clamouring for a fair division of the spoil, and complaining loudly against those of their companions whom they suspect of having got more than their share of the good things.

But it is not fair to judge of them when so utterly out of their

---

* I saw some of them display the liveliest curiosity at the sight of their "white sisters", two remarkably good specimens of whom found their way to Nilgala in 1857.

[287] † Formerly the sacking-like bark of the "Riti tree" (*antiaris innoxia*, or *A. saccadora*) supplied the place of cloth; and bags made of this fibrous bark are still used by the Singhalese for carrying rice, etc.

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [164] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and [146] framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even 177 their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 224 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels 231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with 221 melted wax (*itee relhee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 222 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

● 515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukhan* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

to something; but it was long before I saw the bird, a veritable leaf among the leaves and more motionless than they.

The hilly jungles of central Ceylon echo, during certain seasons of the year, to this bird's incessant cry, the popular onomatopoeic renderings of which are, in English, "Captain Philpotts" and "Bring the tappal" and in Sinhalese "*Botuakappan*." Most people have heard, but very few seen, the shy author of these dolorous notes. There is a gruesome story associated with the bird :—A Sinhalese king once asked his dhoby, in order to test his marital fidelity, whether he would cut his wife's neck and bring him her head! "Oh! king," said the man falling at the monarch's feet, "even if you behead me I cannot do such a thing." The following day the king called up the dhoby's wife and made a similar request of her. She replied that she would do it. Going home she helped her husband with his bath, rubbed boiled limes on his head, and cooked him a good meal. Like a good wife she asked him to lay his head on her lap where he soon fell asleep. Then, with a knife she had in readiness, she cut his throat; and severing his neck, put the head into a pot, covered it with a cloth and carried it to the king. On the way she met a man who, singing, asked her, "What do you carry in the pot on your head?"

"I am taking *mee amba** to the king," answered the woman.

"Why cover it so carefully?" sang he.

"If I take them uncovered, wayfarers will ask me for them," she replied. "It is on a fine journey I go."

When she brought her gift to the king, he was incensed at her cruelty, and ordered her head to be struck off instantly. Ever after, has she gone about in the form of this bird, crying *botua-kappan* (cut the throat), as her one refrain.

While making our way through a tree-studded glade, we surprised two men carrying sacks of dried meat on their shoulders; through rents in the bags peeped unsavoury scraps of sambur, monkey and pig. Their first impulse on seeing us was to escape; for to shoot sambur legitimately, gun and game licences are necessary; and what money have they for these, who have barely the wherewithal to purchase the ammunition for their ramshackle muzzle-loaders.

When we camped, Kombua regaled us with Vedda songs of questionable taste chanted rapidly in a high nasal monotone, lengthened indefinitely by endless repetition, and accompanied in the last staves with a clapping of hands. To the suggestion that he should show his skill in archery he responded with alacrity; jumping up, he seized his weapons as if confident of skill. A fragment of paper, six inches square, placed fifteen paces away, was the mark. At the word he loosed his arrow. A clean miss! He walked up to the target and dashed it down in dudgeon, and nothing would induce him to shoot again. Archery is a lost art to the Veddas, though they still have considerable skill in fashioning bows and arrows. Jungles that echo to guns are no places for bowmen.

Kombua's farewell was as bizarre as his greeting of us. Tossing head and hands in the direction we were taking, and tapping us on the chest, he wished us good going in tones more peremptory than complaisant.

Quite a number of our carriers were half-Veddas. There was one whose constant occupation was to run his fingers comb-fashion through his upstanding hair scraping out vermin. His expression was of that thoughtful seriousness which is the surest mark of profound vacuity.

*A species of mango.

S: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the 252
caudal vertebræ, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of
fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip 262
and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, 251
or smoked and put by for future use.

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is 262
the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment
by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I
asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them,"
he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry
'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire."

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This 251
is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to
this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as
the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more
meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well inter-
mingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole.

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped 752
in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes
a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good
sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas*
can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil!

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes 777
made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a
bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair;
only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard,
he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal
is more frightened of us than we of him."

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred 773
miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow
the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything;
in yonder Balagala rock he lived.

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or 764
deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the
pigs away.

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of 515
dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If
she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my
axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came
to me."

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, 583
having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later,
it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his
bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the 585
feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out
his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given
him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually
throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl 591
away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents
may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take
our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild
and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

4. FRIAR'S HOOD AND THE VEDDAS OF GALMEDE

ACCOMPANIED by Kauwa and a Tamil, we left Divulana to enter upon the wildest part of our journey. The *illuk* glades, so familiar to us for many days, now gave place to jungle sunless, forsaken, virginal and silent save for the cry of a cicala or the rustle of a jungle cock or chevrotan.

Crossing the Amankelle Oya we came to the deserted home of the Bandaradua Veddas—Kauwa's old home. It outlay a glade in full view of the Bandaradua rock. All that now marked the place were a cadju tree, that spread its branches in a great canopy, and a few live fence sticks all overgrown with *pussela-wel*, the pounded bark of which the Veddas soak in water rendering it soapy for cleansing their lousy heads.

Late in the evening we were at the foot of Friar's Hood, that loneliest of Ceylon's forest hills, the landmark of the old Portuguese mariners. The environing jungle was sinister with the menace of unseen things. Here our guide had once encountered a gang of no less than six bears, and indicated to us the very trees up which he and his companion had shinned. It was not the sort of place one would care to be in alone; and yet, in a clearing by the rock, a Moor had recently lived with his wife for three years, growing amidst his cassava a deadlier plant,* the joy and bane of Eastern lands.

We camped on this deserted plantation. As it darkened a sambur belled and stamped around us in high dudgeon that his accustomed pasturage had been usurped. The hooded peak before us melted into the gloom, only to stand out again under the stars more sinister and secret than ever. This lonely outlaw, standing away from the herded hills, had survived a race of men. It was there when the first paleolithic ancestors of the Veddas crossed from India, when Ceylon and that land were one. Towards it, and the security it afforded, was the best remnant of that race gradually driven by succeeding waves of civilisation through the long years. To-day around it the last of the Veddas are dying. And yet,

> The hills are shadows and they flow
> From form to form, and nothing stands;
> They melt like mists, the solid lands,
> Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

It is difficult to say where Galmede really begins. We must ascribe to it all that tract of deserted *chenas*, with their crumbling Vedda shelters and *mera* forests devastated by elephants, between Friar's Hood and the Magalawatavan Oya, on the other bank of which stand the few huts that comprise the Galmede of to-day. This place, the port of our dreams, we entered with beating hearts.

The first individual to meet us was no Vedda at all but a Chetty!

"Where are the Veddas?" I asked eagerly.

"There are no Veddas here," he said.

*Cannabis indica.

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
911 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some
[283 six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
824] (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But
565 for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

M2
291
342
516

Plate II

Danigala Veddas on look-out rock

[facing p.16a]

Plate X

342
361

Fig. 1. A chena settlement of the Hanabedda Veddas

516
302
291

Fig. 2. Hanabedda Veddas of the Nanadewa clan inhabiting the chena settlement

[facing p. 36]

Plate XI

342
133

Fig. 1. Rough shelter on the Danigala rock dome

142
516

Fig. 2. Veddas of Bandaradewa

[facing p. 38]

Plate XII

361

Fig. 1. Mixed Sinhalese and Vedda chena at Bandarawela

516
415

Fig. 2. Uniche Veddas

[facing p. 41]

Plate XVIII

342
516
415

Fig. 1. Pihilegodagalge rock shelter

Fig. 2. Part of Pihilegodagalge rock shelter

[facing p. 84 b]

342
516
411

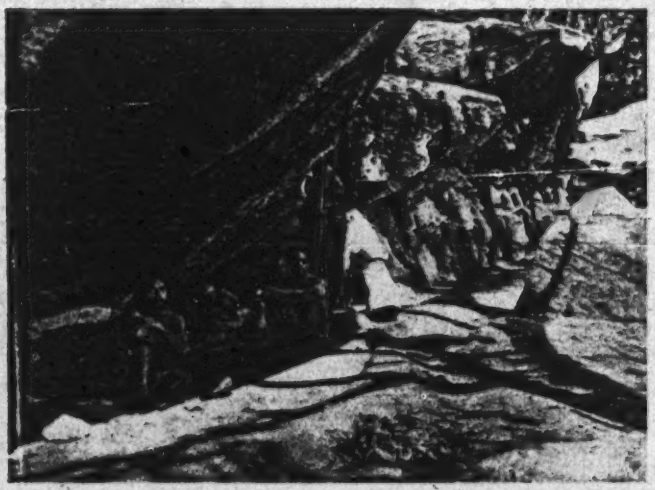


Fig. 1. Lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge

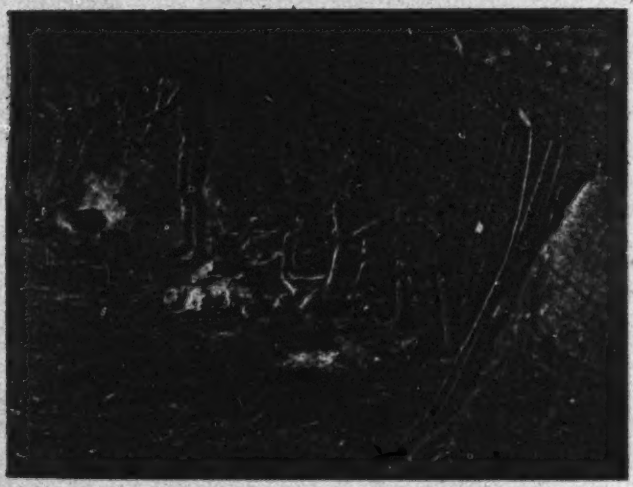


Fig. 2. Early morning scene in lower rock shelter at Bendiyagalge

[facing p. 84c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
787

Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*

[516]

Fig. 2. The Adukku Denawa ceremony (Henebedda)

[facing p.216B]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
411
516
142
787

Plate LV

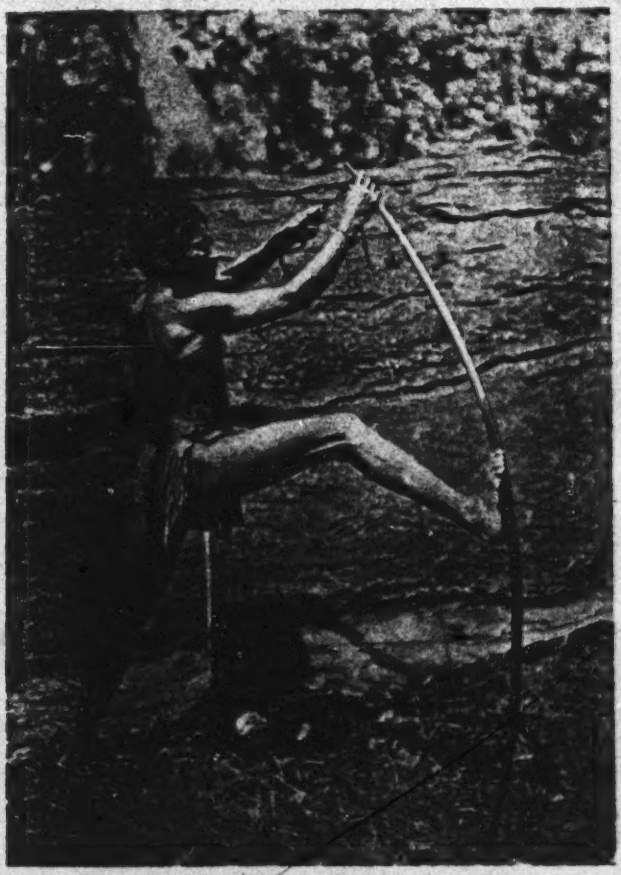
Nila holding bow while reciting invocation No. XXIII. When the name of the yaka causing the illness is spoken the bow swings to and fro

[facing p. 290]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXIII

411
142
291
516



Hunduma of Henebedda stringing his bow

[facing p. 326 a]

411
516

Plate LXIV

Handuna shooting

[facing p. 326 b]

142
291

Fig. 1. Coast Veddas.

[534
482]
516

Fig. 2. Coast Veddas of Vakarai

[facing p. 332 a]

342
516

Of no consequence except to each other (Page 5)

133

Gunner's Quoin across Manampitiya tank. (Page 7)

[facing p. 3]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

away more frightened than you. A scratching noise under your pillow may lead to the discovery of a scorpion or a centipede. Beetles, moths, biting ants, and insects of all descriptions investigate and experiment with you. But you soon learn to ignore these little draw-backs and drowse to the lullaby of some wood-land songster.

Tropical Nature is a stern mistress; her favours are never unalloyed. For him who would seek her she holds grievances in store, grievances that enhance the very joy they encumber; toning down ecstasy lest it pall with surfeit; giving to the contemplation of foregone experience that unfettered pleasure the reality denies, prompting us in after years to say, forgetful of all the hardships, "those were happy days we had".

The Verugal where it joined the Mahaweli was at this season an insignificant stream. Quite a colony of tobacco growers flourished here. Very picturesque are these settlements or *thethes* as they are called. Four to six huts stand some distance apart in clearings along the bank, most of them beautifully overspread with melon-creepers. Every hut has its vegetable garden; and standing before them, like sentinels, are the draw-wells, usually in couples, that feed the tobacco plots direct from the river. The lowing of cattle under the superb trees that stud the clearing, the crowing of cocks, the sound of human voices complete the atmosphere of rural domesticity in this wild land and furnish scenes which would rejoice the heart of a painter.

Putting up one evening in a coconut grove owned by a Moor we found an unkempt ill-clad fellow seated on his haunches staring at some simple wares a pedlar was displaying. They told us he was a Vedda from a village some miles away. Becoming restless under our scrutiny he walked off. I followed him to his miserable shelter, where I found his daughter, a puny girl of four, covered with ulcers. Edging up towards her father she stared at us distrustfully with the eyes of a startled doe. A few broken pots were their sole belongings. The bond of tender solicitude that united these human derelicts, of no consequence except to each other, was indeed a touching sight. I asked the man what he did for a living. He said he "earned a rupee for two months work". He knew neither his nor his daughter's age, and when pressed for an answer said irritably, "What do I know of age? Am I a man who knows anything about age?" Blessed mortal!

We gave him a coin which he at first refused, and only accepted with persuasion; he had evidently never handled one like it before, for he looked at it puzzled and suspicious; and when the amount it represented was explained to him he was not enlightened.

"He knows nothing," said the Moor vociferously. "Ask him to count six and see if he can. He's a real bull. What does he know? He's a Vedda. For thirty-six cents he will bring a kerosene-tinful of *bambara** honey, and," he added chuckling with subtle satisfaction, "he does not know what thirty-six cents is!"

The next day we saw in the distance the blue contours of Gunner's Quoin, the goal of our journey. The river had now become considerably shallower with broad stretches of its sandy bed exposed. As we punted along the shady border, we suddenly came upon a most realistic piece of ancient sculpture—the life-sized head of an elephant carved out of a

*Rock-bee, *Apis dorsata*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
301
415
516

"Their homes, the shelter of the trees." (Page 9)

142
291
622

Naida and his family. (Page 9)

[facing p. 9]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

411

Kaurais and his wife. (Page 55)

291
516
854

A Galmede home. (Page 60)

[Facing p. 59]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Ved[illegible]AX5

291
301
[582]
516

Wedded children. (Page 65)

Kaim and his wife. (Page 65)

[facing p.65]

5: Spittal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese *ekma* village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there. 131 361

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmeda. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you. 101 161 [587] 855 [164 516]

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty. 361 [194 342] 101 161 [582] [164]

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect. [595 586]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

516
291

Little Handura. (Page 65)

[Facing p. 66]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

56

The hut of Gama. (Page 65)

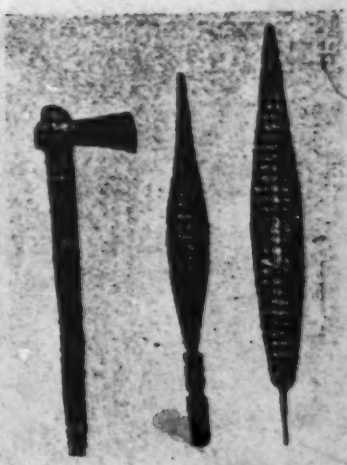
"Too ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness." (Page 65)

[facing p. 67]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

372
412
535

Strike-a-light and flint. (Page 74)



Vedda axe and audes

372
516

Fire making by rubbing sticks. (Page 74)

[facing p. 74]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

804
411
516

Method of measuring length of arrow shaft. (Page 76)

411
516

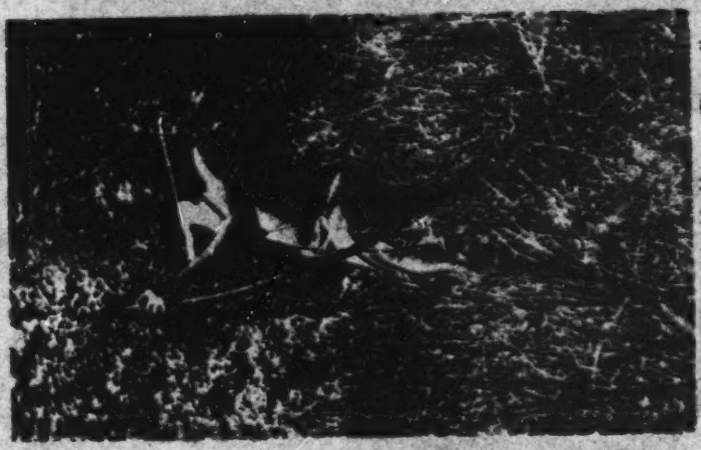
Feathering the arrow. (Page 76)

[Facing p. 75]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

411
516

Stringing bow by foot-thrust. (Page 76)



Stringing bow with aid of knee. (Page 76)

[Facing p. 76]

342
516
854

Veddas of Bahugahadena. (Page 93)

[411]

Veddas of Bahugahadena. (Page 93)

[Facing p. 93]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
516
854

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

142
291
351

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 95)

[Facing p. 94]

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

142
302
516
291
411
137

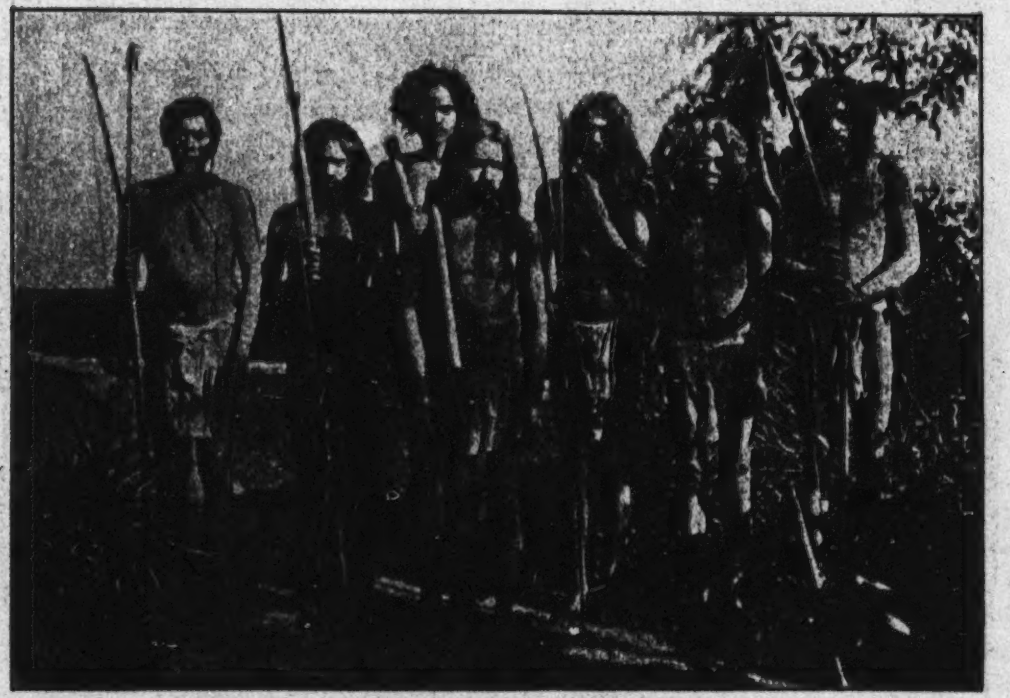


Fig. 16. Veddas from the Nilgala District (Ceylon) *Photo R. Martin.*

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

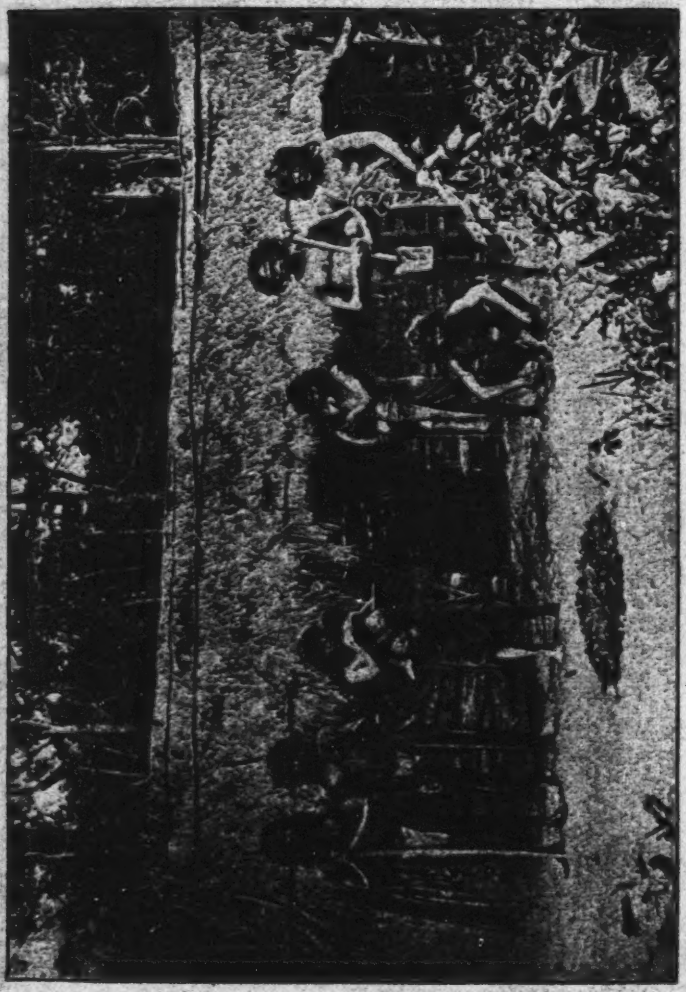


Photo Fr. Sarasin.

342
137
291
516
411
854

Fig. 17. Veddas of the Nilgala Region

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XI

ARTS AND CRAFTS

517 It is not our purpose in this short chapter to attempt to describe systematically the crafts of the Veddas, this has already been done by the Sarasins and we shall, therefore, limit ourselves to touching on matters which especially interested us, or concerning which we have unrecorded information.

The arts and crafts of the Veddas are of the simplest nature, their belongings are few, and there is no certain attempt at ornamentation on any of these. Even personal adornment is so lacking that it may be disregarded. The highest artistic attainments of the Veddas seem to be their songs and invocations, and these, with their ceremonial dances, in which they may be said to have specialised, seem to have absorbed all that part of their mental energy which remains after providing for their daily necessities. There is no reason to believe that their artistic development was ever any higher than it is at the present day, when the only form of decorative art in which they indulge for its own sake, is rude drawing on rocks which we shall now describe[1].

Rock Drawings.

532 Figs. 1 and 2 of Plate LVI show rock drawings made by the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya at Pihilegodagalge and another cave near it. Since our return we have ascertained that other Veddas

[1] It is possible that a few individuals are pleased by simple geometrical patterns. [177] There are traces of ornamentation on two of the pots shown in Plate LXII although this had avowedly been copied from foreign pots.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Things new to them which we showed
them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and
152 most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by
[522] a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the
rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground
with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and
smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character,
but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous,
and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the
fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman,
but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose
opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela,
half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means
stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing
inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well
as the other men. Kaira, *baena* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was
intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *baena*
to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was
a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not
chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when
addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives,
keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them
as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from
that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge
showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately,
it did not seem that any food was private property. One
other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely,
that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own
division, but always put them all together in a particular

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the huts in the Morane chena settlement at Henebedda. It was shown us with pride by Handuna who said he was keeping it for his twelve year old son. He told us that in the old days the hollow branches, the homes of colonies of these bees, were frequently kept in the rock-shelters. 231

The ladder with the help of which *bambara* honey is collected consists of a greatly elongated loop of cane, apparently derived from a species of *Calamus*, across which rungs of creeper are stretched. In Plate LV (p. 290) there can be seen the bottom of the ladder some fifty feet long, used for training the young, hung from the top of the cliff across the face of the rock mass at Sitala Wanniya. In spite of the fact that honey is usually gathered at night the Veddas do not travel or hunt at night and know only two stars by name. One of these is a star or more probably a planet which often appears close to the moon and is called *pantaru* which, we were told, is the name by which the Sinhalese know it. The other named star appears soon after sunset, always in the same place and before the other stars, and is almost certainly Venus; this is called *irabada tarna*, i.e. "side of sun star." Although the Veddas hunt in the dusk of the dawn the idea that anyone would roam about at night seemed absolutely ludicrous to them (Sitala Wanniya), they roared with laughter at it, "why should one go into the jungle? it would be too dark to see to shoot, besides bears are about, absurd idea," they laughed again, in fact it was quite ten minutes before Kaira had forgotten the joke. 222 417 821 [484] 621 522

MASTICATORIES.

All Veddas chew eagerly, but as they can rarely obtain a supply of areca nuts they commonly use instead of these the bark of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) and the *dawata* tree (*Carallia integerrima*). Concerning the other plants that they use as masticatories Nevill says, "They occasionally chew the leaves of several aromatic herbs, particularly *Anisochilus suffruticosus*, a sort of sage that grows on rocks. The areca does not grow wild in the Eastern Province, but Veddas are very fond of the seeds of the lakada bush, *Gardenia carinata*, a 261 276

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

slipping. Such ceremonial arrows are generally heirlooms, not necessarily passing from father to son but rather being handed down in apostolic succession from shaman to shaman, and among the village Veddas of Bintenne I have handled one such blade with a history running back for five generations. 411 778 [503 428]

Figure 8 shows two ceremonial arrows which we were able to collect. Besides these we saw similar *aude* at Omuni and were told at Sitala Wanniya that Handuna had formerly possessed one. Rutimeyer has figured one of these ceremonial arrows about 14 inches long, obtained from Kaira the "senior" of the Danigala Veddas. These arrows are carefully preserved by the shaman, and just as he himself observes certain dietetic rules, avoiding eating pig and fowl which are supposed to be particularly repulsive to the *yaku*, so among those more sophisticated communities who believe in the periodical uncleanliness of women, special precautions are taken to avoid the possible contamination of the *aude*[1]. This is generally done by keeping them in some comparatively remote spot such as a cave or in the roof thatch. It is necessary that the shaman should hold one of these arrows in his hand when invoking Kande Yaka; he should also have one for Bilindi Yaka, though as a matter of practice Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were often invoked using the same *aude*, another *aude* being reserved for invoking the *Nae Yaku*. Both arrows were, however, commonly held in the hands during the whole of the *Nae Yaku* ceremony, but in spite of this no confusion seemed to arise nor had the onlookers the least difficulty in saying which *aude* belonged to Kande Yaka whenever they were asked. [763]

The offering of rice in the pot would be stirred with the *aude*, and betel leaves might be ceremonially transfixed with it. Among the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula the testing of the quality of the food provided for the *yaku* was performed with the help of the *aude*, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka using the *aude* to remove from the pot a few grains of rice which the *yaku* in the person of the shaman several times examined before expressing his approval of the offering provided. 411 778 782

[1] The belief in the periodical uncleanliness of women has been borrowed from the Sinhalese. It did not exist in the "wildest" group we met with, on the other hand we found it among all the more sophisticated Veddas, attaining a maximum where these had come under foreign influence.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clothing is younger in the case of girls than boys. The boy assumes a piece of rag attached to a string in the same manner as men, while girls wear a piece of stuff fastened round their hips like a sarong. A child's first cloth is put on by its mother without any ceremony. The only toys seen were bows and arrows, and these are possessed by every male child. We never saw a little girl play with a bow and arrow, but mothers make them for the baby boys while these are still crawling about. Such toys of course are small and roughly made, but bigger boys of five years old and upwards make quite neat little bows, and shoot with them tolerably well; they do not feather their arrows. Other children were seen playing with clay and sticks; and girls frequently play with broken pots with which they pretend to cook.

As women take the children with them when they go out to dig for yams, little girls soon learn to do this, and boys would begin to be taken out hunting when about ten years old. It was difficult to find out whether the fathers' or mothers' brothers took the greater part in training the boys and it seemed that a lad eager to go out hunting would be taken by any grown man, who in the very small community is usually a relative. Lads would be encouraged by their elders to shoot at a mark with their bows and arrows, and later they would stalk small birds and shoot fish[1].

When a child tells a lie he may be told "Go away, I do not believe what you say," but it appeared that even young children were usually truthful. One thing is taught the lads systematically, that is the method of collecting honey from the combs of the rock bee. Whenever the caves are conveniently situated a ladder of creepers is suspended from a tree in the jungle above and hangs over the end of the face of rock which forms the cave. On this the youths play at "honey getting." At Pihilegodagalge the lads were quite willing to demonstrate to us how it was done, and the elder men showed clearly that this

[1] Nevill, in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. 1, 1886, p. 189), says ".....a pellet bow is used occasionally by small boys, and birds are often shot with it, though the aim seems very uncertain." Pellet bows were seen at Henebedda, they are used regularly by the Sinhalese in the neighbourhood, and we do not doubt that the practice was introduced by them.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 857 868 was a game which they encouraged. A lad of about thirteen collected some green leaves and tied them together with creeper, then taking an arrow, a toy *masliya*, and a broken gourd tied with creeper, which hung over his arm, for a *maludema*, he set fire to the leaves and climbed the ladder[1]. While lowering the smoker and letting the smoke blow into the crevice in the rock where the comb was supposed to be, he pretended to cut round its sides with an arrow and thrust at it with his *masliya* (figure 3), from which he transferred the honey into the gourd. As he descended from the ladder he beat his chest and sides as though driving off the bees, and directly he reached the ground rushed into the jungle to escape from them, all the smaller children imitating him with great glee. Obviously this was a well-known and favourite game, for even the elders took part in it, throwing their cloths over their heads and running into the jungle.

524 857 At Henebedda (which we visited before Pihilegodagalge) there were no children present when we spoke about honey getting, but four young men were eager to show us how it was done and acted the scene with great spirit. They took from our camp a piece of white and a piece of brown paper, and fastened them with some wax to the roof of their cave, then as there was no tree above the cave around which to fasten a creeper, one man crouched on the top of the rock and held the ends of the ladder in his hands, another stood above and lowered a smoker of green leaves while a third climbed the ladder and collected the honey from the white paper and the grubs from the brown. Afterwards the collector divided the spoil equally and amid much laughter they all sat down and pretended to eat, one actually going through the pantomime of washing his hands after the meal. They eat the grubs as well as the honey.

[439] 291 As regards clothing, pedlars have brought them cloth for so long that no Vedda living knows what was done when they could not buy it, but it is generally stated that they made bark

[1] The *maludema* is the vessel made of deerskin in which honey should be collected and the *masliya* the wooden four-pronged implement with which the comb is broken up and transferred to the *maludema*. For figures of *maludema* and *masliya*, see Plate LXV and figure 3 (p. 92) respectively.

[412] 415

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cloth of the *riti* (*Antiaris innoxia*) of which material the Sinhalese still make rice bags. Men wear a rag of "white" cotton about 9 inches wide passed between their legs, and held in place by each end being passed over a waist string. This cotton material they prefer to anything else for two reasons, firstly, it very soon becomes a dull brown, and hence is less obvious when hunting than a coloured cloth would be, secondly, it is thin machine-made material from which they can easily tear narrow strips for tinder, when they make fire. The women wear coloured cotton cloth of the kind that is woven at Batticaloa, it is a strong material and is not easily torn. A single width forms the length of their skirt from waist to knee and is fastened round their waists like a sarong. Thus, the men's preference for "white" and the women's for coloured cloth is purely economical, depending on the kind of material it has been the pedlar's habit to bring. These pedlars visit the wilder Veddas once a year after the honey collecting season; they never approach the caves, but when within about a quarter of a mile of them they shout till a Vedda comes to them, then they expose their wares and the Vedda returns to the cave to fetch as many pots and gourds of honey and as much dried flesh as he is willing to exchange. The "silent trade," mentioned by Knox[1], is now a legend among the Sinhalese of which no tradition lingers among the Veddas. We have Bailey's evidence that it had ceased before 1863, and the old Kandyan we met (see p. 31) remembered it only as a tradition in the days of the rebellion in 1818. "They are not now, nor have they been for very long, so shy as to be prevented from bartering freely enough

Fig. 3. Toy machya × $\frac{1}{10}$ (about).

[1] Cf. p. 6.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 According to my authority the Veddas indulged in no games, unless, indeed, the custom of tossing dry leaves in the air and speculating on their position when they fell back upon the ground could be called a game. This, I am told, was only an occasional recreation, and indulged in by boys alone.

423 614 628 The limits of the hunting ground were jealously guarded by the Veddas, and anything like poaching by the members of one clan in the area recognized as belonging to another was punishable by death. Should a hunter lose his way and fall into the hands of a neighbouring clan, he would be closely watched, remaining for the time being in a sort of captivity. If the man's conduct during that time was such as to disarm suspicion he was permitted to go, and might even be accompanied to the confines of the clan's hunting ground, but he would have to proceed at once without looking back, or his conduct might lead to the belief that he was a spy, with fatal consequences.

226 The method of fishing was to hem in a piece of water by closely fencing in both ends of the stream. People would then enter the enclosed piece of water, armed with slender sticks, thrashing the water therewith till a fish was actually struck, when it would be captured. I saw this actually done in one pool on the Kumbukkan.

173 My informant told me that the Veddas were at one time harassed by a race of pygmy people, called the Nittawo, who lived in the country known as Lonama, that extended from Bagura in the Panawa Pattu in the east to the confines of the Kattaragama hills on the west.

According to him, these people lived in small troops of from 10 to 40, inhabiting caves, hollow trees, and crevices of precipices. They were about 3 feet or a little more in height, exactly like normal human beings, only in miniature. Their legs were hairy like those of the Wanduroo; they walked erect, and had no tails.

Their arms were short and very powerful, with strong hands, and talon-like finger-nails with which they tore and disembowelled whatever they captured. These generally were small animals, such as hare, mouse-deer, monkeys, iguanas, and tortoises. Their method of attack was by surrounding

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard huma
[411 voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fello
412] carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. The were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness som miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to thei homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one
[342] these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting sma yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** clos
[163] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgal*
[164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women an
[146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria an framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The childre were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especiall
177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and eve their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if th coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanie us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true t
142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and up standing frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the childre
● 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal an *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dr
415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a woode pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*
and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that o
224 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrel
231 that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when foo
264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; i
261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a fe
415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated wit melted wax (*itee relhee*). Partial nomads, they spend many month
221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, o
222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women an children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of thei ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that whe our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and wha constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then w
[276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

[137] *A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

†*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana* respectively.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords. 361

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter. 301 304

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of coconut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]." 415 [531]

Village Veddas of Tamankaduwa.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of intermarriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils. 144 621

Elakotaliya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-bred. Their mode of life is similar to that prevalent at Dambani and Bulugahaladena, i.e. they are occupied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their *waruge* and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaku. 105 621

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve mud huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1901. [113]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

boar wounded by the companions of Bandura, as is related in the Bambura Yaka dance.

The Henebedda Veddas washed before performing or assisting at the *kirikoraha* seen by us, and every Vedda who invoked the *yaku*, either let down his hair before beginning to dance or while dancing, in the latter instance presumably as he felt "possession" coming upon him. Many Veddas put on the *hangala* before dancing, this being a length of white cloth worn round the waist as is shown in many of the photographs reproduced in this chapter. Presumably this was not worn for the arrow dance, which is especially performed by unsuccessful hunters without any special preparation. We do not think that a leaf girdle was ever worn as a ceremonial garment when dancing. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya said that at some time, which he put more than three generations ago, there were Veddas, whom he called *Attukola Veddo*, who lived so remote from the Sinhalese that they had no cloth and so always wore leaf girdles, but he was quite confident that no Veddas who had cloth ever wore such girdles especially to invoke the *yaku*. This agrees with Nevill's conclusions[1] and does not conflict with the experience of the Sarasins.[2]

The Roman numbers in parentheses after references to invocations in the accounts of the ceremonies described in this chapter refer to the invocations given in Chapter X.

The Arrow Dance.

This, the simplest of the Vedda dances, has been described at length by the Drs Sarasin who saw it danced by "Veddas of the Nilgala district[3]." We have already quoted Bailey's account of the arrow dance as he found it danced by the ancestors of these Veddas two generations ago, and Monsieur Emile

[1] "I have especially questioned the best informed Vaeddas whether leaves were worn, either at ceremonies or otherwise. They all say yes, they were worn once, when cotton cloth was hard and dear to get, by those who lived where there were no Riti trees. They were only worn by the poorest, and from necessity, not choice. The leaves chosen were those of shrubs, the branches of which ended in rather pendulous sprays of foliage, and these were tucked under the waist string as a sort of apron." (*Op. cit.* p. 188.)

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 387—389.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 512—514.

323 In both communities it was said that men and women make pots, and of five pots bought at Bendiyagalge at different times three were said to have been made by men and two by women. Further, it was agreed that pots had been made for a very long time and our informants at Sitala Wanniya said that they were made in their grandfather's grandfather's time, the longest period we ever heard a Vedda mention. A small pot, the upper right-hand pot of Plate LXII, made by Poromala of Bingoda, has a [531 177] rough chevron pattern upon it; no importance or meaning was attached to this, which was avowedly copied from a pot obtained by barter. The thick open pot without a lip shown in the lower right-hand corner was made by Poromala (Walaha) who volunteered the information that the oldest pots were lipless. The large pot in the centre of the upper row was made by his wife. The pot to the left of this was made by Poromala (Walaha) and the pot underneath this by Randu Wanniya. It is worthy of note that though many fragments of wheel-made [172] pottery were found in the upper layers of the floor of the Bendiyagalge caves, no trace of pottery was found in the deepest layer associated with the quartz implements figured in Chapter I.

Tools and Weapons.

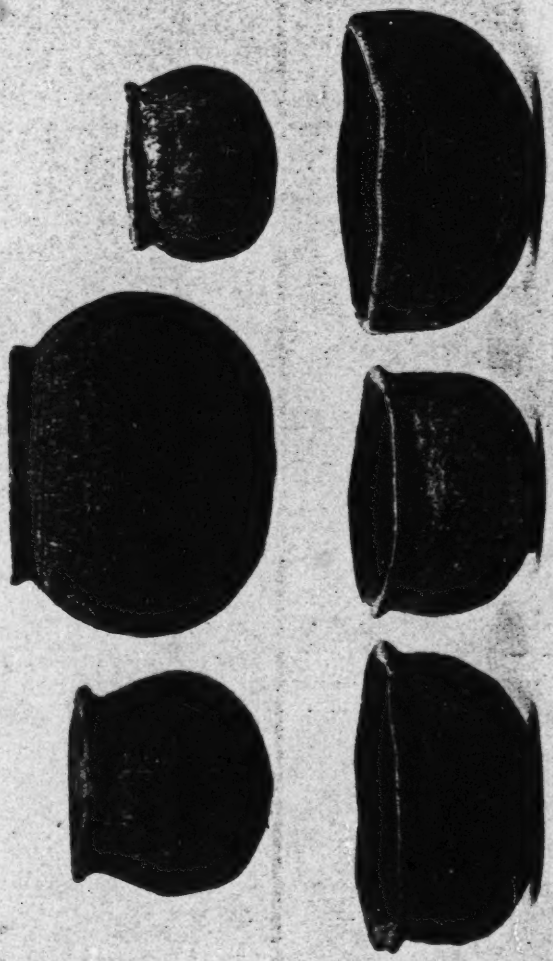
411 The bow and arrow with the axe are the only iron tools used by the Veddas for the chase, for fighting, and for general domestic use. The iron arrow and axe heads are obtained by [437] barter, as are the areca nut-cutters and strike-a-lights which most Veddas now possess. To a limited extent the areca nut-cutters are used as tools, for we have seen the final polishing and trimming of arrow shafts performed with these.

411 No spells are recited or other magic used when making axes or bows and arrows. At Henebedda the wood of the *hobberul* 322 (*Allophylus cobbe*) is used for the bow; a sapling is peeled and shaved down until the desired amount of flexibility is obtained, it is then stained black. The bow string is made of the bast of [283 a tree called *aralu* (*Terminalia chebula*), the same is used to bind 314] that part of the shaft of the arrow pierced by the tang of the arrow head, the binding being afterwards covered with gum or resin obtained from the tinbiri tree (Diospyros embayopteris).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

323
415
531

Plate LXII



Vedda pots

[facing p. 324]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

prevalence among the Sinhalese of magic having for its object the production of disease and death. Even the Henebedda Veddas, who have adopted a number of Sinhalese charms against animals, do not believe in this form of magic. The presence of a woman with wasting of both legs and contracture, the result of a long-standing ulcerative process of obscure origin which developed spontaneously, enabled this to be tested.

Although we discussed this woman's condition with a number of Veddas it was only once suggested, and then very doubtfully, that it might have been due to Sinhalese *kuniyam* magic[1], and it was clear that to the community generally this woman's disease was simply an accident, the origin of which they did not understand and did not trouble about.

Though Veddas, and especially Vedda women, are extremely shy there is no belief in the evil eye, or in the danger of being "overlooked."

Charms protective against Animals.

The bear is the only animal that the Veddas really fear, and there is no doubt that a number of Veddas and jungle-dwelling Sinhalese are mauled each year, indeed, at least one man in each community that we visited bore the marks of the bear's paws. Bear's flesh is not eaten and we doubt if Veddas ever voluntarily attack a bear, though there is no doubt that they sometimes kill one that has attacked them. Hence, the bear is called the "enemy" and his name is seldom mentioned nor is he represented among the rock paintings at Pihilegodagalge although the leopard, who steals the Vedda dogs and is hated in consequence, is represented. When questioned on the subject our male informants said nothing, but a number of women looked surprised and one said quite decidedly that no one would paint a bear. The words used in speaking of the bear are of

[1] That the *kuniyam* idea was foreign to the one Vedda who suggested it, was proved by the results of further questioning, when our informant gave an outline of one of the commonest Sinhalese beliefs as to the method of preparation and action of *kuniyam* charms. The reference to *kuniyam* in one of the "Vedda charms" published by Mr De Zoysa (*Journal Ceylon Branch R. A. S.*, Vol. VII, 1881, p. 103), cannot be taken to invalidate our conclusions, for many of these charms show undoubted Sinhalese influence.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XI

ARTS AND CRAFTS

517 It is not our purpose in this short chapter to attempt to describe systematically the crafts of the Veddas, this has already been done by the Sarasins and we shall, therefore, limit ourselves to touching on matters which especially interested us, or concerning which we have unrecorded information.

The arts and crafts of the Veddas are of the simplest nature, their belongings are few, and there is no certain attempt at ornamentation on any of these. Even personal adornment is so lacking that it may be disregarded. The highest artistic attainments of the Veddas seem to be their songs and invocations, and these, with their ceremonial dances, in which they may be said to have specialised, seem to have absorbed all that part of their mental energy which remains after providing for their daily necessities. There is no reason to believe that their artistic development was ever any higher than it is at the present day, when the only form of decorative art in which they indulge for its own sake, is rude drawing on rocks which we shall now describe[1].

ROCK DRAWINGS.

532 Figs. 1 and 2 of Plate LVI show rock drawings made by the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya at Pihilegodagalge and another cave near it. Since our return we have ascertained that other Veddas

[1] It is possible that a few individuals are pleased by simple geometrical patterns. There are traces of ornamentation on two of the pots shown in Plate LXII although this had avowedly been copied from foreign pots.

[177]

[p. 318]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

make drawings[1], but unfortunately we did not pay attention to this matter until we had seen Pihilegodagalge. 532

This was due to the frequent occurrence of rough drawings and scribblings made by Tamil gall-nut collectors in some of the rock-shelters sometimes used by the Henebedda Veddas. The Veddas obviously had nothing to do with these, and they denied that they were responsible for the only other drawings that we saw, namely those of an elephant and two men in Punchikiri-ammagalge.

Probably drawings are made in many of the sloping rock-shelters and are habitually washed away by the monsoon. Indeed this view was put forward by the men of the Sitala Wanniya group who stated that all Veddas could make pictures.

Pihilegodagalge was, however, specially well situated for the preservation of the drawings, and the pictures on the back wall of the cave were never touched by rain. The drawings were usually made by women, who said they did them when they were waiting for the men to return from hunting, apparently merely to amuse themselves. We feel confident that no magical import attaches to these pictures, the usual subjects of which are men and women, various animals and the hide vessel *maludema* (Sin. *hangotu*) in which honey is collected. Ashes were mixed with a little saliva in the palm of the hand and streaked on to the rock with the forefinger of the right hand, the spots of the leopard being put in with a charcoal paste prepared in the same manner. [386]

Plate LVI, fig. 1 shows on the right a *maludema*, a vessel made of deer's hide in which rock-honey is collected. The radiating lines which make this drawing appear like the sun's disc, represent handles made of loops of creeper, while the spots inside indicate the honey. The *maludema* (a photograph of which is given in Plate LXV) is a favourite subject and occurs in a number of rock paintings. Below the *maludema* on the right is a dog and below this a leopard is represented. On the

[1] Mr H. C. P. Bell has written to us that he has seen drawings in the rock-shelters used a few years ago by the Veddas of Tamankaduwa, and Mr Alfred Clark formerly of the Woods and Forests Department has also observed them.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

532 left the two long figures which might be taken for centipedes really portray the big monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*), the vertical lines representing ribs.

Plate LVI, fig. 2 shows on the right a leopard and dogs while on the left men and women are seen. This illustration does not show very clearly the difference between men and women which was pointed out to us. Lines pointing upwards were drawn from the heads of women to show that their hair was tied in a knot. This distinction is very difficult to understand. The hair of both men and women is equally unkempt, the women certainly tie theirs into a knot behind, but this is quite frequently done by men also as a matter of convenience; and to the uninitiated these lines radiating from the head rather give the appearance of loose hair than the reverse.

The drawings in Plate LVII, fig. 1 are the work of a man, the grandfather of Handuna, the leader of the group. He is considered to have been an exceptionally good draughtsman. He was once obliged to go to Batticaloa the official headquarters of the province, the reason was difficult to follow, but it appeared to have been connected with a murder which had taken place. On his return to the cave he made a picture of what had impressed him most, namely, "the white man on horseback." Two representations of this are seen on the left, on the right there is a group of men and women surrounding a man who holds a bow above his head. The lower horizontal line represents the bow while the upper is the string and the vertical line the arrow. The dots scattered around the arrow represent its feathers.

Plate LVII, fig. 2 represents a number of drawings of *malidema* in a cave near Sitala Wanniya.

Plates LVIII to LXI are photographs of pictures made for us on brown paper by several members of the Sitala Wanniya community. The upper part of Plate LVIII shows a leopard attacking a dog, this was made by Vela, below it is a row of men drawn by the wife of Handuna. On Plate LIX a *malidema* is depicted on the left, next on the right are three women, two drawn horizontally and the third vertically, but upside down; in all of them the body has been carried down too far,

●532

Fig. 1. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave

415

Fig. 2. Rock drawings in Pihilegodagalge cave

[facing p. 32~~8~~]

Plate LVII

532

Fig. 1. Rock drawings in Pihilagodagalge cave

Fig. 2. Rock drawings of *hanguta* in Gamalandagalge cave

[facing p. 320 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

●532

Plate LVIII

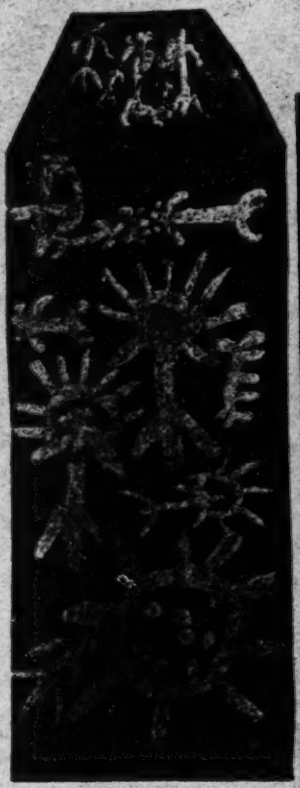
Vedda drawings

[facing p. 320 c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

532

Plate LIX

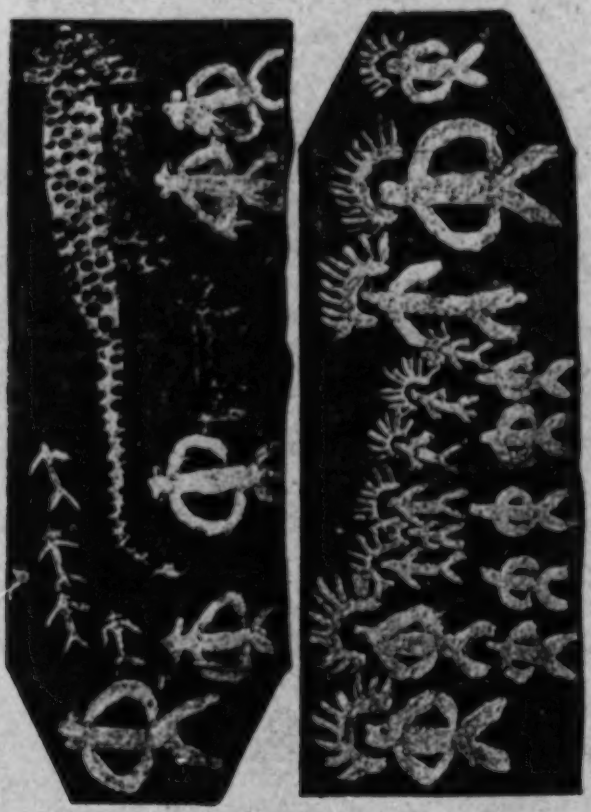


Vedda drawings

[facing p. 320 d]

●532

Plate LX



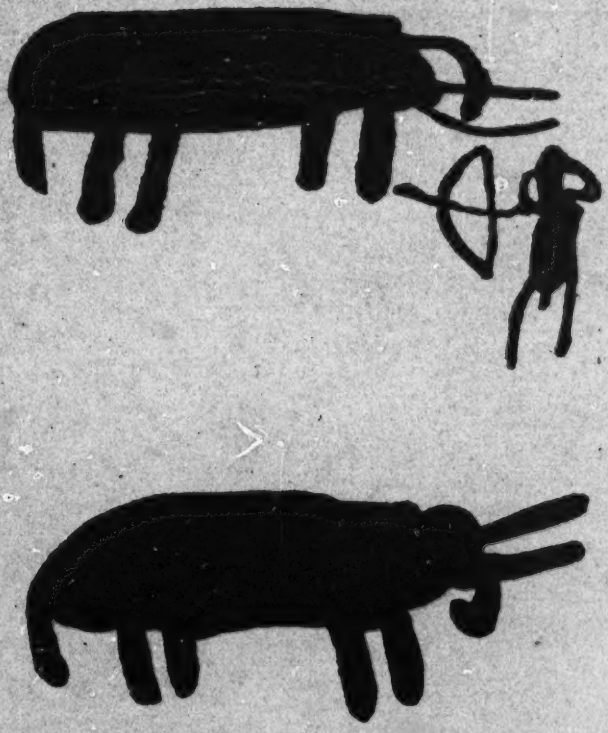
Vedda drawings

[-facing p 320 e]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXI

532



Vedda drawings

[facing p. 320 f]

1·Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so as to project downwards between the legs: the radiating lines above the head were said to represent hair. In the lower part of the photograph in the centre is a dog. The next three figures represent a bow and arrow, a woman and a man, looking at them from above to below. On the right is a group of men. The lower figure in this plate shows a sambar deer in the centre and four dogs, two men and a woman. Plate LX shows a leopard, a dog and several men and women. 532

The figures of elephants and a man with a bow and arrow on Plate LXI were drawn on grey millboard and were so faint that it was necessary to blacken them before reproduction. The carelessness with which the trunk is put in is noteworthy.

The only other occasions on which we saw pigments used were at the Bambura Yaka and Rahu Yaka ceremonies described in Chapter IX, black and yellowish-brown marks being made on the properties prepared. The black marks were made with charcoal paste, the brownish marks with turmeric. [386]

PANTOMIME.

The only other art practised by the Veddas is that of pantomime from which they undoubtedly derive real pleasure. Within the limits of their daily experience they are good actors, and will most faithfully portray their own method of doing things. The zest with which a number of Henebedda Veddas spontaneously prepared the properties for a pantomimic exhibition of honey-gathering, and then enacted the scene at Bendiyagalge caves, was very striking and has been referred to in Chapter IV. 536

Another piece of pantomime which we never saw enacted spontaneously but which was performed at our request, was the stalking of game. Directly the object to be "stalked" had been indicated, the stalker fixed his eyes on it, and then approached noiselessly and warily, with body bent and head forward, every muscle ready for instant action, till within a few paces of the object when he would straighten his body and return to the rest of the party at his usual easy pace.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from trees. Besides the *bambara* other species including the 222
small stingless bee supply a considerable quantity. The first two months of our sojourn in the Vedda country (January and February) was at a time when honey was particularly scarce, and even at the end of March and in April it was not abundant, yet such was the courtesy of the Veddas that each community managed to make us a small present of honey, though this often entailed a long search and the combs were frequently full of grubs. In two communities only, which were better off than the others, namely Danigala and Kulukalaeba, were we given large pots of strained honey, the remains of the previous year's store.

The manner in which *bambara* colonies are regarded as 262
property has been discussed in Chapter V. Writing in 1886 251
Nevill says, "Honey forms a great part of their diet. It is eaten fresh in large quantities, wax and all; combs with young bees in them being considered especially wholesome. It was also the practice formerly to store strips of dried meat in honey, filling in a cavity of some tree with it, the cavity being first lined with clay. At present they barter away their surplus [437]
meat and honey, during the hunting season, and keep no store for the rainy season. This often brings privation and is one cause of the rapid decrease in their numbers.

"They tell me their health is never so good as when their 262
food largely consists of yams and honey.

"To procure honey they rapidly cut open hollow trees, even 222
of the hardest wood; and to take the hives of the large black bambara bee, they make long ladders of cane, called 'rang [417]
kendiya,' by which they descend precipices, and cut off the combs adhering to their sides.

"They do this at night, generally, as the bees are not so savage then; and smoke them with a sort of resin. The hives are often cut off with a sort of wooden sword, made for the [413]
occasion. These frail ladders swing fearfully, and the task is so dangerous, only the boldest and most athletic attempt it. 222
While engaged on the task they sing lustily, songs specially made, which appease the spirit of the rock, and prevent him 533
from dashing the hunter off the ladder. They also go about

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the work with songs, so as to get up a certain degree of excitement, necessary to carry them through the task. A song is chanted, and a little honey sprinkled for the spirits, before the combs are cut off the rock[1]."

Before honey collecting as many pots as possible are made and old pots and gourds are overhauled. The wooden sword which Nevill mentions is probably the *masliya* (fig. 12). This is a stout stick about 2½ metres long with four prongs at one end, which the Vedda carries hanging by a loop from his forearm and which he uses to detach the comb and convey it into the vessel called a *malu-dema* in which the honey is collected. This is also carried hanging from the forearm and should be made of deer's hide so that it may not be broken against the rocks as the honey collector swings to and fro. Plate LXV shows a *malidema* collected at Sitala Wanniya. An arrow is also carried and is largely used in detaching the combs from the rock.

Before taking the honey a bundle of green leaves is set alight and lowered in order to stupefy the bees. The smoker is called *odiya* (Sin. *hula*) and the creeper attached to it *yotwella*[2]. Several men of the community join together to collect rock-honey, the whole spoil being equally divided without any special consideration for the owner of the land, though it seemed that the owner would decide when the honey should be collected. The women accompany their men to crags and gulleys where the *bambara* build their combs. They hold torches and sing while the honey is being collected.

Plate LXVI shows a gourd, used as a hive for a colony of the stingless bee, hanging outside one

Fig. 12.
Masliya × $\frac{1}{20}$.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 190.

[2] For the use of these see Chapter IV where the pantomime of honey getting is described.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XIII

MUSIC

By C. S. Myers.

Introductory.

The account of Vedda music given in this section is based upon an examination of thirty-four phonographic records of songs obtained from the Veddas by Dr and Mrs Seligmann[1]. 533 [126]

These songs are probably simpler in structure than any other native songs hitherto studied.

Nine of the tunes are composed of only two notes. In three others the tune consists also of two notes, but with the addition of one or more unimportant grace-notes. These twelve songs may be conveniently classed as belonging to Group A.

Twelve other songs consist of three notes only. These we shall class under Group B.

Nine songs contain four notes, and one consists of five notes. These we shall consider as Group C.

Of the songs in Group A, in no case is the range sensibly greater than our whole-tone interval. With the exception of two anomalous songs, no song in Group B has a range sensibly greater than our minor third. With one exception, no song in Group C has a range greater than a fourth.

There is evidence that the songs of Group A are more archaic than those of Groups B and C. For, unaware of the above system of classification, Dr Seligmann was asked to indicate those songs which appeared to him (on grounds of language, ceremonial, etc.) most probably archaic and those

[[1] We received the manuscript of this chapter from Dr Myers in November 1909, but owing to our absence from England, publication was deferred for six months. Meanwhile, in the *Quarterly Magazine of the International Musical Society* (Year xi, Part 2, 1910) there appeared a short account of Vedda music by Herr Max Wertheimer, based on an examination of four phonographic records obtained by Frau M. Selenka. Dr Myers has thus had no opportunity of alluding to Herr Wertheimer's observations in this chapter.] [114 713]

[p. 341]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 which were likely to be modern or foreign. Of the ten songs which he considered to be probably archaic, four belong to Group A, four to Group B, and only two to Group C; while of those in which he suspected modern, or foreign influence, only one belongs to Group A, five to Group B, and five to Group C. None of the Sinhalese songs collected by Dr Seligmann belongs to Group A.

In this connection it is also noteworthy that the Sitala Wanniya Veddas are considered by Dr Seligmann to have been less exposed to outside influence than other Veddas, and that of the three songs sung by them belonging to Group C two are believed by him to be late or foreign. There are altogether eight songs of the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, in only two of which is an interval sung sensibly greater than a whole-tone.

While the Sitala Wanniya Veddas may be considered the most primitive, the Veddas of Dambani and Bulugahaladena are semi-civilised, having absorbed much Sinhalese culture, and the Bandaraduwa Veddas are also much affected by the Sinhalese, with whom they are now living. The Henebedda Veddas have only lately begun to be affected by the Sinhalese.

Not only is Vedda music primitive because the notes of each song are so few and the range so small, but also because the natives are ignorant of any other than vocal music. Dr Seligmann writes that the "uncontaminated Veddas," e.g. those of Sitala Wanniya, have no musical instruments whatever. Others, however, e.g. those of Henebedda, although they had no drums at the time of his visit, borrowed them, when opportunity offered, from the Sinhalese, especially for songs belonging to the *kolamaduwa* ceremony. The two oldest Vedda ceremonies, namely, the dancing round an arrow in order to get game (p. 213), and the *kirikoraha* ceremony in which the dance is round an offering of coconut milk (p. 218), were accompanied by the rhythmic slapping of the hands on the abdomen and thighs. At Bandaraduwa, the Veddas were found to possess drums of Sinhalese pattern and make.

The songs of the Veddas may be divided according to their purpose into two main classes, the one consisting of charms and invocations, the other of lullabies and songs sung for amusement. Dr Seligmann observes that among all Veddas the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

invocation songs are accompanied by dance movement, and that the purpose of such song and dance is to produce possession by the *yaku* or spirits.

METHODS OF ANALYSIS.

126

The speed of the phonograph used for studying the records of these songs was so regulated that every record reproduced a tone $c' = 256$ vibrations per second, a tone of this pitch, emitted by a pitch-pipe, having been always sounded into the recording phonograph just before each record was taken by Dr Seligmann in the field. Consequently when the reproducing phonograph emitted the note, one was sure that the speed of this instrument agreed with that of the instrument into which the song had been sung. That is to say, the reproducing phonograph reproduced the exact tempo and pitch of the recorded song.

A rough notation was then made of the song, a metronome being employed to determine its approximate tempo.

Finally a more accurate determination of the pitch of the various tones was made by means of an Appunn's Tonmesser, an instrument consisting of a box of carefully-attuned metal tongues, any one of which could be sounded at will by means of a bellows worked by the feet. The particular instrument employed contained 65 tongues, the pitch of each tongue differing by two vibrations per second from its neighbour and the extreme range being an octave, from c^0 to c', i.e. from 128 to 256 vibrations per second[1].

The songs are transcribed as accurately as our European notation allows. Bars are only inserted when the regularity of the rhythm clearly permitted their use. A + or – above a note indicates that it should be somewhat sharpened or flattened. Greater precision may be obtained by observing the numbers written beneath the notes. These give the mean vibration-frequency of the tone in question, obtained by comparison with the standard Tonmesser. The sign V indicates a "breath mark," i.e. a short rest during which the singer draws a breath.

[1] For further details in manipulation, the reader is referred to the writer's Essay on "The Ethnological Study of Music," in *Anthropological Essays presented to Edward Burnett Tylor*, Oxford, 1907, pp. 235—254.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

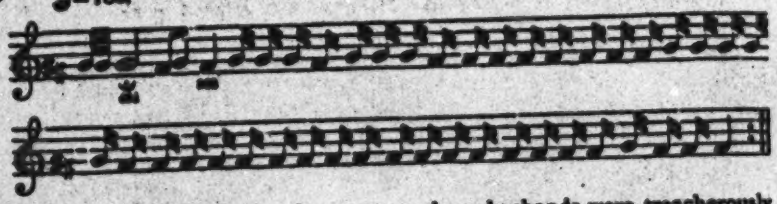
NOTATION OF THE RECORDS.

GROUP A.

No. 20. Invocation to the *Nae Yaku* sung by Kuma of Dambani.

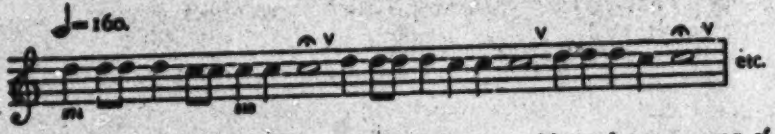
533

♩=160.



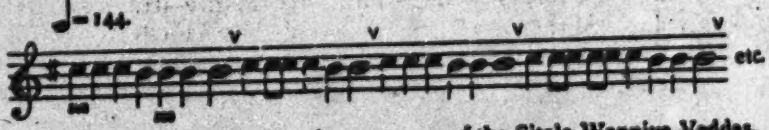
No. 22 A. Commemorating women whose husbands were treacherously killed while collecting honey; sung by Hudumenike of Bandaraduwa.

♩=160.



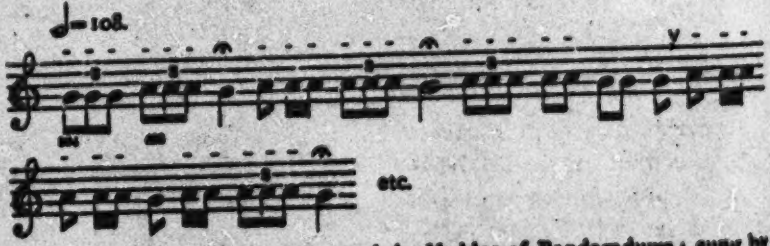
No. 21. Sung by women to men returning without honey; song of Sitala Wanniya Veddas.

♩=144.



No. 38. Sung while taking honey; song of the Sitala Wanniya Veddas.

♩=108.



No. 11 (2). Amusement Song of the Veddas of Bandaraduwa; sung by Tissahami, the "Vedda Arachi."

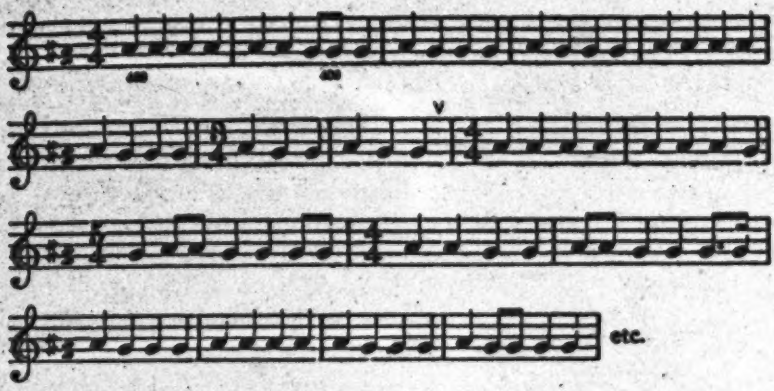
♩=196. See *lower*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

No. 18 (2). Song of the Bandaraduwa Veddas when driving monkeys.

♩=104.

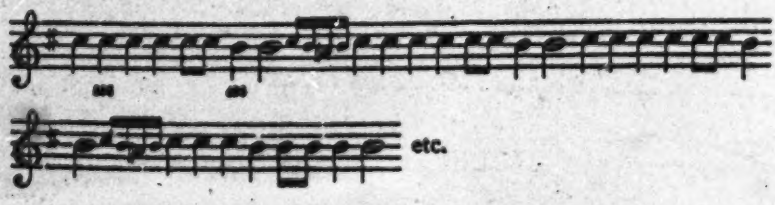


No. 1 (1). Invocation at the *kirikoraha* ceremony of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas; sung by the "Vedda Arachi."

♩=80. *8ve lower.*

No. 1 (2). Invocation at the *kirikoraha* ceremony of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas; sung by the "Vedda Arachi."

♩=176.



No. 19. Lullaby; sung by Hudumenike of Bandaraduwa.

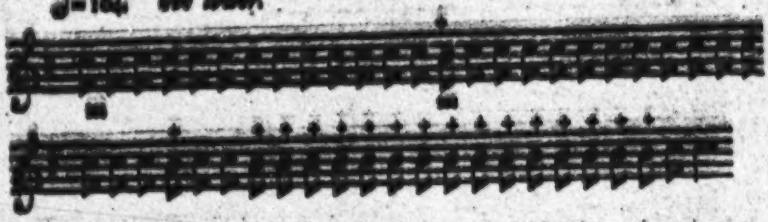
♩=208.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

No. 32. Invocation sung during ceremony to exorcise *Yaku* from the sick.

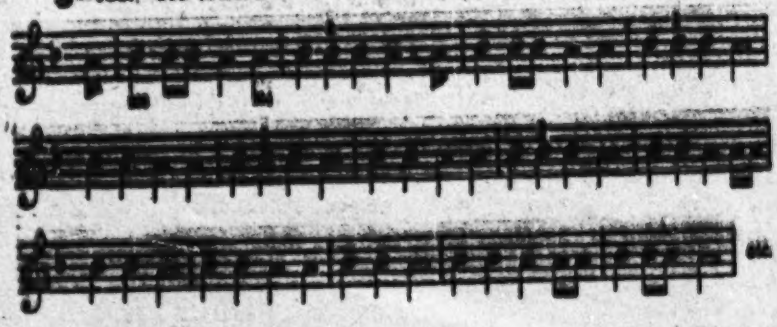
533

♩=164. See *lower*.



No. 42. Song (*Tundina* etc.), sung by the Vidane (headman) of the Dambani Veddas.

♩=108. See *lower*.



No. 43. Song (*Takgdin Sindu*), sung by Kuma of Dambani. The tune is that of No. 42, but the tones are *e* and *f*, corresponding to 160 and 171 vibrations per sec.

GROUP B.

No. 30(1). Invocation at the *Rumala* ceremony of the *Yaka* and *Yakini* of Walimbagala.

♩=100. See *lower*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

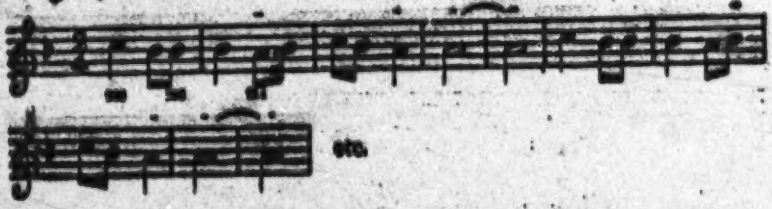
No. 30. Song; the first part sung by Tandi, wife of Handuna of Sitala Wanniya.

♩=180.

The second part sung by the husband to the same tune but in different pitch ♪=f^{0}g.

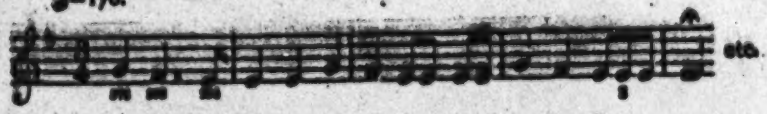
No. 31. Amusement Song; sung by Sita Wanniya of Henebedda.

♩=176. See lower.



No. 32. Song asking for gifts; sung by a woman of Bandaraduwa.

♩=176.



No. 31 A. Dance Song; sung by Sita Wanniya of Henebedda.

♩=88. See lower.

No. 34 (2). Lullaby; sung by Tandi, wife of Handuna of Sitala Wanniya.

♩=120.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

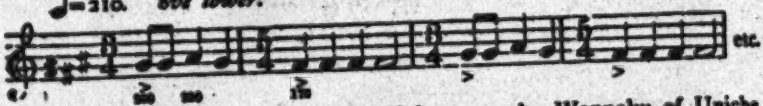
533

No. 27. Invocation of the Mahayakino at the *kolamadurua* ceremony; sung by Handuna of Henbedda.

♩=132. 8*ve lower*.

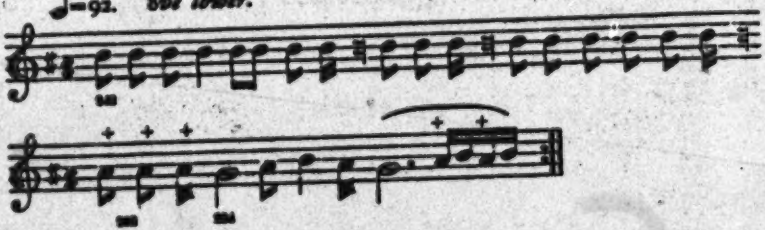
No. 36 (2). Amusement Song; sung by Handuna of Sitala Wanniya.

♩=210. 8*ve lower*.



No. 29. Invocation to the *Nae Yaku*; sung by Wannaku of Uniche.

♩=92. 8*ve lower*.

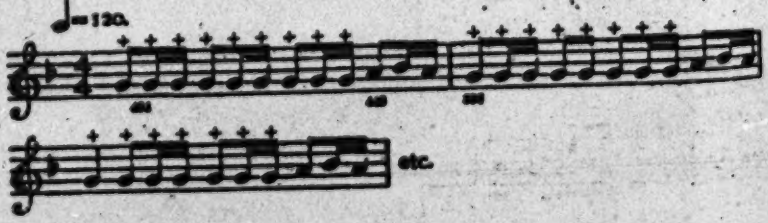


No. 2. *Maligi*, a honey-collecting song of the Henebedda Veddas; sung by Tissahami, the "Vedda Arachi."

♪=126. 8*ve lower*.

No. 39. Amusement Song; sung by Kuma of Bulugahaladena.

♩=120.



1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

No. 14 (2). Invocation used by the Bandaraduwa Veddas; sung by a Sinhalese[1].

♩=104. 8*ve lower.*

Repeated ad lib.

GROUP C.

No. 32. Invocation of Bambura Yaka; sung by Handuna of Sitala Wanniya.

8*ve lower.*

No. 33. Mulpola Itia Waniya; sung by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya.

♪=208. 8*ve lower.*

etc.

No. 26 (1). Invocation sung at the *kirikoraka* ceremony at Bandaraduwa.

♪=138. 8*ve lower.*

At end.

etc. etc.

No. 53 (1). Sinhalese rice-harvesting song; sung at Hemberewa (see footnote, p. 356).

♩=132. 8*ve lower.*

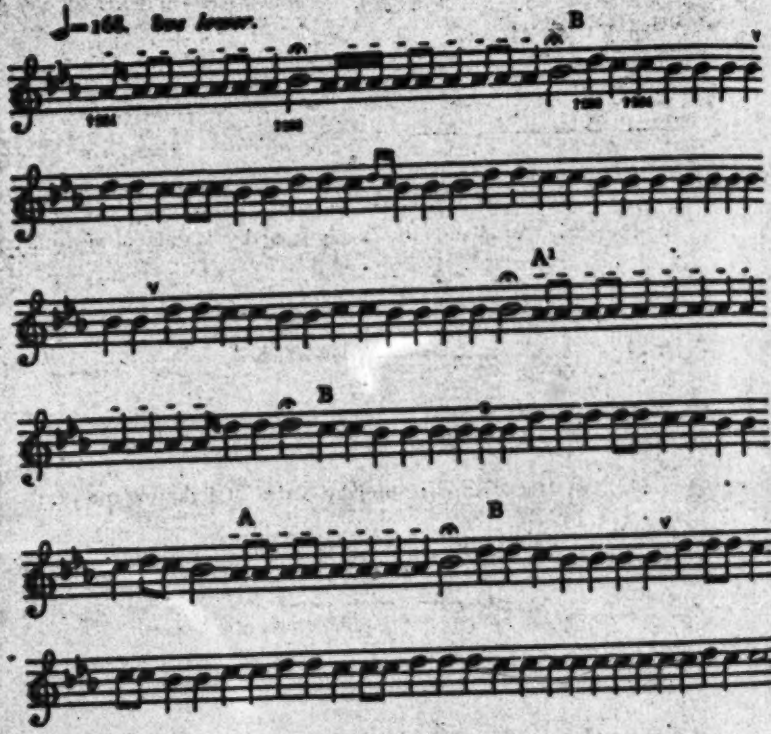
[1] Dr Seligmann is uncertain when this invocation is used; it is probably foreign.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

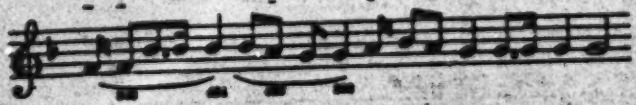
No. 44. Song when taking honey; sung by Peromala of Henebedda.

♩=168. See *lower*.



No. 28 A. Song commemorating two women who committed suicide (cf. p. 323); sung by Wannaku of Bandaraduwa.

♩=80.



No. 34 (1). Lullaby; sung by Tandi, wife of Handuna of Sinh Wanniya.

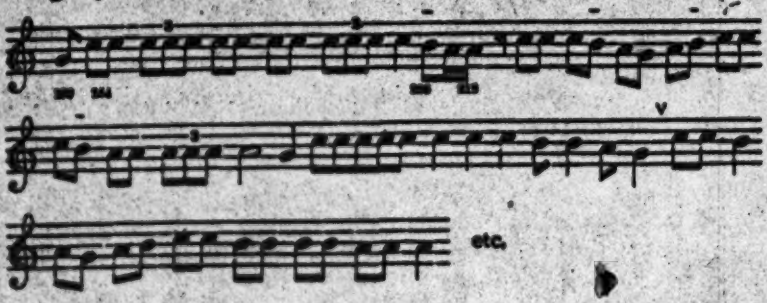
♩=96.

1; Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

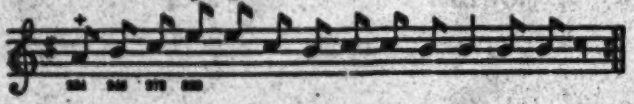
No. 51. Sinhalese song; sung at Alutnuwara at night while watching the crops (see footnote, p. 356).

♩=132. 8ve *lower.*



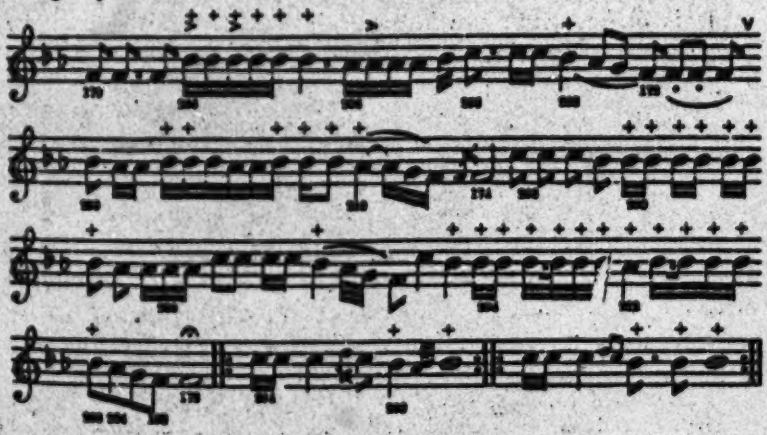
No. 5 (2). Invocation to Bilindi Yaka and Kande Yaka at the Kirikoraha ceremony.

♩=80. 8ve *lower.*



No. 41. Invocation by the Dambani Veddas of the *Nae Yaku.*

♩=152. 8ve *lower.*



1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Analysis of the Intervals.

The Songs of Group A.

533 The two columns headed "quotients" and "cents" in the accompanying table are obtained from the transcript by the following means:

Song No.	Quotients	Cents
42	1·075	125
43	1·075	125
38	1·099	164
32	1·110	168
21	1·104	171
11 (2)	1·104	171
1 (2)	1·121	198
40	1·121	200
22 A	1·125	205
18 (2)	1·128	208
1 (1)	1·133	216

The quotient is the result of dividing the larger by the smaller of the two numbers which express the vibration-frequencies of the two tones in each of the songs of this group. Thus in the case of Song No. 42, 230 divided by 214 (the figures given in the transcript) yields the quotient 1·075. The cents are hundredth parts of our own tempered semitone[1].

It is obvious that the intervals intended to be used in the songs of Group A are three in number. The averages are given in the following table:

Interval	Quotient	Cents
(α)	1·075	125
(β)	1·104	168
(γ)	1·126	205

Of these the largest (γ) is approximately our own whole-tone interval, the smallest (α) amounts to five-eighths of our whole-tone interval, while the intermediate interval (β) is almost

[1] Various methods for calculating cents from the vibration-numbers of an interval are given by Ellis, in his annotated translation of Helmholtz's *Sensations of Tone* (3rd edition, London, 1895), pp. 446—451.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

exactly half-way between the values of the two extremes[1]. The interval (α) occurs only in two songs sung by different individuals, who, however, were both Dambani Veddas. The Dambani singer of No. 43 is also responsible for No. 40, the interval of which falls in (γ). 533

The Songs of Group B.

Song Number	Quotients		Cents		Range Quotients	Range Cents
29	1·043	1·137	73	223	[1·186]	[299]
36 (2)	1·050	1·124	84	202	1·180	287
2	1·057	1·129	96	210	1·193	306
27	1·067	1·152	112	215	[1·208]	[327]
39	1·055	1·111	94	181	[1·172]	[275]
31 A	1·061	1·114	102	187	1·182	289
34 (2)	1·084	1·094	140	157	1·186	297
30 (1)	1·087	1·104	144	172	[1·200]	[316]
31	1·084	1·121	140	197	1·215	337
37	1·072	1·095	121	157	[1·175]	[279]
20	1·132	1·122	199	219	1·270	414

The columns headed "quotients" and "cents" in the foregoing table measure the intervals—in this Group the pairs of

[1] For purposes of comparison, the following details may prove useful:

Interval.	*Quotient.*	*Cents.*
Our tempered semitone	1·059	100
" " tone	1·122	200
" " minor third	1·189	300
" " major third	1·260	400
" " fourth	1·335	500
" " tritone...	1·414	600
" " fifth...	1·498	700
Our just (or pure) semitone (15 : 16) ...	1·06	111·731
" " " minor tone (9 : 10) ...	1·111	182·404
" " " major tone (8 : 9) ...	1·125	203·910
" " " minor third (5 : 6) ...	1·200	315·641
" " " major third (4 : 5) ...	1·250	386·314
" " " fourth (3 : 4) ...	1·3	498·045
" " " tritone (32 : 45) ...	1·406	590·224
" " " fifth (2 : 3) ...	1·500	701·955

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 intervals—for the various songs as in the previous Group. The last column, headed "range," expresses (also in the form of quotients and cents) the interval between the highest and lowest notes of each song. When that interval is not actually sung but only calculated, the figures are enclosed in brackets. Song No. 14 (2) is omitted from this group as its range and structure are obviously different from the rest. Dr Seligmann independently characterises this song as "almost certainly foreign... I find it was sung by a Sinhalese. I should neglect it." Song 20 is again exceptional. Its range exceeds four semitones (400 cents), or a major third. Here again Dr Seligmann—having regard only to evidence of a non-musical character—observes that "the words of this song are very late." Song No. 37 is somewhat exceptional. The intonation, moreover, is not very reliable.

The remaining songs of this Group fall into three divisions, the averages for which are shown in the following table:

Interval	Quotients		Cents		Range	
					Quotients	Cents
(δ)	1·054	1·130	92	213	1·192	305
(ε)	1·059	1·112	98	184	1·177	282
(ζ)	1·085	1·106	142	175	1·200	317

It is evident that the range of notes in these three divisions is not sensibly different. It amounts approximately to our minor third.

This interval is divided in the case of divisions (δ) and (ε) into two intervals, one of which is somewhat smaller than our semitone, while the other is in (δ) larger, in (ε) smaller than our whole-tone.

In the case of division (ζ) the interval of a minor third is divided into two intervals which are much more nearly equal to one another. The same feature characterises Song No. 20, where the major third is almost equally bisected.

In only four of the eleven tunes of this group is an interval appreciably larger than a whole tone actually sung by the singer.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

This is shown by the unbracketed numbers in the columns headed "range." In No. 20 an interval of 414 cents (slightly exceeding a major third) is sung, but this song, as we have already observed, is exceptional. In Nos. 31 A and 34 (2), an interval somewhat less than a minor third is sung, in the former of 289, in the latter of 297 cents. In No. 31 the interval (337 cents) slightly exceeds a minor third.

The intervals sung in the anomalous song No. 14 (2) are of 467 and 269 cents.

The various average values of quotients and cents in the songs of groups A and B are set out in the following tables:

Quotients.

I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.
1·054 1·059	1·075	1·085	1·104 1·106 1·112	1·126 1·130	1·177 1·192 1·200

Cents.

I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.
92 98	125	142	168 175 184	205 213	282 305 317

It will be noticed that the difference between I and II, III and IV, IV and V is about thirty cents, and that the difference between V and VI is about thrice this value.

The Songs of Group C.

It will be remembered that the songs of this group contain four different notes. The intervals between the highest and lowest notes (maximal range), the intervals between alternate notes (an intervening tone omitted) and the intervals between

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 immediately successive notes are shown in the following table of quotients. Brackets indicate, as before, that the interval in question was not actually sung but only calculated.

Song Number	Maximal range	Interval between alternate notes		Interval between immediately successive notes		
32 (also 46)	1·23	[1·17]	1·13	1·10	1·06	1·06
33	[1·24]	[1·17]	[1·17]	1·10	1·06	1·06
53 (1)	[1·31]	[1·21]	[1·19]	1·10	1·09	1·09
26 (1)	[1·28]	[1·22]	[1·13]	1·13	1·09	1·05
34 (1)	1·32	[1·25]	[1·19]	1·12	1·11	1·06
31	1·34	[1·24]	1·20	1·12	1·11	1·08
28 A	1·35	[1·26]	[1·17]	1·15	1·09	1·07
44	? 1·37	[? 1·29]	? 1·19	? 1·16	? 1·12	? 1·06
5 (2)	1·43	1·30	? 1·27	? 1·18	1·11	1·10
41	1·46	1·37	1·31	1·13	1·10	1·05

The songs appear to fall into four divisions. In the first of these the maximal range is expressed by the quotient 1·235—equal to 365 cents—(nearly a neutral third), and the intervals between successive notes are expressed by the quotients 1·06, 1·10,—equivalent to 101 and 165 cents respectively. In the third division, the maximal range amounts to 1·33 or 496 cents (almost exactly equal to a just fourth) while the successive notes average 1·06, 1·10 and 1·14, i.e. 101, 165, and 227 cents. A very similar interval in song No. 53 is trisected into almost equal intervals, each approximately of 165 cents. In the case of the last division, the maximal range averages 1·445, equivalent to 637 cents (an acute diminished fifth), and the intervals comprise again an almost pure fourth, a slightly exaggerated major third, and other intervals common to other songs of the group. Of the two songs in this division Dr Seligmann writes that in "No. 5.....there are signs of foreign influence in the invocation as it stands, but it has a good old Vedda basis," and that "No. 41 is probably late."

Hence the most significant of the smaller intervals between

[1] These songs are said to be Sinhalese, but in most respects they closely resemble the Vedda songs of this group and are therefore included in it.

I:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

successive notes occurring in the songs of Group C are equal to 101, 165, 227 cents, which are successively different by about 63 cents. But it will be remembered that the difference between cestain intervals employed in Group B was found to be about 30 cents, half of the difference just observed. In Group C we have just found the neutral third of 365 cents divided into two intervals, one of 101 and the other of 165 cents, representing approximately three and five of these hypothetical units, each of 33 cents. The same intervals were found in the division of the fourth of 496 cents into 5, 3 and 7 of such units. Again in three songs of Group B, the average interval of 317 cents is divided into intervals of 142 and 175 cents, differing by 33 cents. In view, however, of the want of precision in intonation, it is difficult to believe that these differences are significant. 533

The value of the fourth, when actually sung in the songs 28, 34 (1), 51 of Group C, averages 1·337 or 503 cents. Consequently it is almost pure. A pure minor third is sung in No. 34 (1). A neutral third is sung in No. 32, the value of which is 1·235 or 365 cents. In No. 5 (2), the minor third which is sung is small, amounting to 1·176 or 281 cents. The diminished fifth and the fourth sung in No. 41 correspond respectively to 655 and 543 cents.

Of the smaller intervals, the interval of 165 cents is certainly one of the most important. It occurs frequently in Group C and also (as 168 cents) in Group A, where it is exactly midway between the other two intervals (125 and 205 cents) met with in this group.

Analysis of the Rhythms.

In the majority of the songs the *time* is fairly regular, but the *accents* often recur irregularly owing to the variable numbers of syllables. The following extracts from the writer's note-book will serve to illustrate this general lack of regular measure:

No. 22 A. Want of regular accent; number of notes *and* *Rhythm* according to words.

No. 21. Irregular accent according to number of syllables (see notation).

No. 32. Time regular but without regular accent.

Seligmann & Seligmann 2:5 (1907-1908) 1811
AXS Vedda AXS

533 No. 1 (1). Frequent interpolation of extra beats owing to extra syllables. *Rate* of beats constant. Little or no grouping of beats into larger units (i.e. no measure, bar or tact).

No. 33. The words dictate the number of notes.

No. 20. Considerable variation in time and in number of notes, regulated by breathing and by number of syllables.

No. 26. With variations according to recitative.

No. 28. No regular accent.

In some songs, however, the measures were more obvious. Thus,

No. 51. Very rhythmical, but occasionally an odd syllable is inserted.

No. 5. Fairly regular, save for a few extra syllables.

In only a few was the rhythm very well marked, as the following extracts show:

No. 11 (2). Very regular rhythm and accent.
No. 18 (2). Very regular rhythm.
No. 34 (1). Regular save for breath-marks.
No. 14 (2). Strict tempo save for breath-marks.
No. 36. Strict time.

In five songs, the rhythm is particularly noteworthy owing to the occurrence of bars of five beats. Thus, in No. 18 (2), a bar of five beats is inserted three times in the course of the song. One of them is shown in the part transcribed. In No. 14 (2), a five-bar is introduced in strict time at the close of the tune. Again in Nos. 33, 34 (1), 36 (2) there are alternate groups of three and five beats. In other words a bar of eight beats is sub-divided into two bars containing three and five beats respectively.

With these exceptions and the striking exception of No. 20, no one of the songs is clearly in triple measure, although occasionally, e.g. in No. 22 A, a bar of three beats is introduced into a song.

Generally speaking, where the accent occurs sufficiently regularly for the measure to be apprehended, the accent is found to lie on the first of every two or four beats.

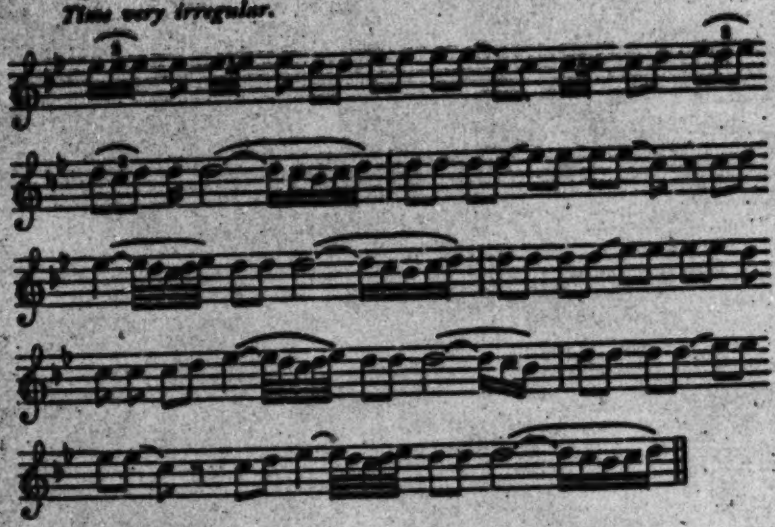
Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

General Character of Songs.

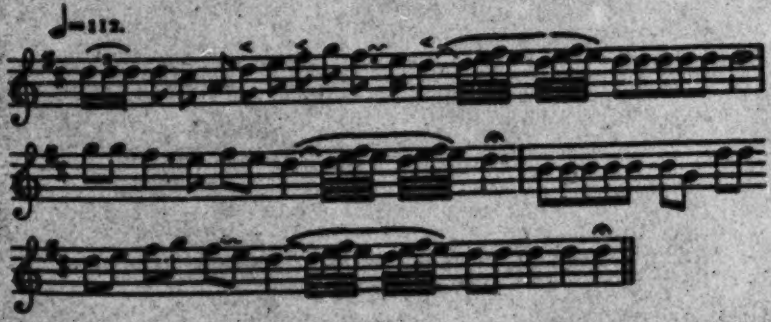
The songs have an exceedingly plain character, and are devoid of the ornamentation with which we meet in many examples of primitive music. The few embellishments which occur in Nos. 1 (1), 1 (2), 2, 29, 32, are quite slight and simple. They present a contrast in this respect when compared with Nos. 30 and 33, which are records of other than Vedda music from Ceylon. I am indebted to Mr R. R. Broome, B.A., of Christ's College, Cambridge, for their notation.

533
171

No. 30. Charm (reputed to be Arabic) sung by the Arachi of Girandura.
Time very irregular.



No. 23. Sinhalese Love Song.



1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 Another feature is the precision with which the notes are hit. There is not a single example of that *glissando* from note to note, which is so frequently met with among certain primitive peoples.

In only one song does more than one singer take part, and in this, No. 37, the second singer merely repeats the melody of the first when the latter has finished. There is hence no instance of two or more simultaneously sung notes.

But perhaps the most striking characteristic of Vedda music is the apparent feeling for tonality. In every song a tonic note is clearly present, which is, so to speak, the centre of gravity of the melody, emphasised by accent, duration, or frequency—a note to which the melody seeks to return.

In the majority of songs of Groups A and B the melody starts from the highest tone and proceeds (directly or by an intermediate tone) to the tonic, which is consequently the lowest tone. This description essentially holds, (i) for all the songs in Group A, excepting the opening phrase of No. 38, which is distinct from the rest; (ii) for the twelve songs of Group B, excepting Nos. 36 (2) and 37, where the tune ascends from the tone below the highest before descending, and Nos. 14 (2) and 39 which ascend direct from the lowest (tonic) to the highest; and (iii)—but for the introduction of a leading note—for four of the songs in Group C.

The close similarity between the various songs of Group A is so obvious that no further comment is necessary to establish it.

It is not difficult to trace the development of many of the songs of Group B from those of Group A. For example:

No. 11 (2). No. 42.

No. 31 a.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533

From the last song, No. 31 A, there is an easy transition to certain other songs of the same group, e.g. to

No. 31. No. 34 (2).

We can also indicate the relation between No. 42 of Group A and five other songs of Group B.

No. 42.

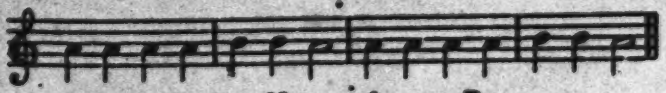
No. 36 (2). No. 37.

No. 2. No. 39.

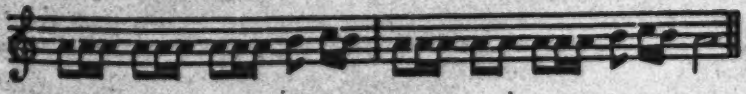
No. 27.

Again, No. 19 of Group A

by a change comparable to that occurring in the opening phrases of No. 38 easily becomes



and this passes easily into No. 39 of group B:—



1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 The introduction of a fourth note into the melody is seen in its most elementary form in the case of song No. 44[1]. Here, a division into two phrases, A (modified at A[1]) and B, is clearly possible. Of these B consists of three notes, and has the general characters of the songs of Group B, while A contains the tonic, the lowest tone of the phrase B, preceded by the tone below the tonic, that is to say, by the leading-note. The use of the leading-note is clearly foreshadowed in the opening phrase of Song No. 38 in Group A. Four other songs in Group C, Nos. 28, 34 (1), 51 and 5 (2), have a definite leading-note. In Nos. 28, 34 (1) and 51, the leading-note is followed immediately by the highest note, whence a descent is made to the tonic as in the songs of Group B. Hence four of the songs in Group C only differ in structure from those of Group B by the addition of a leading-note.

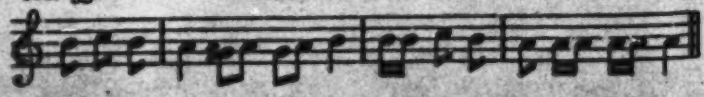
No. 53 (1) is exceptional in that it starts from the tonic and ascends by intermediate tones to the highest, whence a gradual descent is made to the tonic. It is a Sinhalese song.

No. 26 (1) should perhaps be classed in Group B,—of so little importance is the highest or fourth note introduced. Apart from its opening phrase, it may be compared with Nos. 36 (2) and 37 of that group, both of which ascend from the note below the highest, before descending to the tonic.

Only one other song of Group C remains unmentioned. And this, No. 33, is extremely like No. 36 (2) of Group B, not only in structure but in the curious rhythm. An unimportant semi-tone is introduced beneath the tonic.

No. 36 (2).

No. 33.



There are so few tones in these songs that we can hardly expect to meet with a strict division of the melody into phrases

[1] See [illegible], p. 31[illegible]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yet in songs Nos. 26 (1), 38, and 44 there are opening phrases distinct from the body of the song. And in No. 44 this opening phrase (marked A in the transcript) is repeated in its original (or, as at A[1], in a modified) form during the song. The melody is thus very easily divisible into a series of alternating phrases, attaining a higher stage of development in this respect than any other of the melodies under investigation. Nos. 26 (1) and 41 (both of which Dr Seligmann suspects to be of modern date) have a short terminal phrase, clearly separable and differing in character from the remainder of the song. 533

Conclusions and Comparisons.

In the Vedda music we seem to meet with the very beginnings of melody-building. At the lowest stage (Group A) we have a two-note song descending from the higher to the lower tone. Then (in Group B) a third note is added higher in pitch than either of the preceding. Lastly (in Group C) a fourth note is introduced, generally a tone below the tonic, the influence of which throughout most of the songs is very clearly felt. 533
171

There is no other people in whose music the gradual construction of melody on these simple lines can be discerned. If we turn to Australian music[1], we usually meet, it is true, with small intervals between successive tones, but the range of tones throughout any one song is considerable. Among the American Indians it is also rare to find a song consisting only of two notes. Only four of the forty-three American Indian melodies collected by Abraham and v. Hornbostel[2] consist of two notes, and in three of these the interval is a neutral or minor third. Similar results are yielded by the older collections of Baker[3] and Stumpf[4]. The music of the natives of New Guinea, Borneo and Africa is decidedly more complex than that of the Veddas.

Turning to the music of Southern India, we find that only two or three of thirteen phonographic records, obtained from

[1] Karl Hagen, *Ueber d. Musik einiger Naturvölker*, Hamburg, 1891.

[2] Phonographirte Indianer Melodieen aus British Columbia, in the *Boas Memorial Volume*, New York, 1906, pp. 447—474.

[3] *Ueber d. Musik d. nordamerik. Wilden*, Leipzig, 1882.

[4] *Vierteljahrs. d. Musikwiss.*, 1886, S. 405—426.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
171

natives of Gujar, Malabar and Tanjore[1], at all resemble in simplicity the Vedda music. Five of them have a range of tones compassing an octave, while three others range over a sixth. Of the three most primitive songs one is a prayer, the other two being children's songs. It cannot be said that in general character they very closely resemble the Vedda songs.

The intervals among the Veddas appear to have been developed by the successive addition of small intervals to those previously used. There are only two or three exceptional cases [Nos. 20, 34 (2), 53 (1)] in which the added intervals are approximately equal to the original; and these instances are possibly accidental. In nearly all the remaining songs of Group B, the additional third tone consists of approximately a semitone added above the whole-tone interval which starts from the tonic. The two intervals thus comprise a minor third. This minor third tends to be smaller than our own tempered or untempered interval. A major third occurs only in a single song, and a neutral third is also only once sung. In Group C, the fourth, when sung, is in most cases approximately true, although in one song it is smaller, in another decidedly larger, than our own tempered or untempered interval. A fifth occurs but in one song and is distinctly smaller than ours.

We can only conclude from these data that in the absence of musical instruments, musical intervals are by no means fixed among the Veddas, and that this want of fixity becomes more striking, the greater the number of notes introduced into the song. In dealing with the songs of Group A, we were able to range without difficulty the intervals under three heads. But with the songs of Groups B and C such classification became increasingly difficult and more uncertain.

From what we know of primitive music elsewhere, it was not to be expected that the Veddas would sing pure minor or major thirds. For a long time, even in European music, thirds were regarded as dissonant. What does, however, seem unusual, is that the fifth, in the one Vedda song in which it occurs, bears so little resemblance to the consonant interval which has the ratio 2 : 3. It is almost a quarter-tone flat. On the other hand, the

[1] *Sammelb. d. Internat. Musikgesellsch.* 1901, Bd v, S. 348—[illegible].

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
171

fourth is several times sung nearly in the consonant ratio of 3:4. Inasmuch as the fifth is so much more consonant than the fourth, we should have expected to have found its intonation purer than the fourth.

For the same reason we might have expected to have found the fifth preferred to the fourth, but the fifth only occurs in one song, while the fourth is sung in several. But the intervals of the Veddas appear to have been developed, as we have already said, not by taking a harmonious interval and dividing it into smaller intervals, but by starting with small (and uncertain) intervals and adding further intervals to them. It is only in the more advanced songs (and these are very few in number) that relatively large intervals are sung. And here we appear first to meet with the influence of harmony in fixing the size of such consonant intervals. Despite the fact that to our ears tonality is so well-marked throughout the Vedda songs, the approximate consonance of intervals is only reached when the two tones immediately succeed one another.

As regards the rhythm of the Vedda songs, it is noteworthy that in Indian music Abraham and von Hornbostel found frequent instances of the interpolation of a 3- or a 5-pulse measure in music otherwise of common time. They note that change of rhythm is "so frequent that we are often unable to detect any constant primary rhythm at all, but are compelled to imagine a continual modification of measure[1]." This remark is applicable, as we have seen, to much of Vedda music, while in other Indian and Vedda songs a definite rhythm can be readily apprehended. In many parts of the world primitive music is characterised by "a delight in change and opposition of rhythm, and a demand that relatively long periods filled with measures of diverse length be apprehended as an organic whole or 'phrase'[2]." This is a characteristic of several of the Vedda songs.

[1] *Op. cit.* S. 398.
[2] C. S. Myers, *Brit. Journ. of Psychol.* 1909, Vol. 1, p. 405.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XIV

SONGS

533 In this chapter we give a number of Vedda songs for the transliteration and translation of which we are indebted to Mr Gunasekara.

It will be noted that a number of the songs are variants on a common theme; with the exception of No. IV (song asking for presents), the lullabies and the song sung while plucking *jāk* fruit, all were sung for the enjoyment they caused or the amusement they produced—that is to say we could not discover that there were occasions on which any of these songs were sung specially and exclusively. Even the sad little song (No. VII) commemorating the suicide of two women[1], though it did not cause amusement, was by no means avoided and seemed to give a good deal of quiet satisfaction. The song sung by women to their husbands who returned empty handed from seeking honey, though doubtless sung on appropriate occasions, was also sung at other times and was considered rather a joke.

533 539 A number of the best known songs begin or end with a variant of the untranslatable lines

Ṭan ṭaṇḍinānan ṭaṇḍinānī
Ṭānan ṭaṇḍina ṭaṇḍinānī[2].

[1] The legend has been given on pp. 322 and 323.

[2] Mr Gunasekara by slightly altering these lines would obtain

Ṭaṇ ṭaṇ dinānī ṭaṇ ṭaṇ dinānī
Ṭānān ṭaṇ dina ṭaṇ dinānī

which he would translate

May each be victorious! May each be victorious!
May he defeat those who are inimical to him! May he be victorious!

[p. 366]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Other songs begin with a variant of

Mānipi mānipi mādayiyā

which may be translated

Oh great man! Oh great man! Oh great god!

or perhaps as Bailey writes

My departed one, my departed one, my god!

The following lullaby was sung at Banderaduwa by a woman called Hudumeniki to the air (No. 19) given on page 345.

I. *Rē-rē-rē*
Ammī mōkafada ādanni
Ammī gōsiga ilāfai
Ēkat nindama dīpawu dennā
Ammī mōkafada ādanni
Ammī gōmala bokkafayi ādanni
Ēkat nindama dewu dennā
Ammī mōkafada ādanni
Ammī wādurāgē ihafayi
Ēkat nindama dewu dennā
Ammī mōkafada ādanni
Ammī rōsāgē ihafayi
Ēkat nindama dewu dennā
Rē-rē-rē
Ammī halawalta pafuni
Nindāfayi ādanni
Nidigannā pāfuni
Nindāfayi ādanni
Rē-rē-rē
Ammā rē-rē-rē
Ammā mōkafa ādanni
Ammā dīsī nāpfayi ādanni
Ammī mōkafayi ādanni
Ammī nidi nidundayi
Rē-rē-rē ammā.

Rē-rē-rē Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the fat of the monitor lizard? Give the whole of it (i.e. the fat). Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the *gōmala* yams you are crying? Give all of them (i.e. the yams). Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the head of the *wandura* monkey? Give the whole of it (i.e. the head). Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the head of the *rilawa* monkey? Give the whole of it (i.e. the head).
Rē-rē-rē

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5 .

533 Child, creeping child; are you crying for sleep? Sleeping child, are you
539 crying for sleep? *Rá-rá-rá* Darling, *Rá-rá-rá*

Darling, for what are you crying? Darling, is it for bathing you are crying? Child, what are you crying for? Child, is it for sleep? Darling, *Rá-rá-rá*.

The next lullaby was sung by Tandi of Sitala Wanniya; we do not know whether this is the lullaby the music of which is given on page 347 (No. 34 (2)) or on page 350 (No. 34 (1)).

ii. *Ammita puthuna*
Ammat mahapuda ekkamuda
Ammat ayiti kakkapayi
Ehai ninduma dendenna
Ammat mahapuda ekkamuda
Ammat kapuwala kakkapayi
Ehai ninduma dendenna
Ammat mahapuda ekkamuda
Ammat gaitha kikkapayi
Ehai ninduma dendenna.

Lovely babe, what do you cry for, child? Child, it is for the ayiti yam. I will give the whole of it. Child, what do you cry for? Child, it is for kapuwala yam. I will give the whole of it. Child, what do you cry for? Child, it is for the fat of the monitor lizard. I will give the whole of it.

These lullabies though longer than those collected by Nevill closely resemble the latter, although they do not appear to contain the jokes and intentional absurdities which Nevill considered to exist in those he recorded[1].

The next song though not a lullaby was said to have been sung by a mother to her young children who were frightened at the oncoming of a thunder storm. It was taken down at Nilgala.

iii. *Ekmuthan ambithan*
Sat mudura handiyen piyai
Siluan silpawunali widinnayi uruyi uruyi
Balapanu dunu nan bala pan dunu
Ayiyinan ayiyinan dini mudura nagala
Balapi gina ina ragu narahayi

1 *Taprobanian*, Vol. II, p. 122. We are by no means convinced that Nevill was right in seeing jokes and absurdities in these lullabies. He himself notes (*loc. cit.*) "that the people themselves do not altogether understand many words in these...."

539
539

Mapa ego kandi kuwangi
Rajamalli gajimanja wanawa dunnā nam
Kada kadagi dagi rajā wannila dunnā
Atta wannagi kada wannagi Nilgawa dunnā nam
Ahan rajā ainala yahilla kadala ayinā
Ihapa rajā ayibinnai wannagi wannagi
Ubā ādāri wanigawa ha ādāri wanigawa
Ilangala malagala gaha ādu wanigawā hiriyā wannagi
Rajamalli gajimanja wannanā dunnā.

Darling! Darling! Then you see the wind and rain are coming down from outside the Seven Rock. See the rain. See brother, thunder and lightning coming from the direction of the sun. Things are getting bad. My body is losing strength (through fear). Let us two go to the Rajamalla cave (or cave plant). Ha! ha! my two princes, it is not possible to go down, day. Oh lovely princes! in the forest are *yaha* and *gaha*. Are we not staying in the palace at night! The sky is growing dark, the earth is growing dark. Are not *ilu* trees falling at Ilangala and Malagala! Let us go to the Rajamalla cave.

The following "song asking for presents" was sung by a woman of Bandarawa to the air (No. 20) given on page 349. Although addressed to the *Hindu Nilame* (white chief, i.e. white woman) it was not an contemporary composition but was said to have been known to the singer's parents.

IV. *Hindu nilame kadā kala, ādi kala, rati kala, Ahamarā wāgawa jaramā gatiyaya.*
Kadawa ādu ādi kāgi ādawa, ādi dāmbilla yanaga
Kadawa ādu ādawaya malgala ādāgi kāgalā wāgilā gana ādawa.
Ādi dāmbilla yanaga ādi kāgi ādawa ādawa.

White chief (other), (I am) running short of betel leaves[1] and betel nut. White chief, give (us) presents so that we may run away. White chief, the young (or other) younger sister of *Ahamarā* is getting hungry. Give us, give us, presents that we may run away.

The next two songs, both collected at Nilgala, were particularly popular; the first reflects the very high estimate in which a Vedda holds his wife.

V. *Kudaha kawan jaya ādyā*
Kudaha kawan jaya ādyā
Hiriwa kalagun jaya ādyā
Hiriwa kalagun jaya ādyā

[1] In the original *kawā* betel and *ādi* betel both mean betel leaves.

L. Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

539
539

Wanain ḡinam ḡaṇa nāyayi
Wanain ḡinaṇa ḡaṇa nāyayi
Kuḡi ḡata nattin ḡaṇa yannayi
Kuḡi ḡata nattin ḡaṇa yannayi.

For (want) of gruel or food, the life will not depart (i.e. man will not die); owing to cold or wind, the life will not depart; owing to rain or dew, the life will not depart. If there be no wife, the life will depart.

VI. *Tinan taṇḍen tināni*
Man sellin baḡawak dekn gattim
Man sellin baḡawak dekn gattim
Mahada mahada bola hiri nāni
Mahada mahada bola hiri nāni
Ehema hiyena baḡawak nowayi madaka gatti bola nāni
Aru ḡalli tilawi tibānu
Dambuḡlikkiya bila dek gattim.

Tinan taṇḍen tināni.

I have seen a fine thing and taken it. What is it, what is it, oh good *nāna*? *Nāna*, the thing which I saw and picked up is not one that I will mention readily. You *nāna*, what I saw and picked up is the smoking pipe which was on that distant high ground (lit. back high-ground).

[276] The Sinhalese do not smoke pipes, and the Veddas do not smoke at all; on questioning our informants we were told that this song was only two or three generations old and referred to the finding of a pipe dropped by a white sportsman.

The next song recorded at Bandaraduwa alludes to the suicide of two Vedda women and has been referred to already on pages 322 and 323. Only the first part of the song, containing no direct reference to the final tragedy, was taken down.

VII. *Akkinam akkinam yanḡi wārinan*
Aḡi dennāgi wanniliā endāno nāti
Bilanda yandewa wāri naḡā
Naḡā nan naḡā aḡi dennāgi wanniliā
Duwagena ennan bilandā wāri naḡā nan naḡā
Akki nam akki nam maḡa bāsuru bāri nam bāri nam
Naḡā nam naḡā nam wāri nam wāri nam
Aḡi dennāgi wanniliā wellihandiyin duwagen ennan
Bilandu wārin.

Elder sister, elder sister, come to go. Our husbands have not returned; come younger sister, let us go to look for them. Younger sister, younger sister, the husbands of us two are coming running. Younger sister, younger

C.G. Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

sister, come to look. Elder sister, elder sister, I am afraid, I cannot, I cannot. Younger sister, younger sister, come, come. The husbands of us two are coming running from Wellikandiya. Come and see.

533
539

The next song, collected at Sitala Wanniya, records a fatal accident while honey-gathering; a woman speaks to her sister, so that "elder brother" in the third line should be "elder sister"; "younger brother" is a common periphrasis for husband. Tantirivelo is the name of a rock-face and the "golden jewelled cord" is the *liane* ladder by which the honey-seekers reach the comb (cf. Chapter X, invocation No. XXVI).

VIII. *Tantirivēlo baliyaṭo bāṭu*
Raṇ miṇi kendō gallan kinikī
Bādā dennaw mayē kiriṇ ayiyē
Apilā dennayē mallila dennaṭa
Adissi amarukamak eti mayē kiri akki.

(At) Tantirivēlo the skilfully (or forcibly) lowered
Golden jewelled cord which is sunk from the rock
Gives an unlucky sign, my dear elder brother.
For the younger brothers of us two
There will be a sudden difficulty, my dear elder sister[1].

The following song, also from Sitala Wanniya, was sung by women to their husbands when the latter returned from honey-seeking without honey. The air to which it was sung is given on page 344 (No. 21).

IX. *Disi mawili ranhenda elala ilala*
Kalu rati nangilā dunhewuten pannālā
Ran kuḍuwēn kaṭālā ela mōran nāgāṭoyi
Mēmullin ikalī kodāyi kiyālā
Duwagena dwō wennilā-gollā
Ela mōran nāgātā ela gini wediwigina ennā.

(They) let down, let down the great *mawila* creeper jungle rope, (they) drive away the bees with smoke; (the comb) was cut with the golden sword for the young sisters of Morane. (Our) husbands came running and saying, "Above this corner there is none." The young sisters of Morane are getting hungry.

[1] Mr Parker, to whom we are indebted for the translation of this song, notes that "gallan stands for galan; kinikī appears to be derived from kindunnā to be sunk, and to be the equivalent of kindirī.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 539 The next song, transliterated and translated by Mr Parker, was collected at Sitala Wanniya where it was known only to the older men of the community. It was sung only when getting *jak* fruit, and though these Veddas knew the ordinary Sinhalese word for this fruit they told me it would not be used. They explained that there was only one place in their territory where there were two or three *jak* trees (doubtless the remains of old gardens made by Buddhist monks or recluses), that they valued their fruit very highly, and that they would not commonly speak of them by name and certainly would not do so when about to gather the fruit. In this song *bo* tree and *moran* flower are both honorific terms. This suggests that the song has magic power, so that its most appropriate position in this volume would be in Chapter VIII.

X. *Mī yāmeṇ yāmeṭa mī āsaṭa wadunā*
Mī Bōpata ruwala yan kenekuṇṭa baha dinawanna
Mī moraṇ malī misak attiyen barī nan kekkiyen bindala
Masi polawaṭa bassalā deṇḍayi.

Here, from watch to watch, this (tree) touched the sky.
No one can cause this Bō-leaf sail to be overcome.
Having broken off with the hook this ripening flower only, if unable (to pluck it) by the hand,
Having lowered it to the earth, I will give it.

Moran appears to be *mōrana*.

Malī may be a poetical allusion to the fruit.

Masi polawaṭa for *mahi polawaṭa*, a pleonastic form, "to the earth's earth," that is, to the ground. Such pleonasms are not uncommon in colloquial village Sinhalese, as for instance, *edā dawasa*, "that day's day," for "that day."

The next two songs were collected at Nilgala; our informants attached no meaning to the first line.

XI. *Mā miṇi mā miṇi mā dayiyā*
Kāburuhaddī hōbayiyā
Kuduruu kuduruu hiyannā
Kokhā gāleṭa wari wālā
Madī gāleṭa wari wālā
Madī gāleṭa wari wālā
Tala pīṭaṭa wari wālā
Kāṭan dannana boru wahuriyi

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Kaḍen paccala yak gamata
Bimen yannaṭa bol pini barimayi
Miwāpiṭen yanu denna
Ānē apē wannila
Kobbā wala nagila
Ēkat bihdagena wattila
Kalina wali nagila
Ēkat bihdagena waṭila
Walkobbā wala dunna namāgena
Wewel icagi piṭaṭa damāgena
Bulat payiyat ina gannāgen
Pōrē paccāt ina gannāgena
Kunu gē taḍiyā hurata damāgena
Kaḍiyā ballat iccura kuragena
Endalu potu ban dena nayidi
Endalu potu ban dena nayidi.

Mā mini mā mini mā deyiyā.

The dove of the Kakuru Mountain is singing *kuduruu, kuduruu.* There was rain at Kokkāgāla. There was rain at Mādēgāla. There was rain at Mādēgāla. There was rain on the high land. There is muddy water bringing down logs. (There has been) a *yaka* ceremony below the rock. (I) cannot go on the ground as there is dew. Let us ride on the back of the buffalo. Anē! our husbands having climbed up the *kobba* creeper, on its breaking having fallen; having climbed the *kalina* creeper, on its breaking, too, having fallen; bending the bow (made) of *wal-kobba*[1] creeper, putting the canes at the back of the head[2], taking the betel bag at the waist, taking the axe at the waist, putting the dirty monitor lizard on the shoulder, sending in front the dog Kaḍiyā, (You are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Potubanda Nayide, (you are) to come, they say (or he says, or we say) Potubanda Nayide.

XII. *Mā miṇi mā miṇi mā deyiyā*
Mā miṇi mā miṇi mā deyiyā
Ānē apē wannila
Kokhā gāli yanni denna
Mādi gāli yanni denna
Kokhā gāli bari baburu
Mādi gāli bari baburu
Kākuru Kandi Kōbeyiyā
Kākuru Kandi Kōbeyiyā
Kuṭuruṇ kuṭuruṇ kiyanna

[1] *Aliophylus cobbe.*
[2] Or "carrying them hanging round the neck."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Kuṭurup kuṭurup kiyanna
Tala piṭaṭa wayi wāsa
Kāṭan dimana kera waturayi
Kāṭan dimana kera waturayi
Kāḍu paccalayak gamata
Simen yannaṭa kol pini karimayiyayi
Madayā piṭen yanni denna
Kaliya wala nagila
Ēkat bindagena wattila
Kobba wali nagila
Ēkat bindagena wattila
Wal-kobba wala dunna damigena
Wiwal icagi piṭaṭa damigena
Kaḍiyā bellat iccarakaragena
Endalu potubanna nayidi
Endalu potubanna nayidi
Mā miṭi mā miṭi mā dayiyā
Mā miṭi mā miṭi mā dayiyā.

Ah, our husbands! Let us go to Kokkagala. Let us go to Madegala. (I) cannot go to Kokkagala. I cannot go to Madegala. The dove of the Kakuru-kanda is uttering *kuturun, kuturun.* There has been rain in the high land. There has been muddy water bringing down logs. There has been a *yaka* ceremony (lit. *yaka* house) below the hill. (I) cannot go on the ground as there is dew. Let us ride on the buffalo. Having climbed up the *kāliya* creeper, on its breaking having fallen; having climbed up the *kobba* creeper, on its breaking too, having fallen; putting down the bow (made) of *wal-kobba* creeper, putting the canes at the back of the head[1]; sending in front the dog Kaḍiyā, (you are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Potubanda Nayidē. (You are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Potubanda Nayidē. *Mā miṭi mā miṭi mā dayiyā, Mā miṭi mā miṭi mā dayiyā.*

All the remaining songs except the last were collected from the village Veddas of the Uva Bintenne; all are of one type and with a single exception (No. XVII) all are related to each other and to the two songs immediately preceding them which we obtained at Nilgala. No. XVII, the exception just referred to, is extremely Sinhalese in tone and thought. The *gomara* spots referred to are the light patches on the body, due to the attacks of a parasitic fungus, which are much admired by the peasant Sinhalese of Uva and the Eastern Province.

[164]

[1] Or "carrying them hanging round the neck."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Veddas AX5

553
537

XIII. *Kaliya wale nagila*
Rapaṭa paligana nagila
Tunaṭiya pollat hiddila
Tā ya halla gaana wat
Nandage pudurapa mangamala
Tānanna hala ātmanā
Mundi hadapiya wattirila
Ōhata widapaw biri nāna
Iraata widapi iccu avi
Tunhata lappa nanapi
Ē mudi widapi mari
Dapiya mapen wilga
Peruma marāpila nāna
Pucci halayi diya hanu
Eliya pan ot eneru nāna
Cappi cili hill hiyaniya
Yannata nepiya nāna
Walhaggiyi cappigi gati
Cappige hittara dahana dahayi
Pucci hala diya hanu nanā
Tan tadina tan tadinanā
Mānaiya mawiyi wānaiya
Kottikata hana nā hala halayi diya hanu.

Having climbed up the *kaliya* creeper,
Splitting it in two and having fallen,
Having broken (his?) hip and stick,
Having even brought thy girl,
Having gone to thy mother-in-law's mat (*i.e.* hut).
Tānanna hala ātmanā.
The monitor lizard is sprawling on the log.
Shoot it dear cousin,
Shoot at the head. You will miss the head;
Incline (the arrow) towards the tail, by the ribs.
Shoot (it) in the middle; it will die.
Kill the buffalo, cousin,
Which has smeared (itself) at the pool with mud on both sides.
Having roasted and eaten (part of it) we drink water.
The light is coming, cousin,
The birds say *illilli.*
Must we not go, cousin?
In the bird's nest on the Wal-kon tree
There are two and two bird's eggs.
Having roasted and eaten (them) we drink water, cousin.
Tan tadina tan tadinanā.
To eat a part, having cut this and eaten (it), we drink water.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Dehemu dehayi Sin. *deha dehayi*, two and two, or two by two.
533 The last line appears to refer to the buffalo that was killed.
539

XIV. *Hitten tuddiñat tun tuddiñatni*
Hi heliya uwak uagtiñ
Hitten binuju wuñtiñ
Hi Kokkagulaju mun ginnin
Etten ijiju mun nedunin
Etten ijijat mun dunin
Madi-gulaju mun nedunin
Etten ijijat mun dunin
Uthirigulaju mun dunin
Etten ijiju mi nedunin
Etten ijijat mun dunin
Hi mandigulaju mun dunin
Etten ijijat mun nedunin
Wujunt utmi lunu hetiduñ
Wujunt jiji yunnat hariunu
Crunpen crunpaju yunu dunnt
Trunpen trunpaju yunnat hariunu
Sitten mindigin yunu dunnt.

Hitten tuddiñat tun tuddiñatni.

Having climbed the *heeliyawala* creeper, and having fallen to the ground from it, I know the way to Kokkagala. I know the way beyond that also. I do not know the way to Madegala. I know the way beyond that also. I know the way to Uthirigala. I do not know the way beyond that. I know the way beyond that also. I know the way to that Madegala. I do not know the way beyond that also. Put the ropes on the hunting buffalo. If we cannot go on the back of the hunting buffalo let us go from shelter to shelter. If we cannot go from shelter to shelter, let us go (exposing ourselves) to cold and wind.

XV. *Tun juddiñunu juddiñatni*
Tinjun juggiñi juggiñatni
Dinuju hakdun uju nuwunt
Dinuju hakdayi uju nuwunt
Cippi cili hili hiyunnt
Cippi cili hili hiyunnt
Run hurn mipuñ juguwunt
Run hurn mipuñ juguwunt
Hi mun hewuda hiyañ
Hi mun hewuda hiyañ
Etukuju uju uru hiri nimi
Etukuju uju uru hiri nimi.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Tun puḷiliṭuwa puḷiliṭuwa
Tāppan pappiyi pappiṭuwa
Diyaṭa haḷiyan uṭa nawuwa
Diyaṭa haḷiyayi uṭa nawuwa
The birds are twittering[1]
The birds are twittering.
A golden bud face was visible
A golden bud face was visible.
I asked "Who is that?"
I asked "Who is that?"
Then (it was) that dear cousin of ours.
Then (it was) that dear cousin of ours.

XVI. *Tun puḷiliṭuwa puḷiliṭuwa*
Tāmba pappiya puḷiliṭuwa
Kapuru-handi hakayi
Kapuru-handi hakayi
Kajaruw hajaruw kiyanwa
Kajaruw hajaruw kiyanwa
Kawili pojja hadi hāpa
Kawili pojja hadayi hāpa
Æṭa pojjāwat hewillaw
Æṭa pojjāwat hewillaw.

Tun puḷiliṭuwa puḷiliṭuwa
Tāmba pappiya puḷiliṭuwa
A dove of the *Kapuru-handi* (lit. camphor mountain) is crying *hajaruw, hajaruw.* No one has cakes. Eat some grain.

The last three songs are evidently variants of a common theme, or perhaps of a number of common themes, for they suggest that they consist of a number of fragments strung together with little regard for their meaning. They were certainly sung for the pleasure they afforded, and perhaps the incongruity of the subjects alluded to and the abrupt way in which they are introduced amuses the audience. Nevill collected variants of fragments of these songs in the Bintenne which he definitely regards as comic.

The following is the first of these fragments:

Kuburu pāya dawa nagilā
Ehat hindi gana wattilā

[1] Literally "the birds are uttering *ililili*," the last word being onomatopoeic. Mr Parker, to whom we are indebted for the translation of this song, is uncertain of the meaning of the third and fourth lines; perhaps they might be translated "There was a noise of water; we made chainsaws."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Dânen mâden hrilâ
Mâmini mâmini mâ mâ mâyi.

Having run and climbed up the *kukuru* tree
That breaking having fallen,
Having stuck in the mud up to the knee,
Mâmini mâmini mâ mâ mâyi.

Nevill regards this as a "take off of the hymns sung by the celebrant when inspired in the worship of Kiri Amma, a Vedda form of Venus, Pattini, Parvati, or Amman," and he states that the "refrain is that actually used in her honour." Further "the *kukuru* tree is a prickly bush, up which no one could think of climbing, and the utter nonsense is a ridiculous parody on the hymn."

The following is given as comic by the same authority, who draws attention to "both *pata pata* and *danni panni*," being expressions coined from the sound of a heavy body falling whop, whop, or flop, flop, and pulling itself up slowly and with pain.

Kukuru kande naegilâ
Pata pata gâ gana waetilâ
Danni panni gâla naegitala
Tân nan tadi tadi tâ nâ nâ.

XVII. *Ayyô nānage dāti walalu gigiri dena naḍa datdeyi kiri nānā*
Nānage baṅdaṭa icunu gōmara petiwan gōmara icilā
Nānage baṅdaṭa icunu gōmara mayo bandet iciyô
Nānaṭa bæṅdaṭu pæṇimula ayiyô pot pæṇi haḍā watennā
Nænaṭa wiyaṭu pædura ayiyô keḷin raṭā wetīga
Kadiranwallā bæṅdi wiyanā nangiyat wiyan damannī
Ætul wiyan damannī bala ætul wiyan no danna nānā
Piṭṭ wiyan damannī ele wina panan wina ennaw nānā
Capṭi cili bili kiyanni yannaṭa nidikimidiya nāna
Oyê keḷalā waccô æwidin nāndage pæduraṭa wiruwālā.

Good wife! Oh what a noise the jingling bells of the bracelet on the two hands of yours (lit. of wife) are making! There are (lit. spread) *gomara* spots (on my body) resembling the *gomara* spots on (lit. spread on) my wife's waist. The *gomara* spots which are (lit. spread) on (my) wife's waist (are) spread on my waist also. Oh! the thickened honey of the honey packet made up (lit. tied up) for (my) wife is dripping. Oh! the coloured stripes of the mat woven for (my) wife are gone straight. A canopy is tied to Kadiranwalla. The younger sister is also putting up canopies. She is

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

putting up inner canopies. Oh wife! do not put up inner canopies. She is putting up outer canopies. Wife, bring white canopies and leaf canopies. The birds are chirping[1]. Wife, rise up from sleep to go. The calves (or oxen) having come after playing in the river went to (my) mother-in-law's[2] hut.

The last song was collected at Unuwatura Bubula.

XVIII. (1) *Andā diya duwana māwili gaṅgāwē*
Sorabora wilē wilpatulen enawāda
Atat damā dætaka ena nurāwā
Salā piṭawala yak gammal
Salā piṭawala wæhi wæhalā bora waturayi

(2) *Bimin yanna bæri nan*
Wadanā mīmaṭa lanu bændapan
Ten tedinā
Aṅgara neṭun naṭannē
Sellan bera pada gasāpan.

(1) Oh Māwili river! whose water is flowing, making a sound! Are you coming from the bottom of the lake Soraborawila? Oh lover! who comes in two directions, having put (your) hand also (round her neck). There has been *yaka* ceremony at Salapitawala. It having rained, there is muddy water at Salapitawala.

(2) If you cannot go walking (lit. on the ground) put the ropes on the hunting buffalo.
Ten tedinā
They are dancing gesture dances[3].
Play a tune on the drum (used) for games.

This song very clearly shows the composite nature of some of the Vedda songs, especially those in use among the more sophisticated groups. The first two lines of the first verse and the last two lines of the second verse are obviously related to, if they are not derived from, the invocation sung at the *Kolomaduwa* ceremony (Chapter X, No. XXXIX), while the first two lines of the last verse refer to harnessing a buffalo as in the preceding songs.

[1] Lit. uttering *sililili*.
[2] [*Nenda* presumably for *nenda* from *nendamma* a paternal aunt or maternal uncle's wife, hence mother-in-law, cf. pp. 64 and 65.]
[3] We are indebted to Mr Parker for the following note. "*Angara naṭun naṭanno* may be 'dancing gesture-dances' or 'dancer of gesture-dances.' *Angarayo* is stated by Clough to be 'gesture,' the particular gesture of the Malabar dancing girls."

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukhan* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 136 825 to something; but it was long before I saw the bird, a veritable leaf among the leaves and more motionless than they.

The hilly jungles of central Ceylon echo, during certain seasons of the year, to this bird's incessant cry, the popular onomatopoeic renderings of which are, in English, "Captain Philpotts" and "Bring the tappal" and in Sinhalese "*Botuakappan*." Most people have heard, but very few seen, the shy author of these dolorous notes. There is a gruesome story associated with the bird :—A Sinhalese king once asked his dhoby, in order to test his marital fidelity, whether he would cut his wife's neck and bring him her head! "Oh! king," said the man falling at the monarch's feet, "even if you behead me I cannot do such a thing." The following day the king called up the dhoby's wife and made a similar request of her. She replied that she would do it. Going home she helped her husband with his bath, rubbed boiled limes on his head, and cooked him a good meal. Like a good wife she asked him to lay his head on her lap where he soon fell asleep. Then, with a knife she had in readiness, she cut his throat; and severing his neck, put the head into a pot, covered it with a cloth and carried it to the king. On the way she met a man who, singing, asked her, "What do you carry in the pot on your head?"

S 539

"I am taking *mee amba** to the king," answered the woman.

"Why cover it so carefully?" sang he.

"If I take them uncovered, wayfarers will ask me for them," she replied. "It is on a fine journey I go."

When she brought her gift to the king, he was incensed at her cruelty, and ordered her head to be struck off instantly. Ever after, has she gone about in the form of this bird, crying *botua-kappan* (cut the throat), as her one refrain.

While making our way through a tree-studded glade, we surprised two men carrying sacks of dried meat on their shoulders; through rents in the bags peeped unsavoury scraps of sambur, monkey and pig. Their first impulse on seeing us was to escape; for to shoot sambur legitimately, gun and game licences are necessary; and what money have they for these, who have barely the wherewithal to purchase the ammunition for their ramshackle muzzle-loaders.

V 533 When we camped, Kombua regaled us with Vedda songs of questionable taste chanted rapidly in a high nasal monotone, lengthened indefinitely by endless repetition, and accompanied in the last staves with a clapping of hands. To the suggestion that he should show his skill in archery he responded with alacrity; jumping up, he seized his weapons as if confident of skill. A fragment of paper, six inches square, placed fifteen paces away, was the mark. At the word he loosed his arrow. A clean miss! He walked up to the target and dashed it down in dudgeon, and nothing would induce him to shoot again. Archery is a lost art to the Veddas, though they still have considerable skill in fashioning bows and arrows. Jungles that echo to guns are no places for bowmen.

V 411

V 576 Kombua's farewell was as bizarre as his greeting of us. Tossing head and hands in the direction we were taking, and tapping us on the chest, he wished us good going in tones more peremptory than complaisant.

V 515 Quite a number of our carriers were half-Veddas. There was one whose constant occupation was to run his fingers comb-fashion through his upstanding hair scraping out vermin. His expression was of that thoughtful seriousness which is the surest mark of profound vacuity.

*A species of mango.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

HIVES

There are five varieties of honey bee in Ceylon :—The large *bambara* (*Apis dorsata*) that builds huge combs of very pure wax on bare hill sides and the large branches of lofty trees ; the *mee massa* (*Apis indica*) sweetest honey bee of all, whose combs are to be found in hollow trees, rock-clefts and within ant-hills ; the *dandual massa* (*Apis florea*), the smallest honey-bee in the world, that hives on rocks and boughs ; the *kanava massa* (Rosin or Dammar bee) a docile, stingless, friendly little creature whose long black combs within tree crevices yield a delicious, if heady, honey ; the *kotha massa*, an even smaller species, whose puny comb is hardly worth the taking. 222 136

Kanava and *kotha* combs are available all the year round ; they are the *pathinchikarayas* or stayers. If the Vedda is hungry it is for one of these he goes at a pinch. The *bambara* and *mee massa*, the most abundant honey makers, are seasonal in their habits ; and June and July are the great honey months ; the fruit season synchronising with this, marks these months as the festive time of the jungle ; then the Veddas leave their homes for caves and stream beds, take their fill, and have a surplus for barter. 222 [439]

On the flavours of honey the Veddas are connoisseurs. They can tell by tasting a comb the flower or medley of flowers that contributed to its making. That honey is relished most which prevails when the *mora*, *veera* and *galseembela* are in bloom. [151 262]

Honey gathering is the master art of the Vedda. Supreme as he is in other jungle crafts, he is supremest in this. As he travels through the forest he is alive to the faintest hum, and no hive, however concealed, escapes him. His adroitness in tracking a bee to its lair is well described in a delightfully euphonious song they have (beginning, *Thomba, thomba Gomba me-na-na*), that tells of a Vedda Thutha who goes on the honey quest with his brothers Gomba and Naga. Thutha leads in the trail of a particular bee ; and as he goes he sings to his brothers, indicating various trees in which bees are busy ; but not decoyed by these, and with his eye steadily on the bee he first sighted, he follows it, till eventually it guides him to its hive within the skull of an elephant—*kolanathe gatche* (tree without leaves) as he quaintly describes. [533]

The taking of any hive, other than that of the rock *bambara*, is a very simple thing for the Vedda. All he does is to climb the tree, steady himself at the hole containing the comb, and blow into it to drive the bees away. Then with his axe he enlarges the opening sufficiently to enable him to introduce a hand and secure the cache, stopping every now and then to blow inside or to slap an offending bee. He eats the comb at his perch, grubs and all, throwing down fragments to those below.

The *bambara* comb is quite a different proposition. These great bees build high on the precipitous sides of rocks ; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only. A dangling cane at Westminster Abbey gave us some idea of the daring of the enterprise. To reach the combs ladders of vines are lowered from the summit of the rock ; and down these the collector descends ; as this does not bring him within arm's length of the hives, he has usually to rely on the use of a long stake. Sometimes [417 481]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

222 And as he works he sings the cutter's song* and many a vulgar song besides. For this is the epic event of the Vedda's life, and never is he so happy as when engaged in the perilous work. Wild is the jungle night and the rocks around re-echo to his song.

[533: 152]

The honey-gatherer at work

When the "devil's mouth" is full, he releases it from the ladder and shouts "*adapo*" (lift) to those above; they pull on the attached rope. With a series of short jerks, the cutter climbing and helping from below, the honey is lifted. As each pull brings the vessel to the level of the cutter's head he calls out "*ho-ho*," and the hauling is stopped; then, climbing a rung or two he gives a helping hand and cries "*adapo*" again. And so, with "*adapo*..... *ho-ho*" following each other in quick succession, the precious freight is safely hauled over the edge of the cliff. It may be that the cutter has to descend to his work again. With the last load he climbs over the top, a figure to behold—sweating, exhausted, honey-bedaubed, bereft of all the stamina that has sustained him so long. He throws himself down. Nor have all his arts availed him against the bees, for he is covered with stings. Solicitously his wife and a friend or two group round him, and with pitying words pick off the stings. But, impatient of this, he besmears himself with sand that the ants may not worry him, and is soon asleep.

Such is the story behind the potful of *bambara* honey the Vedda offers for a trifle of grain or a fragment of cloth.

[439]

**Borri, borri, borri, borri,*
Borri, borri, borri, borri.
Ama, ama,
Aramaya, aramaya, aramaya, aramaya,
Thelung badonage adung padung hothoi hayya
Esale karale palang anda kanthulang
Gagung thengena yanna
Alutta Vanniya!

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXVIII

142
291

Fig. 1. Coast Veddas.

534
482
516

Fig. 2. Coast Veddas of Vakarai

[facing p. 332 a]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
173 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *waruge*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built
142 than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

241 The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
342 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

415 They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
● 534 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours.
621 One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vaedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda."

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 (Great Goddess).[8] It was in vain that I pointed out the urgency
[796 of the work and protested against any delay, even going the
776] length of suggesting that the ceremony should be postponed. After a good deal of futile argument I was obliged to resign myself to the inevitable.

My chagrin was to some extent lessened when the Chief Headman approached me with an invitation from the people to be present at the ceremony. The invitation was welcome, for it offered an alternative to an evening spent in the company only of a book and of my own thoughts in the solitude of the one-roomed " rest house " where I had my temporary quarters. It was accordingly arranged that the Chief Headman should come to fetch me after my dinner.

The moon,—full two days before,—had already risen when the Chief Headman and his following of village notables emerged from the shadows of the jungle bordering the high road. I got up from the long chair in which I had been sitting on the verandah and joined them, and we set off northwards along the road. After walking along it for about half a mile we turned off to the right through alternate thick jungle and open spaces overgrown with *illuk*-grass, and with here and there a solitary tree casting a deep black shadow under the white light of the moon, in the direction of the mouth of the river which crossed the high road about three and a half miles to the north of our camp. We had
● [534] gone in this way perhaps a mile in all when I began to be aware of the rhythmical throbbing of a tom-tom, at first only faint in the distance, somewhere ahead in the jungle. I recollect well the feeling of growing excitement as the sound grew gradually louder and more insistent with our advance. Another mile, and the path which our party was following, at that point through thick
123 jungle, took a sharp turn to the right, and we suddenly found ourselves in a large circular clearing, surrounded by high timber.
796 To our right as we entered were the spectators, squatted upon the ground in rows and facing towards that part of the enclosure which lay to our left. Even the fringes of the jungle seemed to be

[8] This goddess is presumably the goddess Ammal, " who sends small-pox and skin disease ": see *The Veddas*, p. 336.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the [103] sheer face of the rock.

We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, [241] plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though [262] far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose and rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that [281] ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and [534] manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

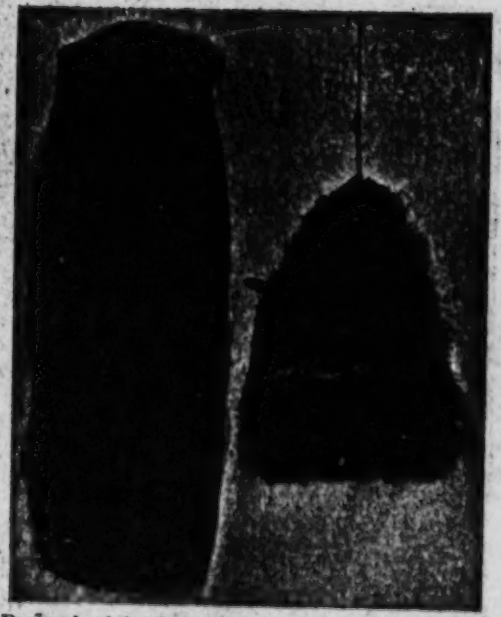
000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothurupathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

Habbaha, a weighted frame-work for trapping animals. (Page 48)

The dancers of Bowala. (Page 48)



Bag made of threshed *rili* bark and monkey skin pouch. (Page 48)

224
292
534
535

281
287
415

[Facing p. 48]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree
that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of
the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of
brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pine-
apple.

The height was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the
superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then
the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There,
crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadina-
gala; to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thanagoda* (breast
mounds) and behind them *Thanakirigoda* (breast milk mound) with
wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks
driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the
summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach
of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale:
A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a
ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing
daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by
just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within
reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it.
When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep
into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards
it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge
collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year.
On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor
fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife
who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena kalangkal-
angme popekorai*," which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 535
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were
hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with
slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose
and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that
these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted
by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with
great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that [534]
studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch
perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For
a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step
dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they out-
distance us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

1 [the hill called Westminster Abbey. – Analyst]

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena* ; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house" ; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark ; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that ; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats ; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone ; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned :

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas ; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain : it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good !

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes : *Gona-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thel-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 554 Uru *warugs* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

shorter ceremony *ruwela*, this being an older name than *kolamaduwa*[1].

It appeared that the invocations at present in use among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas were those used in the old man's youth, for although he had not, as he stated (truthfully we believe), been closely associated with the Veddas for many years he recognised a number of Vedda invocations which were sung to him, as identical with those sung in his youth, and named the occasions on which each was used. *Maligi* was recognised as sung when honey was taken; the invocation at the beginning of the *kirikoraha* ceremony (cf. p. 285) was promptly named, and the occasions of its use pointed out, but the charm used when driving monkeys was not recognised. A song sung for amusement by the Veddas beginning *Mamini mamini ma deyo* was immediately recognised, as were two of the invocations of the Kolamaduwa ceremony, but considering how Sinhalese in substance this ceremony is this is perhaps not of much importance.

At the present day the number of Veddas living their natural forest life is necessarily few, for their territory has been gradually encroached upon by the Sinhalese who are inveterate poachers. The Veddas, who were never numerous within recent historic times, are now rapidly dying out, while many have settled among the Sinhalese and so lost their identity. We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgala but among the Nuwaragala Hills. At Nilgala itself there are no Veddas at the present day, though the local peasant Sinhalese doubtless have much Vedda blood in their veins. The Henebedda and Danigala Veddas are the descendants of those recorded by Bailey in 1863, and the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are the descendants of those known and described by the old Kandyan who visited us at Bandaraduwa.

Hennebedda. At Hennebedda we met a number of families living together in the Bendiyagalge caves. They had come to this their largest cave, from several settlements all within a few hours' journey. The genealogies show that at least

[1] These ceremonies are described in Chapter IX.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

temperament. Travellers have called the Vedda morose, and stated that he never laughs; this belief has doubtless been strengthened by the disagreeable behaviour of the "show" Veddas (see p. 50), yet Veddas have told us how they throw leaves in the air and laugh and dance for joy. Nevill was certainly right when he said, "They are a merry people, delighting in riddles, songs and jests. Mr Hartshorn observed some Vaeddas who never laughed in his presence. They must have been either terrified, or sulky and offended, for those I have seen, of all clans, laugh often and merrily, a habit very strongly contrasted with that of the Sinhalese, who scarcely ever go beyond a smile. They burst into a verse of song, now and again, apparently from sheer exuberance of spirits, and any ludicrous incident amuses them[1]."

At Bendiyagalge we were particularly well situated to observe their behaviour, our camp being out of sight of the Vedda cave but within 200 yards of it, here we could listen to their unrestrained chatter and laughter which was especially noticeable at sunset. It is true that their faces express no emotion of pleasure or gratitude when they are given exactly what they expect. Thus, white cloth, which the men like to wear, is well known to them, they buy it themselves from the Moormen pedlars, it is the usual present for a European to make to Veddas, and they receive it with perfectly stolid faces, and are hence dubbed sullen. We had an excellent example of this at Henebedda when we gave a piece of white cloth to Poromala the senior of the group, whom we knew well and who had frequently smiled and laughed in our presence. When, however, a sharp pruning knife was given him his face beamed like a schoolboy's, he ran his thumb along the blade and tried its edge on pieces of grass. Things new to them which we showed

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. I, 1886, p. 192. Veddas often dance for a few moments when pleased, thus a Henebedda Vedda on being given a piece of sacking to cover himself with after complaining of cold, immediately held it over his head, bowed his body forward and went through a few dance steps, singing the while. On another occasion this man and three companions (all young men) began to dance spontaneously. This was about 9 p.m. one night in the courtyard of the Ambilinne Rest House, where they had visited us, their sense of well-being in this case may have been stimulated by a liberal feed of curry and rice which had been given them, but we do not think they danced in payment for this.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Adoption is not practised, for the custom of a near relative looking after children who have lost their parents cannot be called by this name. 597 768

Dances play no part in the domestic life of the Veddas, for, although Veddas may perform a few steps of a dance as a sign of pleasure, their dances are mostly if not entirely ceremonial. 535

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER IX

CEREMONIAL DANCES

WITH a single possible exception the dances of the Veddas are ceremonial and are performed with the object of becoming possessed by a *yaka* in the manner that has already been stated in Chapter VI where the subjective phenomena of possession are discussed. The majority of the ceremonial dances described in this chapter are pantomimic, and so well illustrate the objective manifestations of the condition of possession that little need be said on this subject, though it may be well to repeat our conviction that there is no considerable element of pretence in the performance of the shaman. The sudden collapse which accompanies the performance of some given act of the pantomime, usually an important event towards which the action has been leading up, is the feature that is most difficult to explain. According to the Veddas themselves it occurs when a *yaka* suddenly leaves the individual possessed, but it does not invariably accompany the cessation of possession, and it may equally occur when the individual becomes possessed, as at the Bandaraduwa *Nat Yaku* ceremony described on pages 233 to 237, where the first sign of possession shown by the brothers of the dead man was their collapse into the arms of their supporters. This can be explained as the result of expectancy, they expected to be overcome by the spirit of the deceased, and in fact this happened. In this connection we may refer to a Sinhalese "devil ceremony" which we witnessed in the remote jungle village of Gonagolla in the Eastern Province. One of us has described this ceremony elsewhere[1], but we would here

535 ● 786

[1] Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journal Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXVIII, 1908.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
786

specially refer to the condition of the *katandirale* or "dev
dancer" when dealing with the dangerous demon Riri Yak
Although he took special precautions to prevent the demo
entering him, that is to say to avoid possession by the demo
he almost collapsed, requiring to be supported in the arms of
assistant as under the assaults of the *yaka* he tottered with draw
features and half open quivering lips and almost closed ey
Yet avowedly he was not possessed by the demon, but on t
contrary was successful in warding off possession. His who
appearance was that of a person suffering from some amount
shock and in a condition of partial collapse, while the rapidi
with which he passed into deep sleep immediately Riri Yak
and his almost equally dreaded consort Riri Yakini, had l
him, also favour the genuine character of his sufferings, co
cerning which he said that although he had never complet
lost consciousness he had been near doing so and had felt gid
and nauseated[1]. Here we have a condition only a degree sh
of possession, occurring in an individual who not only hoped a
expected to avoid being possessed by the spirit whom he invok
to come to the offering, but took elaborate precautions to prev
it. Had he become possessed it would have been a disas
which would have led to his illness and perhaps death, a
would certainly have frustrated the object of the ceremo
Here there can have been no desire to lose consciousness,
as the result of anticipation of the attack of the *yaka*
katandirale came near collapse.

This in our opinion throws a flood of light on Ve
possession and the collapse which may take place at
beginning, but it does not directly explain the collapse o
experienced when a *yaka* leaves a person. But here we
seek assistance in the idea of analogy; when a spirit leaves
body, collapse and unconsciousness, permanent (death)
temporary (swoon, fainting fits or sleep), ensue. When
yaka leaves the body which for the time it has enti

[1] During the condition of partial collapse the dancer's face was covered with
and so felt clammy, but this may only have been the result of his previous exer
his pulse was small and rapid and was certainly over 150 though the cond
prevented it being accurately counted.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

dominated, what more natural than that collapse should occur or be feigned by the less honest or susceptible practitioners? There is no doubt that the Vedda ceremonies make considerable demand on the bodily powers of the dancers, but this is not so great as in the case of the Sinhalese devil ceremony of Gonagolla, since the Vedda ceremonies are of shorter duration—none we saw lasted over two hours and the majority certainly did not take so long. In spite of this we noted, after more than one ceremony, that the shaman was genuinely tired, and this was the case at Sitala Wanniya, where Kaira appeared actually exhausted at the end of the Pata Yaka ceremony.

We may now refer to the steps of the Vedda dance. The Drs Sarasin have described the steps of the arrow dance of the Henebedda Veddas in an elaborate and rather formal manner. We shall shortly quote their description of this dance and meanwhile content ourselves with summarising the movements of the Vedda dances. Essentially, these appear to consist of steps taken alternately with each foot, each step being followed by a couple of pats on the ground delivered with the ball of the foot that is in advance, and after each such movement with right or left foot a half turn is made. The rhythm of the dance is kept by swaying the body gently from the waist, the hands (when not beating the body or holding an object) being allowed to swing freely; with each half turn forward the body is inclined forward and the head bent so that the hair falls over the face, and with each half turn backwards the head is thrown backwards. The dance always begins slowly and gently, the back foot still touching the ground while that foot with which the step has been made performs the double pat, so that just at first it is little more than a shuffle, soon, however, the feet are raised more and more and longer paces are taken, the back foot no longer remains on the ground while the double pat is made and the swaying and bending of the body is greatly increased.

When the *yaka* enters the person of a shaman it is customary for him to inspect the offerings, and if he is pleased—which is almost invariably the case—he will show his pleasure. This is usually done by bending the head low over the offering, then

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 787 springing away and shouting "Ah! Ah!" while taking short deep breaths. The natural outcome of the *yaka's* gratitude is a promise of favours to the community. When prophesying good luck, the shaman places one or both hands on the participant's shoulders, or if he carries an *aude* or other sacred object, the shaman holds this against the latter's chest or, more rarely, presses it on the top of his head. His whole manner is agitated and he usually shuffles his feet, speaks in a hoarse somewhat guttural voice taking short deep breaths, and punctuates his remarks with a deep "Ah! Ah!"

787 778 535 With regard to the arrows and other special objects which are used when invoking the *yaku*, in which class we include such bower-like structures as the *alutyakagama*, the *ruwala* and the *kolomaduwa*, all described in this Chapter, we must point out that these simply act as conductors and resting places for the *yaku*. It was stated that Kande Yaka could not and would not come when invoked, unless his arrow were held, and the same idea accounts for the arrow dance, performed round an arrow struck in the ground in order to obtain game. Again the leaves in the bower-like structures with the aid of which the *yaku* were invoked were considered the resting place of the *yaku* which they left in order to enter the shaman. The number of *yaku* who came to the bower was not thought to be limited to those who possessed the shaman, on the contrary, important *yaku* were thought to bring their attendants (*piriwari*), who remained among the leaves which their lord left to possess the shaman and it was to drive away the *yaku* who might unduly prolong their stay in the bower prepared for them, that the leaves were beaten and more or less stripped from the bowers at the end of the ceremony.

778 Before leaving the subject we would point out that though *yaku* might be spoken of as arrow-yaka (Itale Yaka), bow-yaka (Dunne Yakini) and so forth, such names do not imply that the *yaka* in question is immanent in the object or is believed to stand in specially close relationship to all objects of that class. In the case of Itale Yaka the idea was "the *yaka* who is invoked by means of an arrow"; in the case of Dunne Yakini the name simply refers to the skill of the nameless heroine who killed

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

boar wounded by the companions of Bandura, as is related in the Bambura Yaka dance.

The Henebedda Veddas washed before performing or assisting at the *kirikoraha* seen by us, and every Vedda who invoked the *yaku*, either let down his hair before beginning to dance or while dancing, in the latter instance presumably as he felt "possession" coming upon him. Many Veddas put on the *hangala* before dancing, this being a length of white cloth worn round the waist as is shown in many of the photographs reproduced in this chapter. Presumably this was not worn for the arrow dance, which is especially performed by unsuccessful hunters without any special preparation. We do not think that a leaf girdle was ever worn as a ceremonial garment when dancing. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya said that at some time, which he put more than three generations ago, there were Veddas, whom he called *Attukola Veddo*, who lived so remote from the Sinhalese that they had no cloth and so always wore leaf girdles, but he was quite confident that no Veddas who had cloth ever wore such girdles especially to invoke the *yaku*. This agrees with Nevill's conclusions[1] and does not conflict with the experience of the Sarasins.

The Roman numbers in parentheses after references to invocations in the accounts of the ceremonies described in this chapter refer to the invocations given in Chapter X.

The Arrow Dance.

This, the simplest of the Vedda dances, has been described at length by the Drs Sarasin who saw it danced by "Veddas of the Nilgala district[2]." We have already quoted Bailey's account of the arrow dance as he found it danced by the ancestors of these Veddas two generations ago, and Monsieur Emile

[1] "I have especially questioned the best informed Vaeddas whether leaves were worn, either at ceremonies or otherwise. They all say yes, they were worn once, when cotton cloth was hard and dear to get, by those who lived where there were no Riti trees. They were only worn by the poorest, and from necessity, not choice. The leaves chosen were those of shrubs, the branches of which ended in rather pendulous sprays of foliage, and these were tucked under the waist string as a sort of apron." (*Op. cit.* p. 188.)

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 387—389.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 512—514.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 Deschamps has given an account of the same dance as it occurs among the village Veddas of Bintenne, while it has also been mentioned by other authors including Davy and Tennant.

Figures 1 and 2 of Plate XXVI show this dance as we saw it performed at Henebedda. An arrow was thrust into the ground and round this the Veddas circled, singing an invocation and keeping time by slapping their flanks with their open hands. The Drs Sarasin have carefully analysed the movements performed in this dance, and the following account is taken from their work.

"Only men dance. They form a circle round an arrow thrust into the ground; they do not touch one another and move slowly round the arrow....Each dancer turns once towards the left, in doing which he keeps the right leg motionless and steps convulsively forwards on the ground with the left, keeping time and giving the body a slight jerk backwards; then when he has executed a half turn he remains standing on the left leg and makes spasmodic trembling movements with the right as he pushes off from the ground. Thus continually executing half turns, and after completing one half turn using that leg which has just been moved as a support, the dancer slowly proceeds backwards in a circle round the arrow. Each dancer pays no regard to his neighbour while executing his circling movements, his sole object being to get round the arrow in the manner described; so that all the dancers are not making precisely the same movement at one time. For example, if one dancer turns on his left leg and his neighbour on his right leg at the same time then it happens that the two sometimes have their faces and sometimes their backs towards each other....Although the legs, as described, come comparatively little and at all events not extensively into play, there being no jumping or hopping...the arms are moved the more vigorously. As the body swings round they are extended and flung about and at the conclusion of the turn they are violently flung away from the body; after the performance of every half turn the dancers beat hard on their bellies, which take the place of musical instruments of which they have none....The head which

535

Fig. 1. Arrow dance (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Arrow dance (Henebedda)

[facing p.214]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

is thrown back at the completion of every turn is flung forward and downward in the direction of the movement while this is taking place. In doing this the mane-like bush of hair is tossed forwards like a horse's tail over the face; subsequently on the completion of every half turn it is tossed back again as the head is flung back, so that the hair is constantly being swung through the air from the right back to the left front and vice versa; this happens independently of the direction of movement round the arrow....As the dancers at the same time gasp out loudly a monotonous song with which their movements keep time—they work themselves up into a state of extreme nervous excitement and the sweat pours down them; the beating on the stomach becomes louder and louder...then after a time one after another falls full length on the ground exhausted, and remains on his back for a time still uttering howls between his gasps and trembling convulsively at the same time in all his limbs. Then suddenly all rise at once and the dance is at an end[1]."

Although this account shows that the dance performed for the Sarasins was rather more vigorously enacted than the one danced for our benefit, it recalls in violence of gesture the figures of a dance which we saw at Wellampelle among the village Veddas. One of these men evidently knew what was expected of him by strangers, for almost directly he saw us he began to dance and soon lay quivering on the ground. Obviously such exhibitions as this are not examples of genuine possession, nor was the arrow dance we saw at Henebedda which was danced at our request, and we believe that all, or almost all, the arrow dances described in literature must simply be regarded as more or less accurate rehearsals[2].

Further, the accounts given by various authors show that the dances they saw were danced with varying degrees of frenzy, the difference in some instances being so marked as to give force to the Sarasins' suggestion that the arrow dance varies in detail in different communities.

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 512, 513.

[2] The pantomime of honey gathering enacted for our benefit by the Henebedda Veddas, and those of Sitala Wanniya, show that the Veddas are good actors and enter thoroughly into the spirit of the parts they take.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 We were told at Bandaraduwa that if men had no luck in
787 hunting they might thrust an arrow into the ground, decorate it with leaves of the *na* tree (*Messua ferruginea*) or the *mille*, and dance round it. If a shaman were present, which was not necessary, he would naturally take part in this, and any number might participate. This dance was performed at our request, the shaman and a Vedda called Tambia taking part in it. Two clusters of *na* leaves were tied to an arrow, one just below the feathers and another immediately above the blade. This was struck in the ground (Plate XXVII, fig. 1) and the dancers slowly moved round it singing an invocation (No. XV). Soon they both became possessed, the shaman falling into the arms of his supporter (Plate XXVII, fig. 2), almost immediately after which he came to one of the onlookers and promised him a sambar deer if he would hunt in a westerly direction early the next morning. Several times during the dance the performers touched the leaves tied to the upper part of the arrow, and bending low gathered them up to their faces (as in Plate XXVIII, fig. 1), while their hair mingled with the leaves. The shaman afterwards explained that the *yaka* first came to the arrow and the leaves tied to it, and then entered the persons of the dancers who became possessed. Before the *yaka* left the dancers bent low over the arrow shaking their heads violently, and after the dance both men salaamed to the arrow.

776 The *yaka* invoked in this dance was sometimes called Itale Yaka (Arrow Yaka), and though identical with Kande Yaka, there was nevertheless a tendency to think of Itale Yaka as a separate spirit, who was not so generally well disposed as Kande Yaka. We discovered this by the shaman refusing to sing the invocation into the phonograph when we were surrounded by children, lest his attention being attracted, the *yaka* should come, which might be dangerous to the little ones. It must be
[177] remembered that the Bandaraduwa community had been much exposed to foreign influence, so that there is nothing surprising in their *yaku* having to a certain extent assumed the dangerous complexion of Sinhalese and Tamil demons.

535 Although the arrow dance originally had, and still has, a religious significance, since it is danced to procure game and as

535
787

Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony. Arrow with *Na* leaves attached (Bandaraduwa)*

Fig. 2. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*

[facing p.216]

535
787

Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*

[516]

Fig. 2. The Adukku Demawa ceremony (Henebedda)

[facing p.216]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535

a means of propitiating Kande Yaka or interesting him in the hunters, it may also be danced for pleasure. In this case it seems to lose much of its peculiar character and tends to degenerate into a dance made up of fragments of the dances proper to a number of different ceremonies, which varies in constitution according to the fancy of the dancers. But that such performances are derived from ceremonial dances is shown by the imitation of the actions of the shaman which one or more of the dancers may introduce.

The dance we cite next was performed in the courtyard of the Public Works Department bungalow at Ambilinne, where we gave a night's lodging to four of the Henebedda Veddas. These were some of the first Veddas we met and the dance they performed that evening was the first Vedda dance we had seen, and it was not until we had seen a number of Vedda ceremonies that we recognised that the dance in question was a parody of their own religious dances, performed for their own amusement after what was to them an unusually good meal[1].

After a little singing three or four men began to dance, the time being about 9 p.m. Their action was quite unconstrained, and each man went his own way, though a rhythm was supplied by the song refrain and the slapping of their hands on their chests and flanks. In the opening figure, in which an arrow was planted in the ground, the performers began to move round it right hands inwards and clockwise, but very soon one performer was circling anti-clockwise between the other two going clockwise. The two performers who had not planted their arrows held these in their hands in front of them, one hand lightly grasping the blade and the other the head of the arrow, while with body somewhat bent forward they moved the arrows from side to side as they danced. The steps were taken with legs tolerably wide apart, the weight of the body being supported on one leg while the other was scraped along the ground by somewhat tilting the pelvis. This movement took place alternately on the two legs, though sometimes a double pat was substituted

[1] In this respect our dance resembles that witnessed by M. Duchaussoy (*Les Pays des Veddas*, pp. 387, 388), which was danced spontaneously by a number of village Veddas of Bintenne.

1; Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 for the simple scrape of the ground. After some time when the circle had become quite broken the three dancers grunted loudly "Oh-h-h," and held their arrows up to the sky toward which they waved them before suddenly falling flat on their backs. They were lifted up and supported by a companion, and they then approached the Sinhalese headman who was present and promised him and one of us a white buffalo each for the next day. This was done in a manner we afterwards recognised to have been an excellent imitation of the actions of one possessed by the *yaku*, though it is certain that this dance was not a real possession dance, while the condition of the pulse in the dancers, surprisingly quiet in view of the violent exercise they had taken, showed that the falling down was not due to exhaustion. In other figures no arrow was planted in the ground and the dance did not begin with a circular movement; in some of these figures the point of the arrow which is in the right hand may be lowered almost to the ground, and the obliquely inclined arrow swept forward and backward perhaps in imitation of a shaman possessed by Kande Yaka tracking the sambar in the manner described in the account of the *kirikoraha*.

The Kirikoraha Ceremony.

796 The pantomimic ceremonial dance by which the favour of the spirits (*yaku*) of the hunting hero Kande Wanniya and his brother Bilindi is secured is called *kirikoraha*. It must be noted that this term, literally translated, signifies "milk bowl," and though the presentation to the *yaku* of a *kirikoraha*, i.e. a pot containing coconut milk, is essential in several other ceremonies they were not called *kirikoraha*. The "milk" consists of the fluid which can be squeezed from the shredded meat of the [272] coconut and is mixed with water. If the coconut juice be not diluted excessively the fluid so produced has a very pleasant flavour, and in appearance is not unlike milk[1]. Whenever "milk" is spoken of as offered to the *yaku* this fluid is meant: the "water" of the coconut is not valued, and though it may be used in preparing the milk instead of water (as was the case at

[1] This is the usual method throughout Ceylon of making the coconut milk so largely used as a flavouring agent.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Some rice with coconut and chillies had previously been cooked at the cave together with certain portions of the deer, the flesh from the head, sternum and front of the ribs, and the whole was brought down to the *talawa*. This food formed the offering (*aduk*), and the ceremony of *adukku dennawa* or "offering the food" was performed before the dance began. The shaman, Randu Wanniya, squatted in front of the food, and with his hands together repeated a dedicatory invocation to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, which lasted nearly ten minutes, and consisted mainly, if not entirely, of repetitions of invocation No. XIX. It was performed in gratitude for all deer and sambar killed, and in it the *yaku* were invited to accept the offering of food which was left for them for a short time and afterwards eaten by the Veddas themselves. Fig. 2 of Plate XXVIII shows the shaman invoking the *yaku* with the offering in front of him. This ceremony, called *adukku dennawa* (literally "the giving of cooked food"), is always held before a *kirikovaha* when game has been killed, but it is not itself part of the latter ceremony.

An open part of the *talawa* near the caves was selected as a dancing ground, and a tripod called *mukhaliya* was made by binding three sticks together on which an earthen pot, the *kirikovaha*, was placed, and a ceremonial arrow (*aude*) laid upon it.

The shaman took a coconut and the *aude*, held them to his head and salaamed while Poromala smeared some resin on a stick and afterwards censed the *aude* which was held so that the smoke might eddy round it, for thus would Kande Yaka smell the incense and be pleased (Plate XXIX, fig. 1). At the same time the shaman repeated the invocation (No. XIX) to Kande Yaka.

This appeared to be one of the many incidents pointing to the fact that when *yaku* are invoked they first come to their special vehicles (Kande always to an *aude*, other *yaku* to leaves, swords and various articles), and from these enter the person of the shaman.

796 All sang the invocation, and the shaman danced round the tripod holding the *aude* and coconut together in both hands and
● 535 waving them rhythmically as he performed the orthodox Vedda
787 step, i.e. one pace with each foot followed by a couple of pats on the ground with the ball of the same foot, every step being

796
787
535

[417]

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, cooking the crude and coconut (Hambadda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the crude and coconut (Hambadda)

[facing p. 220]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
787
535

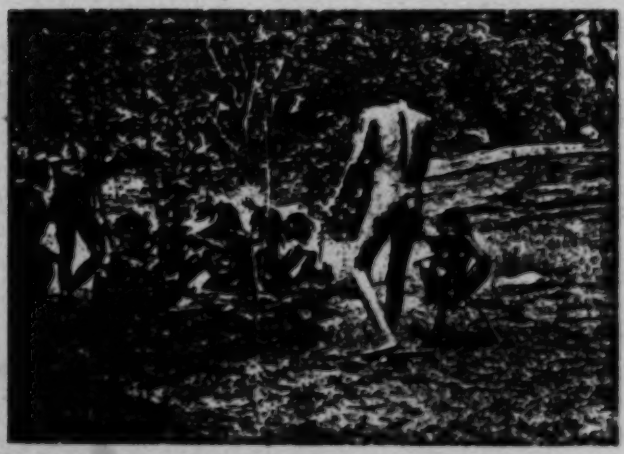


Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *aude* and coconut (Hemebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman breaking the coconut (Hemebedda)

[facing p. 228b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
787
535

followed by a half turn of the body to the accompaniment of sounds produced by some of those who were not dancing slapping their sides. The shaman next sang the invocation to Bilindi Yaka (No. XXI), and after a short time he showed signs of becoming possessed; he shivered and shook his head, and with the *aude* in his right hand he struck the coconut which he held in his left and broke it in half (Plate XXX, fig. 2), letting the water fall into the *hirihovaka*. The way in which the nut split was prophetic; if a clean break was made the animal to be promised later would be a female, but if the edges were jagged a male would be shot. The shaman was now possessed by Bilindi Yaka, and with half the nut in each hand came to each of us in turn, placed his arms on our shoulders, and in the hoarse gasping voice of the *yaka* promised us good hunting and protection from wild animals.

Two of the younger Veddas, Poromala and Sita Wanniya, scraped the meat of the coconut with the *aude* to make the milk, and afterwards placed one half shell on the end of one of the sticks forming the tripod, and the other below the *hirihovaka*. Leaves taken from any tree, but said to represent betel leaves, were also placed in the *hirihovaka*. There was no reason for the particular position of the coconut shells, but as they were considered part of the offering to the *yaka*, it would have been considered disrespectful to the *yaka* to place them on the ground. This rule was observed in all the dances that we witnessed. All sang the invocation again, and the shaman, Kanda Wanniya, continued to dance, holding the handle of the *aude* in the right hand and the point of the blade in the left, turning it with a rotatory movement as he danced, gradually swaying his body more and more and lifting his feet higher from the ground. He went to the *hirihovaka* and inspected the milk, letting it run through his fingers (Plate XXXI, fig. 1), and dropping some on the *aude* to see if it was rich enough. Apparently he was satisfied with its quality, and soon he fell back into the arms of Sita Wanniya who supported him. After a short time he revived with much quivering of muscles and gasping for breath, and taking a handful of the coconut milk he almost fell approached Tissahami the Vedda *Arachi*[1] (who

[1] This man, concerning whom something has been said on p. 42, was known to

1,Saligmann & Saligmann 2-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Veddas AXS

796 was then staying in our camp) and scattered the milk over him,
●535 while with the right hand on his shoulder he expressed his
787 pleasure in seeing him and promised him luck in hunting. Then after prophesying good hunting to each of us in turn and to several of the Veddas, Bilindi Yaka left the shaman.

Randu Wanniya again danced eastward round the *hirihewake*, holding the *ande* in both hands, but soon he began to crunch and point it to the ground, and then pretended to thrust it at imaginary footprints (Plate XXXI, fig. 2). His excited manner showed that he was now possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he represented following the slot of a sambar. Soon Sita Wanniya took the *ande* away from him and gave him a bow and arrow, and the tracking continued amidst intense excitement (Plate XXXII, fig. 1). Sita Wanniya followed closely, ready to support the shaman if he should fall, while others pointed out the slot to him till at last, a basket having been placed on the ground, he drew his bow and transfixed it.

796 Plate XXXII, fig. 2 shows the group round the shaman as
787 the arrow left the bow. As the arrow sped the shaman fell back seemingly exhausted and almost senseless. The *yaka* did not, however, finally depart from the shaman, but merely went to the quarry to ascertain if his arrow had proved fatal. The shaman soon came to himself, apparently satisfied, and bent his head (Plate XXXIII, fig. 1) over the *hirihewake*, and then shouting "Ah, ah!" in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaka* came to each of us in turn and placed the *ande* on our heads, thereby granting us jungle favour, after which he went to several of the Veddas prophesying good luck in hunting to each of them (Plate XXXIII, fig. 2). Then taking the half shells of the cocoanut in either hand and waving them about, he danced round the *hirihewake* and bent his head over the pot so that the *yaka* might drink, and afterwards fell into the arms of Sita Wanniya, who had been following, ready to support him. Again the shaman revived, and, putting his arms on our interpreter, promised him victory in all undertakings. Then returning to the *hirihewake*, and having given the *ande* to one of

the Hewahetta community and was much respected both because of his Veddic blood and because of his renown as a shaman and medicine man (pathwali).

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kirikuraha ceremony, the shaman examines the offering of coconut milk (Hambaddo)

Fig. 2. Kirikuraha ceremony, the shaman invoking the weather (Hambaddo)

[facing p. 222]

Plate XXXII

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kirihonda ceremony, the dancers touching the number [illegible]

Fig. 2. Kirihonda ceremony, the dancers dance the number [illegible]

[facing p. 222 b]

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kirikuraha ceremony, the shaman bends his head over the coconut milk (Haddon)

Fig. 2. Kirikuraha ceremony, the shaman possessed by Dikali Yaka produces good hunting (Haddon)

[facing p. 222S]

Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
.535
787

Plate XXXIV

Kirikuruha ceremony, the dancer about to spin the pot (Hunubedda)

[facing p. 222 d]

796 not possess an *ande*, having given his to a white man who knew not its value, but since an *ande* must be used when invoking Kande Yaka and Billindi Yaka, Handuna unfastened the blade from one of his shooting arrows to represent an *ande*. Having put on the *kangula* he burnt some resin and censed the *hirihevaka*. This had been placed on a support of the usual form in the centre of the dancing ground, and the arrow blade and some betel leaves had been placed in it. Two pots of boiled rice had been placed upon a small platform or altar (*massa*) which had been built for, and used in, another ceremony.

The shaman raised the coconut and salaamed to the *hirihevaka* and then danced round and round it, singing the
796 ●535 invocation given in Chapter X (No. XVI) and exhibiting the
787 nut to the *yaka* and thrusting at the pot as he danced though not actually hitting it. The step was the usual one with many half turns and performed clockwise. Handuna now invoked Billindi Yaka (Chapter X, invocation No. XVIII) and soon he fell back and was supported for a few seconds, but revived almost immediately, when he became possessed by Billindi Yaka. An axe was given him by one of the Veddas with which he hit the coconut so as to split it, letting the water pour out on the ground. Then with a half coconut in each hand he danced up to Vela shouting "Houh! houh!" and held the nuts against his chest while with head bent and body swaying he said, "You have offered me coconut, and I have come, why did you call me?" For coconut, instead of the usual word *pol* he used *ande ema*, literally "the white one" or "the white thing." Again he danced round the pot and bent his head low over it, in this way showing his satisfaction with the offering. Whilst he continued to dance Vela and Kaira made the coconut milk, putting the remains of the flesh of the nut on the pots of rice which had been placed on the *massa*. Handuna now took the arrow blade from the *hirihevaka* and danced with it, holding its ends in either hand and twirling it round between his fingers; taking it in his right hand, he stabbed sharply at the pot as he danced round it, taking care, however, never to hit the pot. He dipped the arrow into the pot and examined the milk on the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535 ®
787

blade, then scattered it to show that he was pleased, shouting several times *Hat Billindi! Hat Billindi!* to which Kaira always answered *dêwa* or "Lord." He danced again, stretching alternately his right and left arms, and about this time Billindi Yaka left and Kande Yaka entered him without any outward signs, so that we did not recognize the change which had taken place until presently he danced round the *kiriliwala* with one arm extended and holding the arrow blade by its centre. We were told that he was possessed by Kande Yaka, who in his person performed the traditional pantomime of tracking the sambar by its slots, pointing at them with the arrow. This scene was not acted so thoroughly as it was at Bendiyagalge. Handana picked up a few leaves and held them across the arrow to represent a bow whilst he crouched in a position ready to shoot; then, dipping his hand in the *kiriliwala* he dropped some milk on the leaves and got up and danced. Filling the palms of his hands with the milk he went to Kaira and said: "The sambar you shall shoot shall bleed like this milk dripping." Coming to one of us he placed one arm on his shoulder, holding a betel leaf moist with milk in the other outstretched hand, and prophesied sambar to the bow of Kaira. With head slightly thrown back and rapt expression he told of Indigollae and the seven pots of blood—and now it seemed that Kande Yaka went and Indigollae Yaka came[1]. Before going back to the *kiriliwala* Handana gave one of us (C.G.S.) a betel leaf as a sign of favour, and then taking another from the *kiriliwala* he allowed some milk to drip over it before he let it fall to the ground. Then with the arrow head he made two slits in the leaf not quite extending to the base, and again dipped it in the milk. Next he went to Vela and passed the slit leaf slowly over his head and finally slapped it on his chest. He did the same thing to Kaira with an uncut leaf, and it was noted that when the leaves fell to the ground off the men's chests they were picked up carefully and put in the *kiriliwala*. The cuts in the leaf denoted that the sambar promised to Vela would be horned. The manner in which the leaf falls is also considered prophetic; when, as in this case, it falls with its

[1] His incantation is given in Chapter x, No. xxxii.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

under surface upwards, the quarry will take long to kill; if, on the other hand, the leaf fall with its upper surface upwards, death will be speedy.

After this Handuna again danced round the *kirikoraha*, holding the arrow in it, and showed his favour to each of the male onlookers by passing a milky betel leaf over their heads and placing it on their chests. This was repeated several times alternating with dances and quiverings over the pot before Handuna finally shook his head over the pot and fell back with a shout, the *yaka* having left him.

Now Indigollae Yakini, the wife of Indigollae Yaka, was invoked, and we were told that Kaira who performed this dance would have worn beads on his wrists had he possessed them. He danced in the usual way round the *kirikoraha* with the arrow head which transfixed a betel leaf in one hand, when suddenly dropping his head over the *kirikoraha* he shouted and apparently became possessed by the *yakini*. Gasping and shaking he went to both Handuna and Vela and put milky betel leaves on their chests, and spoke to them, raising his arms alternately and shuffling his feet. He returned to the pot and danced, stretching his arms and then crossing them across his body as he would have done had he been holding a couple of *aude*, swaying his body and moving vigorously. Several times he bent over the *kirikoraha* and each time leapt back with a shout and danced again. At last Handuna pointed to the offering of rice on the *massa*, which he approached and inspected while gasping and shaking, then evidently satisfied with this he sprang forward to the *kirikoraha*, dropped his head over it and fell back exhausted, but no longer possessed by any *yaka*.

The Kirikoraha at Uniche. The *kirikoraha* performed at Maha Oya by Wannaku of Uniche seemed to be intermediate between the ceremony of the wilder Veddas where the original idea, namely Kande Yaka tracking the elk, was the dominant feature, and that danced by the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula where this *motif* was omitted.

A *massa* was built (though not elaborated into a *bulutyahana* as at Unuwatura Bubula); a white cloth was laid over it and betel leaves, areca nuts, bananas, coconuts, and two pots of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cooked rice were placed on it, as well as the *kirikoruha* itself containing the coconut milk, in which two *aude* had been placed. All these offerings were then covered with a red cloth, the red colour being said to be necessary.

796
535
787

Before describing the dance it must be explained that the Uniche Veddas had come to Maha Oya, some twenty-four miles from their home, and the shaman had not brought his *aude* with him, so we offered to lend him two, a small one we had collected at Unuwatura Bubula, and a particularly fine one lent to us by Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, the Sinhalese headman already referred to, who in his youth had lived a great deal among Veddas, and from whom he had received the *aude*. This *aude*, evidently an old one, pleased Wannaku greatly and he exclaimed with joy: "This is indeed an *aude* for Kande Yaka[1]." We did not tell him whence we had obtained them, but he seemed impressed that a white man should possess such a good Vedda *aude*.

Wannaku put on the *hangula* and salaamed to the *maesa*, and whilst the drum was beaten sang the invocation given in Chapter X, No. XXII, to Bilindi Yaka. He danced in front of the *maesa* facing east, slowly at first, but gradually he began to sway his body more rapidly and with greater vigour and soon became possessed by Bilindi Yaka. The shaman now picked up the large *aude* and, after dancing with it in his hands for a few seconds, flung it from him to the ground with disgust, exclaiming angrily: "This is not my arrow, this has been used by a Sinhalese." Someone handed him the small *aude* and he seemed satisfied and danced with this. Of course it was quite possible for Wannaku to have discovered the history of the *aude* from our servants or from the villagers, or it may even have been mentioned quite casually in conversation with them and not have made much impression on him at the time, but flashing into consciousness in the excitement of the dance it may have appeared an important and till then unknown fact. On questioning Wannaku after the dance he denied any previous knowledge but said quite simply that he was possessed

[1] However, when the dance took place the next day he used this *aude* when invoking Bilindi Yaka.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
635
787

by Bilindi Yaka and "as a man knows his own betel pouch so Bilindi Yaka would know his own *aude*."

The shaman bent his head over the *kirihovuka* and inspected it, then putting his hand into it he scattered the milk on the ground two or three times, before filling his palm with milk and letting it fall over the *aude*, in this way testing the quality of the offering. With the arrow in one hand he stood in front of the *maesa* shaking and shouting. Now he took a betel leaf from the *kirihovuka*, fixed it on the point of the *aude* and as a sign of favour put this on an old Vedda's chest, asking at the same time why he had been invoked: "Is anyone sick?" The old man replied that no one was ill, they had merely called him to take the offerings on the *maesa*. So the *yaka* was pleased and with rapt expression the shaman danced, and again dripped milk over the *aude*, saying at the same time that he must go. He repeated this several times, all the while quivering and gasping and saying that now he would leave, but before finally departing the spirit again showed favour to the old Vedda, influencing the shaman to put a milky betel leaf on his chest; then the shaman leapt back suddenly and the *yaka* left him.

After a short interval the shaman danced again and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he called by the invocation No. XVII; soon he made signs that he wanted something, when the Veddas understood that he lacked a second *aude*, and not having another, one of the Veddas gave him a knife, which the shaman preferred to the rejected *aude*. He held the *aude* and the knife crosswise, these now representing the bow and arrow of Kande Yaka, and dancing wildly the shaman feigned to test the imaginary bow, then leaning both arms on the *maesa* he shivered and shook, at the same time declaring that the bow was a strong and good one. Again holding the arrow blade and knife like a bow and arrow he followed the track of an imaginary sambar for a few yards; he pointed to a spot on the ground and said the next *kirihovuka* should be built there. Then taking some milk from the *kirihovuka* he let some fall on the arrow and spilled some on the ground, and we were told that this represented Kande Wanniya

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

drinking after the kill. After a little more dancing the shaman fell back into the arms of his supporter and the spirit left him. 796 550 787

The Kirikoraha at Unuwatura Bubula. When dancing to Kande Yaka at Unuwatura Bubula the Veddas made a *bulatyahana* (Plate XXXV); this, we were told, would be built when invoking many *yaka*, but the *kirikoraha* would never be danced without it. The *bulatyahana* seemed to be an elaborated *maesa* with the framework carried up to form a back and slanting roof over which a cloth, specially kept for this purpose, was hung and fastened down. On the shelf of the *bulatyahana* two *aude* and a trident of the ordinary Hindu pattern were placed together with betel leaves and areca nut. The *kirikoraha* containing coconut milk and betel leaves stood on a rice-mortar beside it and a pot of cooked rice was put on the ground.

The shaman danced in front of the *bulatyahana* holding in his hands a new piece of cloth (a coloured handkerchief which we gave him) specially obtained for the purpose. He swayed his body and raised the cloth to his head while lifting his feet and patting the ground alternately with his right and left foot, but not moving from the front of the *bulatyahana*, that is to say confining his dancing to a space three or four feet long. He exchanged the handkerchief for the trident and placing a betel leaf on the point he danced with this and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka. Putting his hands into the *kirikoraha*, he examined the milk and expressed his satisfaction by shouting and clapping his hands. Again he danced to and fro in front of the *bulatyahana* with the trident in his hand. The *kirikoraha* was taken off the rice-mortar and put on the *bulatyahana*, and the pot of cooked rice was put in its place on the rice-mortar.

The dancer then approached a sick shaman who, as mentioned on p. 263, had coughed up a considerable amount of blood at the end of the *alutyahagama* ceremony performed previously, and fed him with some rice which he brought to him in a betel leaf. In this way Kande Yaka showed his benevolence towards the sick man, for it was considered that the *yaka* food would cure him. Returning to the *bulatyahana* the shaman quivered and shook his head and examined the [755]

1.Sangmann & Sangmann 2-5 (1967-1968) 1811
AXS Vedda AXS

796
535
787

rice, then he came to us and in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaku* said that he had come because we had asked for him. After some more dancing a little longer in front of the *Anbagahana* and after much bending and shaking over it and the rice put the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya left the shaman and the ceremony ended.

Nae Yaku Ceremonies.

769
535

The large part the *Nae Yaku* play in the life of the Veddas and the great deference paid to them have been treated in the chapters on religion. We witnessed two *Nae Yaku* ceremonies which took place at Sitala Wanniya and Bandaraduwa respectively. The Bandaraduwa ceremony was performed on the seventh day after the death of the individual whose spirit was invoked, and we were allowed to prepare a dancing ground in the jungle, where it seemed that a tolerably good series of photographs might be obtained. However, the Veddas were obviously apprehensive of the spirit of the deceased until the ceremony had taken place, and insisted on performing it early in the morning with the result that the photographs obtained were all underexposed. We have however thought it best to publish a number of these without retouching them, an exception being made in the case of the two photographs reproduced in Plates XXXVI, fig. 2, and XXXVIII, fig. 1, the value of which do not depend on the facial expression of the performers while they were so underexposed that all detail would have been lost in a reproduction.

The ceremony performed at Sitala Wanniya was danced expressly because we wished to see it, but Handuna, the most important man in this community, was delighted when we suggested that they should dance to the *Nae Yaku*, because he said it would please the *yaku*, for when alone the community could seldom provide such good things to offer them as we promised to give.

Nae Yaku Ceremony at Sitala Wanniya. Although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas told us that the *Nae Yaku* could not come without Kande Yaka, Kande Yaka was not invoked at

796
787
535
417

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the *bulatyaheme* (Unerewatura Bulala)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman before the *bulatyaheme* (Unerewatura Bulala)

[facing p. 238]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535

the *Nae Yaku* ceremony that they performed for our benefit; the spirits of certain named relatives being called upon immediately. This may have been an omission caused by the ceremony having been begun in the spirit of a rehearsal (though it was certainly continued in earnest), but it seems more probable to us that this was not a mistake, as it was clearly stated that when a *Nae Yaku* is invoked for the first time after a death Kande Yaka is called upon at the beginning of the ceremony to bring the new *yaku*. The two *yaku* invoked at this ceremony were remembered by the community as influential men, and had probably been invoked frequently, and thus though still looked upon as attendants of Kande Yaka in a general way, they had probably gained a certain independence. Two pots of rice were cooked with coconut milk and placed on the *mana* which was already in existence, having been built for one of the other dances, and an earthenware bowl of coconut milk was supported on a stake driven into the ground in the centre of the dancing plot. This bowl, the *hiriliwala*, was filled with coconut milk, and betel leaves were put in it. Kaira put on a hangalla, and held a piece of cloth in his hands. It was decided that the father-in-law of Handana should be called, therefore an invocation was sung to him, and Kaira danced with the piece of cloth in his hand holding it at times over his head, and soon began to shout and leap showing that he was possessed. He went to Handana, shouted and waved his cloth before him, and he too fell back and became possessed. There seemed to be no doubt that both Handana and Kaira were considered to be possessed by the same *yaku*, i.e. by the spirit of the former's father-in-law Tuta Gamarale. Both bent their heads low over the *hiriliwala* and inspected the milk, then examined the offering of cooked rice, and returned to the *hiriliwala* quivering and gasping, and scattered some of the milk as a sign of pleasure. Then Kaira spoke to Vela in the low gasping voice of the *yaku* and stretched his arms towards Vela's child, who was suffering from yaws, and covered both the child and its mother with his cloth. He treated the other children in the same way, and also sprinkled coconut milk on their heads, and in the hurried *yaku* manner of one possessed smeared their faces with the milk, and we were told

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535

that this was the manner in which the *yaka* of Tuta Gamarale usually showed favour to his grandchildren. Handuna and Kaira both returned to the *kiriheraka*, and shivering and quaking they bent their heads over it, shaking their hair over their faces, then both danced wildly (Handuna with an arrow in his hand), scattering the milk about, in this way showing their satisfaction with the offerings prepared for them. Both Handuna and Kaira went to several of the Vedda onlookers, and waving their cloths promised luck in hunting or favour of some kind. Then coming to each of us, they said while shuffling their feet and shaking their cloths "My grandchildren called me to help them, now you are here too, do you help them also." After feeding some of the small children with coconut milk they both returned to the *kiriheraka* and bent their heads low over it, crying, "Oh," and fell back, and the *yaka* of Tuta Gamarale left them.

A good deal of discussion followed among the Veddas, as many considered that the father of Handuna should be invoked, but all declared they were too tired to dance. At last Handuna prevailed upon his son-in-law Kaira to dance, explaining to us that they seldom had such good food as that which they were able to offer to-day and it pleased the *yaka* greatly, so his father should be called to share it.

So Kaira took the handkerchief and danced again, soon becoming possessed by Huda the father of Handuna. After showing favour to the progeny of Huda as before by holding the cloth over their heads he fell supine into the arms of Vela and it seemed as if the *yaka* was about to depart. Some of the men and boys began immediately to repeat the invocation to prevent this from happening, and after some seconds of immobility Kaira began to tremble slightly, and raised his right hand limply, let it fall again, and once more became inert. Then all joined vigorously in the invocation, and the wife of Kaira smeared his face with coconut milk, and with the aid of a leaf-cone fed him with the milk, that is to say, she managed to convey a few drops into his mouth, but still he remained unmoved. As this was ineffectual several of the grandchildren of the man whose spirit possessed Kaira fed the latter in the same way;

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela did so also, with the result that Kaira dropped his head forward, shook violently and nodded his head sideways in a clumsy drunken fashion, and in a few seconds, still supported, jerked his limbs forwards and moved to the offering, after which he came back to where the women were standing and fell again into the arms of Vela. His chin was thrown back and his whole body trembled, while he gasped a word or two occasionally and fanned himself with his cloth vigorously. He held the cloth over the child suffering from yaws and promised to cure him, then putting both hands on Handuna he let his head fall on the latter's chest, and while trembling and shuffling his feet asked how Handuna fared. Handuna replied that game was scarce, and Kaira then spoke to the wife of Handuna and again to Handuna, and promised help. Then leaving Handuna he danced with wild leaping steps round the *kirikoraks* and gasped that now he must go and so leapt to the *massa*, bent his head over the offering, and fell back exhausted. But he soon began to dance again, twirling the arrow blade between his fingers, till after a short time he returned to the *massa*, and again bent his head over the offering; then with a great shout he took the pot of rice in both hands and spun it on the ground, and as he did so the *yaks* left him and he fell back. 769 535

Spinning the pot had the same significance here as at Henebedda, the direction towards which the pot dipped showing where game would be found. In this instance the pot was so full of rice that it did not dip at all, but this was considered a good omen as game might be expected on all sides. 769 787

After all was over Handuna took an arrow, and standing by the *massa* pointed the arrow to the pots, and called upon all the *Nae Yaks* to feed. The pots were soon removed, the rice they contained was eaten, and the betel leaves from the *kirikoraks* chewed, but the milk in the *kirikoraks* was poured over a heap of twigs laid on the ground, being thus devoted to the *yaku*. 769

Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa. Some account has already been given in Chapter II of the abnormal conditions prevailing at Bandaraduwa, so it will only be necessary to touch lightly upon this subject here. Some twenty years back these Kovil Vanamai Veddas, of whom the Bandaraduwa Veddas 177 769

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 769 are the remains, lived much the same life as the Henebedda Veddas now live, and like them were in transition between a purely hunting, honey-collecting life and the settled condition of the village Veddas who are mainly dependent on their chena produce. When we visited Bandarawa the Veddas were in a sorry condition and had settled down among the Sinhalese. It is true they dwelt in separate huts, but they were built on the same chena which had been allotted by the Government to them all, and like the Sinhalese they were paying taxes[1]. Naturally living in such close contact with the Sinhalese they have been influenced by them, and intermarriage has taken place, so that in many cases the Vedda identity has been lost. However, those of them who still considered themselves Veddas have retained a number of their old songs and many of their old customs, as comparison with the uncontaminated Sitala Wanniya Veddas showed. But even these customs, though Vedda at root, had been largely coloured and often overlaid by Sinhalese beliefs, so that when a death occurred not only was it necessary to make offering to the new Nae Yaka but it was equally important to propitiate the nearest Buddhist priest.

769 535 A *kirikoraha* was prepared in the usual way, and betel leaves put in it as well as the coconut milk. The shaman Tissahami, wearing a *hangula*, placed two *aude* on the *kirikoraha* and salaamed to the bowl. (Plate XXXVI, fig. 1.) Then he began to dance in the usual manner to the accompaniment of a drum played by a Vedda lad, first holding one *aude* and then one in each hand, that in the right hand being for Kande Yaka and that in the left for the *yaka* of the deceased Tuta. The use of the drum, which was of Sinhalese manufacture, must be regarded as an innovation, for although these people used them, and the Bendiyagalge people said they would if they had them, [177] the Sitala Wanniya Veddas declared that true Veddas never possessed or used a drum[2].

[1] It must be remembered that about sixty years ago Bailey, a Government official, encouraged the Veddas of Nilgala to make chena and since then the custom has spread. Sixty years ago these Veddas, and in fact all except the long established coast and village Veddas, must have lived a life very little different from that of the Sitala Wanniya group of to-day.

[2] The readiness with which this community accepted an innovation was demonstrated

769
535

Fig. 1. Nae Yaka ceremony, the shaman submits to the offering (Bandarawela)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaka ceremony, the shaman pretends to stab the offering (Bandarawela)"

[facing p. 234a]

769
535

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed falls into the arms of a supporter (Bandarawela)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman sprinkles milk from the offering on the brothers of the deceased (Bandarawela)

[facing p. 234 k]

Plate XXXVIII

769
535

Fig. 1. Hau Yaka ceremony, the shaman possessed by Kaula Yaka touches the member (Boodoodoo)

Fig. 2. Hau Yaka ceremony, the brother of the deceased falls back possessed (Boodoodoo)

[facing p. 234 c]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-1 (1907-1908) 1911
AX1 Vedda AX1

769
535
987

At the same time an invocation was sung, presumably to Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaka*, but our notes are not quite clear about this; it was however certain that Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nae Yaka* all came, indeed that the last was unable to come without Kande Yaka, but it was not clear when each *yaka* came and went, and it seemed quite possible for the shaman to be possessed by several *yaka* at once.

As the shaman danced he stabbed at the *kirikoraka* with both the *aude* (Plate XXXVI, fig. 2), in this way the *Nae Yaka* by whom he was possessed was pleased to show his power. Sometimes as Tissahami made the usual half turn on his heels he held the *aude* against his hips pointed end outwards. Soon he began to quiver and bend his head forward, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers, into whose arms he fell back (Plate XXXVII, fig. 1). After lying still for a few seconds he revived and began to dance wildly, stabbing the *aude* in the air; this was in order to frighten people, for although the feeling of the *Nae Yaka* towards his living relatives was friendly, provided always that he had been well treated by them and had been offered sufficient rice, coconut milk and betel leaves, the *yaka* was not averse to showing his newly acquired power. After this, in order to show his favour to his relatives the shaman went to both the brothers of the dead man in turn and sprinkled them with coconut milk from the *kirikoraka* (Plate XXXVII, fig. 2), he put his arms on their shoulders and promised them luck in hunting, and taking two betel leaves from the *kirikoraka* he put one on the chest of each man, and the leaves being wet with the milk stayed where they were placed for a short time. Suddenly leaping away the shaman, now apparently possessed by Kande Yaka and probably with the spirit of the *Nae Yaka* still within him, tracked an imaginary sambar round the dancing ground, holding the two *aude* crosswise to represent a bow and arrow. This is shown in Plate XXXVIII, fig. 1, which also shows the betel leaves on the chest

by the shaman who wanted to wear Sinhalese leggings with bells, although he said these had not been worn before in a Vedda ceremony. The leglets, which he greatly admired, had been worn by a peasant Sinhalese at a devil ceremony which had been held two days before at a village a few miles distant.

[177]

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AXI Vedda AXI

769
535
787

of each of the two brothers of the deceased. The shaman made no feint to shoot but soon put the *ande* on the *hirikerahe*, and taking a pot of rice which had been prepared twirled it vigorously in his hands, and though this may have represented Kande Wanniya spinning the rice pot for prophecy, the shaman put the pot down without actually spinning it. Supported by one of the Veddas he again danced round the *hirikerahe* and swayed his body violently; at times he would spring suddenly to one side stabbing fiercely at the air, after which (bending over the *hirikerahe*) he fell back and remained perfectly still with rapt expression and head slightly bent, one hand resting on the edge of the milk pot. It seemed as though the Yaka was about to leave the shaman, but as the relatives did not desire this (perhaps because the Yaka had not yet fed them as a sign of greater favour) they all sang the invocation together. The Yaka heard them, for suddenly the shaman began to tremble, the trembling grew to a vigorous shaking, and he sprang forward and again bent his head over the *hirikerahe*; then with body bent and head drooping he moved a little way, taking short leaping steps, and again fell back exhausted. But he soon revived and took the *ande* and approached the dead man's brothers in turn, who both became possessed by the *Nae Yaka* and fell back. Then the shaman smeared their bodies with coconut milk, throwing some into their mouths, and they soon showed signs of life again. Plate XXXVIII, fig. 2, and Plate XXXIX, fig. 1, show the two brothers of the deceased possessed by the *Nae Yaka*; in the latter figure the body of the unconscious man has been smeared with the contents of the *hirikerahe*, while the remains of that with which he had been fed hangs about his mouth and chin. It will be observed that in both these figures the supporters are Sinhalese; this was because there were not enough grown Vedda men in the community to support the men possessed by Yaku. All this time the invocation was being repeated by one of the youngest Veddas present, who we were told was the dead man's sister's son, that is the dead man's potential son-in-law. The shaman now fed the dead man's brothers with rice from the offering, and then fell exhausted to the ground. One of the chieftains immediately came

769
595
787

Fig. 1. Nuer Yaka ceremony, the other brother of the deceased is also present (Photo-drawing)

Fig. 2. Nuer Yaka ceremony, the disease possessed by the Nuer Yaka embraces the brothers of the deceased (Photo-drawing)

[facing p. 236a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XL

769
535
787

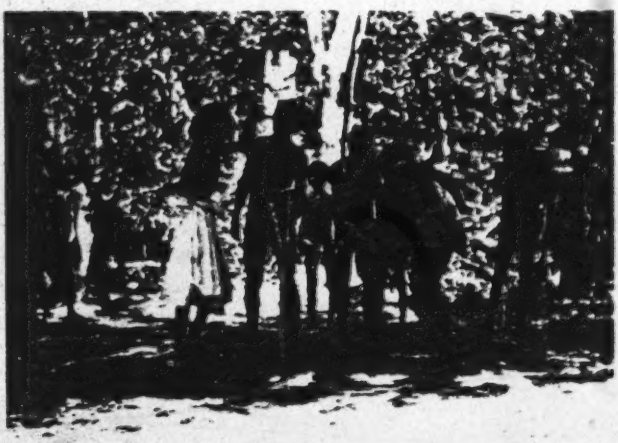


Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the Nae Yaka shows his power (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman feeds the members of the community (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 236 b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to his assistance when he began to quiver and sway, then moved and put both arms round one of the dead man's brothers as a sign of kindness from the deceased. (Plate XXXIX, fig. 2.) The brothers said: "It was good of you to come. See we have given you food, now do not come back again," and the *yaka* agreed. The shaman then took the *aude* and transfixed a betel leaf with each and danced and again showed favour to the relatives by giving them each another betel leaf, after which one of the relatives danced, but the shaman threatened to stab with the *aude* the men who were not relatives of the dead man. (Plate XL, fig. 1.) Soon both the shaman and the two brothers fell back and the Yaka departed from them. When the shaman revived, he bent his head over the *kirikoraha* as a sign of respect; then holding both hands over the rice pot he repeated a silent charm, asking any of the other *yaku* who might have come to the ceremony to depart peacefully. After this he fed each relative of the dead man, holding the *kirikoraha* to their mouths, as is shown in Plate XL, fig. 2.

769
535
787

The Invocation of Bambura Yaka.

The Veddas invoke Bambura Yaka for help in getting pig and yams, both staple foods, the latter being an extremely important element in their diet. The dance is pantomimic, and depicts a boar hunt in which Bambura, the boar-hunting hero, was aided by a Vedda woman, who killed the pig with an arrow she shot from her husband's bow and whose spirit is therefore called Dunne Yakini (Bow Spirit), while the spirit of this woman's husband who turned the boar with his yam stick (*ule*) has become Ule Yaka, that is (Yam-stick Spirit). This ceremony, though not so widely spread, is as dramatic as that in which Kande Yaka stalks and kills sambar deer. We saw it danced by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya and by Wannaku of Uniche.

776
535
773
796

The invocation of Bambura Yaka at Sitala Wanniya. The dance at Sitala Wanniya will be described first, since the story was told us here in its more complete form. Once long ago many Vedda men and women went out in search of yams,

776
773
796

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 and they took their dogs with them. While all were busy digging yams, the dogs strayed in the jungle and soon put up
773 a boar, to which they gave chase, giving tongue. The men
796 hearing the dogs followed them and soon came up with the boar at bay, which immediately charged them. None of the men could kill the boar, but a woman, whose spirit afterwards became Dunne Yakini, picked up a bow and arrow and killed the boar with the help of her husband Ule Yaka and his brother, who became Kuda Ule Yaka, i.e. Little Yam-stick Yaka. Although Bambura Yaka takes no part in the story as it was told us, he is the important *yaka* of the ceremony; it is he who is especially invoked, Dunne Yakini, her husband and brother-in-law coming in as his attendants, as do a varying number of other *yaku*, presumably the spirits of those who joined in the boar hunt[1].

● 535 During the dance Bambura Yaka and all his attendants
796 were present, so that it was not at all clear which part of the dance represented the actions of Bambura Yaka himself, since after the first complete possession *yaku* entered and departed from the shaman without any obvious signs. But we were told after the dance that Bambura was returning to his cave at Lewangala carrying yams and a couple of the large monitor lizards when he came across the hunt.

The properties for this dance are rather complicated and were carefully prepared on the dancing ground, all the men helping in the work and charms being sung the while. The necessary sticks were cut and two flat reddish stones found by a stream were placed below the *maesa* which was built with a double platform, a bundle of grass, leaves and twigs bound together to represent the boar being suspended from the lower platform. The stones were called Kuda Lewangala and Maha Lewangala respectively, and represented the red rocks or rocky hills of Lewangala, the unknown land in which Bambura lived and which is still the chief abiding place of his *yaka*. The majority of these properties are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1.

[1] We may here refer to a matter we discuss at greater length in Chapter X. It is certain that the invocations (Nos. XXVII and XXVIII) used at the Bambura Yaka ceremony and specially addressed to Bambura, which were only partially understood by those who sang them, originally applied to honey collecting.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

On the stones Handuna and Kaira mixed their pigments, lime, turmeric, water and charcoal, while all chanting together they decorated with spots and bars the various sticks which were to form the bows, arrows, yam sticks and carrying sticks sacred to the *yaku* who were soon to be invoked[1]. 535 796

As already stated the boar was suspended below the *maesa* by a creeper, and another creeper fastened to the "boar" was held by a small boy who stood a little back in the bush.

The objects prepared for the Bambura Yaka dance at Sitala Wanniya were as follows:

(i) The *mulpola itiya*; the meaning of these words is doubtful, though *itiya* was said to signify an ancient weapon. This was said to be for the use of Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and is a rough stick about 5 feet 6 in. long (figure 9 *a*) pointed at one end, above which the bark is shaved off for about 6 in., which part was decorated with bars of red and black pigment. This was said to be a yam stick, and it was explained that because of this the bark was not peeled except at the point, for a man would cut any stick in the jungle and dig up yams with it.

(ii) The *ule* (figure 9 *b*) or ceremonial arrow belonging to the Yaka is a peeled stick about 6 feet long, pointed at one end and decorated with rings of red and black pigment. Three pieces of bast are tied to the upper end, a few inches from the top, to represent the feathers of an arrow.

(iii) The *hariwitiya* is a stout stick about 3 feet 6 in. long, decorated with rings of red and black pigment, and was used by Bambura Yaka as a staff.

(iv) The *haelapeta* (figure 9 *c*) is a peeled stick nearly 6 feet long, spatulate at one end and decorated with bars of red and black in the manner indicated in the drawing.

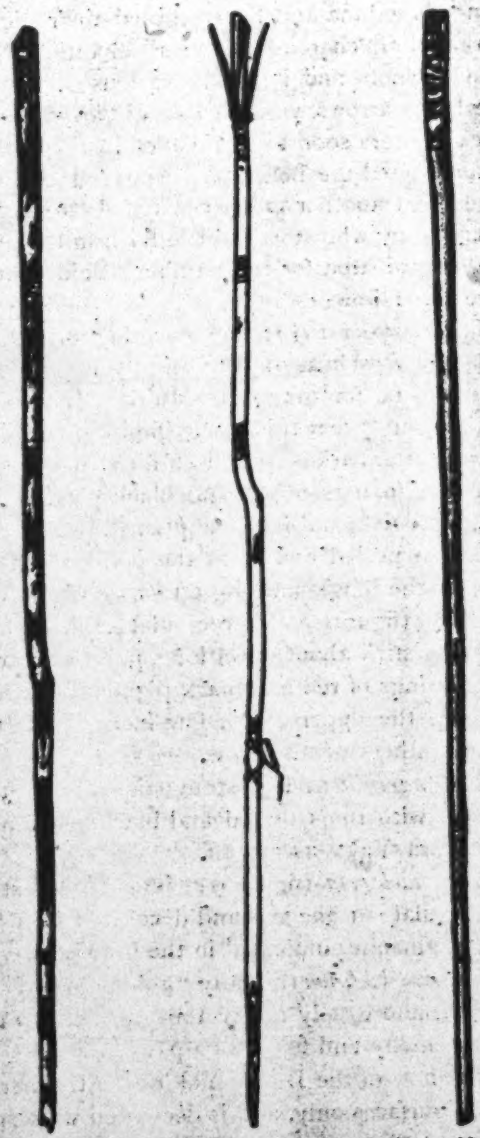
(v) The *ran kadawa* (literally "golden sword") is similar to the *haelapeta*, and totally unlike the *ran kadawa* used in the Rahu Yaku ceremony and figured on p. 256.

(vi) The bow of the Dunne Yakini has the bark stripped from the outer surfaces only, and is decorated with spots of red

[1] On asking the reason for this ornamentation of the properties we were told that the *yaku* would be pleased when they saw the decorations, for the spots of pigment represented the flowers of Lewangala.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796
293



(a) (b) (c)

Fig. 9. Some of the objects used in the Bambura Yaka ceremony.
(a) *Mudgala dilya* × $\frac{1}{10}$. (b) *Ulu* × $\frac{1}{10}$. (c) *Hadagala* × $\frac{1}{10}$.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

and black pigment. It closely resembled that used in the Bambura Yaka ceremony at Uniche.

(vii) The *tadiya* is well seen in Plate XLI, fig. 1. It is a short stout stick, and represents a carrying stick or *pingo* which is used throughout Ceylon; however, it was quite unlike one, as these are long and springy and resemble a bow; moreover, Veddas usually unstring their bows and use them as carrying sticks.

(viii) The *nimiti* or book (explained as book of omens, and said to be borrowed from Sinhalese ceremonies) was made of a couple of broad strips of bark in imitation of the *ola* books used in Ceylon[1].

[787]
[177]

The *haelapeta* and *ran kaduwa* were said to belong to Devatayo of those names, but nothing was known about them. Devatayo or Dewa are Sinhalese spirits distinct from the *yaku* according to Sinhalese beliefs, but Handuna, our best informant at Sitala Wanniya, said Devatayo were the same as *yaku*. Obviously they had been introduced and assimilated to the Vedda *yaku*.

After all the sticks had been painted some cooked yams were tied up in leaves and bound to one end of the *tadiya*, and some wisps of grass were tied to the other to represent monitor lizards (Plate XLI, fig. 1), the whole was then put on the lower stage of the *maesa* with cooked yams for all the *yaku*, while a portion of yams was placed on the upper stage for Koriminaala Yaka, but no reason could be discovered why his food was kept apart from the rest. The dance began by Handuna singing an invocation (No. XXIX) to Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and Kaira, who wore a *hangula*, held the *mulpola itiya* in his right hand, letting the decorated end rest in his left, then he danced slowly round and round in front of the *maesa* facing east, the direction whence the boar of the story came. The *mulpola itiya* was soon changed for the *ran kaduwa*, and now Kaira made long leaping steps, widening his circle as he moved in front of the *maesa* and

[1] The *nimiti* omen or book is perhaps the most curious of all the properties. It was said that Bambura Yaka could read and write, and that he was the only Yaka who had these accomplishments, though nothing was known as to how he had learned them. But certainly this part of the ritual was old and must be the result of quite ancient contact with a Buddhistic people.

1,Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

turning the stick over in his hand. At this time he became possessed by Ule Yaka, and after dancing in a circle for a few minutes he began to leap to and fro in front of the *maesa* and thrust at the ground with his stick, at the same time warning the *yaku* that the boar he was hunting was very dangerous and that they must be prepared to help him should it charge him. Then he approached Handuna and one of us, saying "The boar is very fierce but I will kill it." Again he went to Handuna and laid the *ran kaduwa* across the latter's chest and held it to him with both arms and repeated his boast of killing the boar, but he also begged for assistance if he should meet with an accident. He again leapt to and fro beating his sides, and taking the *tadiya* from the *maesa*, held it first on his shoulder then behind his head and brandished it in the air so that Bambura Yaka might see the good things attached to it, and if he were pleased with the offering he too might come to assist Ule Yaka if the boar should attack him. Then taking Vela by the hand, he spoke to him quietly and pointed as though he saw the boar, and crouching, he stepped forward noiselessly, but again sprang back and danced with the *ule* and *tadiya*, then putting the *tadiya* down, turned the *ule* over in his hands and danced with long leaping strides. Soon he left off dancing and merely bounded to and fro trying to thrust at the "boar" below the *maesa*, but the small boy holding the creeper attached to it pulled the "boar" away each time Kaira thrust at it. After a few attempts he came to each of us in turn, pressing the *ule* against our chests, and with head bent forward and taking short steps alternately to the right and left he spoke to us as though we were Bambura Yaka and said, "This boar is difficult to kill, grant that I may succeed." As he spoke he raised his hand and pointed. Then shouting *usi usi nam* (the words with which dogs are put on a trail) he called the dogs (mentioned in the story) Sanjala, Bahira Pandi, Neti, and Kali, and went through the pantomime of laying them on the trail, gasping and panting the while and hitting his chest saying, "This is a fine big boar and I will kill it." Again he leapt to and fro and thrust at the "boar" without success, then with a great charge and a shout wounded the "boar" and fell back exhausted into

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XLI

535
796

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, preparing the *tadiyo* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[417]

Fig. 2. The Bambura Yaka ceremony begins by Handuna singing an invocation (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 a]

535
796

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar wounds the hunter (Sitala Wanniya)*

[917]

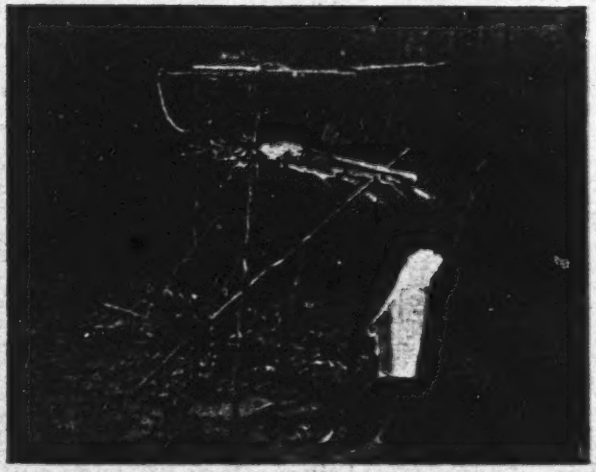


Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar is at length killed (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 b]

535
79L

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the bow of Dunne Yakini (Sitala Wanniya)*

[482]

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Kaira dances with the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the arms of his supporter. However, the "boar" was not yet dead and the *yaka* did not leave Kaira, who rested for a few seconds, and when he sprang forward with a shout and danced again and spoke to Handuna, saying, "I have succeeded in wounding the boar, now I will kill it" he was still possessed by Ule Yaka. Then the whole pantomime was repeated, the boasts, the attempts to kill the boar, and the laying of the dogs on the scent. At last the "boar" was wounded again, for a squeal was set up by the small boy who manipulated the creeper; then with a final thrust the *yaka* killed it, and as the *ule* was carefully withdrawn the "boar" gave a long dying squeal. Then the yaka left Kaira.

535 796

Soon Kaira began to dance again still holding the *ule*, and moving slowly at first but soon more energetically, and now he became possessed by Koriminaala Yaka. He danced as before, calling the dogs in the same way as when he was possessed by Ule Yaka and thrust at the boar in like manner, but this time the boar must have turned on him, as with a grunt "honk, honk," the boar swung forward and Kaira stumbled and then hobbled painfully supporting himself on the *ule*, his right leg dragging stiffly on the ground (Plate XLII, fig. 1).

The other men came forward and "medicined" the leg, that is, while one of them supported Kaira the other took a leaf and hurriedly wiped the limb from the back of the knee downwards. This evidently cured him, and he made another attempt to kill the boar, and was again wounded and again cured in the same way. Then he made one more charge, and the *ule* pierced the back of the "boar," wounding it mortally, and as Kaira fell back exhausted the Yaka left him (Plate XLII, fig. 2). As the *ule* was extracted the dying boar again gave forth a last squeal. After a short rest the ceremonial bow prepared for Dunne Yakini was wrapped in a cloth, and Handuna knelt down and held it on his head with both hands while Kaira and Vela sang an invocation almost certainly to Dunne Yakini, but unfortunately no note was taken of this (Plate XLIII, fig. 1)[1]. Kaira salaamed

[1] There was some experimenting before Kaira took the bow; the plate shows one of the younger members of the community holding it, but as he was not found satisfactory Handuna took it himself.

1; Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 796 to the bow and said, "Behold this golden bow is brought, covered by a clean cloth," and taking it from Handuna proceeded to dance with it at first holding it behind his head, then bringing it forward unwrapped it, placed it on Handuna's shoulder, and spoke in the usual *yaka* voice. He again danced with the bow and tried the string, and expressed his pleasure by gasping and hitting his chest. Then he put it on the *maesa* and fell exhausted.

Although we have no definite note it seems quite evident that at this time Kaira was possessed by Dunne Yakini.

Kaira then danced with the *harimitiya* taking the usual dance steps but supporting himself with the *harimitiya*, and he soon became possessed by Bambura Yaka. One of the lads now held the *tadiya*, then Kaira made a mock search for it for some minutes before he took it from the child. He danced with it over his shoulder with body bent and the *harimitiya* still in his hand (Plate XLIII, fig. 2). He thus enacted Bambura Yaka returning to the cave with good things on his *tadiya*, and he shouted as every Vedda does when within hearing of home. Seeing the children he seemed to threaten them with his stick, and they ran away laughing; this was repeated several times. He tried to frighten the children away as he did not want them to see the food he had procured. Then he led Vela behind the *maesa*, and pointing and speaking in a whisper with a great air of secrecy told him that if he went to a certain place where "there was high land by a stream" he should find a wild pig and kill it. For pig he used the *yaka* word *hossa dikka*, which apparently means "long snout." He led Handuna in the opposite direction, and speaking with like precaution promised that he should find and kill sambar, using the *yaka* name *gowra magalla*.

He took the book, spoke to Handuna and Vela, and next taking yams from the *maesa* presented some to each of us and to all the Veddas present, for in this way Bambura Yaka showed his good will. All the time he was distributing the yams Kaira hurried, gasped, and trembled. Before Bambura Yaka left him Kaira hit the upper stage of the *maesa* with the *harimitiya*, and shouted "Hoi, hoi," to drive Koriminaala Yaka

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

away. Then he fell back, Handuna took the *tadiya*, and the dance ended. 535 796

All the properties of Bambura Yaka and his attendants were replaced on the *maesa* and some water was sprinkled over them, this we were told being water for them to drink, for as no man eats without drinking afterwards, so the *yaku* require water to drink after food has been offered to them.

Handuna repeated charms over them, saying, "We have given you food and treated you well; if we have made any mistakes excuse us and do no harm to our families or ourselves." The whole ceremony was remarkable for the general feeling of cheerfulness and goodfellowship, jokes were frequently made, and obviously the Veddas had nothing to fear from the *yaku* in the ordinary course of events.

The Bambura Yaka Ceremony at Uniche. The dance to Bambura Yaka performed by Wannaku of Uniche differed only very slightly from that performed at Sitala Wanniya, yet in order to show these differences it will be necessary to describe the dance in detail. Wannaku, who visited us at Maha Oya in the Eastern Province, told us that Bambura Yaka was sometimes called Ala Yaka, i.e. Yam Yaka, as he helped men to find yams.

A *maesa* was built and leaves laid on it over which a white cloth[1] was laid, and on this yams, a coconut, and a pumpkin were placed, while some of the properties of the Bambura Yaka ceremony leaned against the *maesa*. These objects consisted of a roughly made bow decorated with bars of red and black (figure 10 *a*), two ordinary arrows and two long sticks which represented the special arrows of the *yaka*. They are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1, leaning against the *maesa*; a ring of bark is left at the top of each stick, and this is split to represent the feathers of an arrow, the peeled portion of both sticks being decorated with bars of red and yellow pigment. The upper ends of these sticks are pared down so as to represent two flattened surfaces as is shown in figure 10 *b*, which is drawn 535 796 293

[1] Among the Sinhalese and Tamils it is customary not only to hang a ceiling cloth but even to cover the walls, table and chairs with cloths when receiving an honoured guest.

1. Seligmann & Seligmann 3-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
1916
[293]

(a) (b)

Fig. 10. Ceremonial bow and arrow of Bambura Yaka. × 1/10.

to a scale of about one-tenth. Below the *maesa*, suspended by a creeper, is the *welmula*, which is merely a bundle of leaves filled with sand to represent the wild boar.

Wannaku, the shaman, put on a *hangula*, and salaamed to the *maesa*, and then sang a curious invocation (No. XVIII), while a lad beat the drum. Wannaku now exhibited all the *yaka* properties, dancing with each in turn. Wannaku did not tell us the story of Bambura Yaka, and as our many questions did not elicit it we may presume that he did not know it, so we did not find out whether all the properties belonged to Bambura Yaka or whether, as at Sitala Wanniya, which we visited afterwards, some belonged to his attendants.

After a short time Wannaku bent his head over the *maesa*, shouted, let down his hair, and became possessed. He picked up each of the big *yaka* arrows in turn and danced with them shouting, and thus showing that he was pleased with them. Up to this time he had not danced round the *maesa*, only in front of it, that is, facing east towards Inginiyagala, the home of Bambura.

The shaman next took up the bow and arrow and danced wildly in all directions, pulling at the bowstring to see if it were strong enough, although he did not let fly. Being at last satisfied with his weapon he aimed at the *welmula* and shot, and although he hit it he only wounded the "boar," so the shaman continued to dance as though following the animal, but although he occasionally pulled hard on

535
796
417

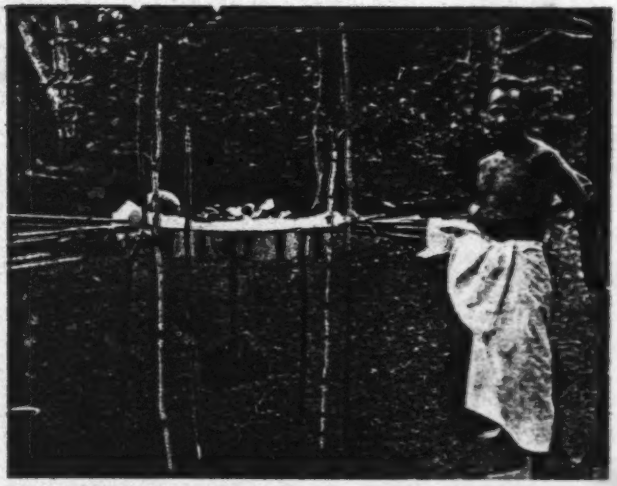


Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, offerings and properties prepared for the ceremony by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Wannaku kills the boar (Maha Oya)*

[facing p. 246]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the bowstring aiming in the air he did not loose his arrow. Soon he slipped down on one knee letting the other leg trail on the ground, and we were told that the wild boar had turned and charged him. Immediately one of the Vedda onlookers sprang forward and "medicined" the leg, that is to say, he wiped it down with a leaf as though he swept the pain from the leg to the earth, and the shaman, apparently cured, continued to hunt. Three times he shot at the *welemula* and hit it each time, then leaning back in the arms of his supporter he gasped: "I have shot the boar, now I am going." After more gasping and quivering he fell into his supporter's arms and the *yaka* left him.

535
796

After the ceremony all the food was eaten except the pumpkin which was left to rot on the *maesa*. Wannaku told us that the *yaku* would come and eat this, getting under the *maesa* and sucking the goodness out of it; the pumpkin would remain there and would look perfect, but should anyone cook it and try to eat it, he would find its substance was gone, so that it would be like trying to eat grass. As we asked to keep the bow and arrows, which would otherwise have been left to rot on the *maesa*, Wannaku sprinkled some water over them and muttered an explanation to the *yaku* before giving them to us.

The Pata Yaku Ceremony.

All Veddas recognise childbirth as a time of extreme pain and even danger to women, and the individuals of the Sitala Wanniya group invoke the aid of the *yaku* as soon as pregnancy is diagnosed[1]. A week before we arrived at Sitala Wanniya this ceremony had been held on behalf of Bevini, the wife of Vela, who did not appear to be at all far advanced in pregnancy. On the other hand, Mari, the wife of Pema, on whose account the Pata Yaku dance which we witnessed was performed, appeared to be quite six months pregnant. The delay had probably been caused only by the lack of the good things which it was necessary to offer to the *yaku* on these occasions, and both Pema and his father-in-law Nila seemed very gratified when

843
796

[1] We did not hear of this ceremony among the Veddas of any other group.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843
796

properties had been used previously in the ceremony performed for Bevini[1].

843
796
535

Two dancers must take part in the ceremony, and one of them should be the woman's father, whether he be shaman or not; if the woman has no father, or if he is unable to dance, her paternal uncle or her husband may take his part. In the ceremony we witnessed Nila, the father of Mari, and Vela, who was no relation to her, both wore the *hangala*. Nila also wore wristlets and cross shoulder straps of bark which represented beads.

As usual all the women and children collected at one side of the cleared space to watch the ceremony, and Mari joined the other women in preparing the offering of cooked food. An arrow was struck (Plate XLV, fig. 1) in the ground beside the *usmukaliya*, and Nila, standing in front of the three posts, began an invocation (No. XXX) which was soon taken up by the other men. Nila salaamed, took the arrow out of the earth and began to dance round the three posts, and then in and out between them, without observing any particular order, holding the end of the shaft with one hand and the head of the arrow with the other. The usual steps and movements were performed, the knees bent, the body inclined from the waist and swaying to and fro, the arms with the arrow between them being moved to and fro, but not raised higher than the chest. Vela followed Nila closely; it appeared that he should have held an arrow, but not having one, he did the next best thing and pretended that he had one, holding his hands as though there was an arrow between them.

Suddenly when between two of the posts Nila dropped the arrow on the ground and leapt over it. Kaira, one of the onlookers, immediately picked it up and returned it to Nila. Nila then dropped the arrow between the other two posts and again leapt over it. This was repeated several times, Kaira always picking up the arrow and returning it to Nila, whose movements Vela imitated. Although we asked numerous questions as to the meaning of this figure no reason could be supplied, "Our fathers did it" was all the information we could obtain. The movements had gradually become quicker and

[1] See genealogy, p. 61.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843
796
535

wilder till after a final leap between the posts Nila fell supine with outstretched arms, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers. The *yaka* of the high post now possessed Nila who, after a few minutes' immobility, began to shiver and gasp, then springing forward he danced to the posts with shuffling feet and head bent forward, and examined each one in turn. This he did by dropping his head on them so that his face was partly buried in the bast, his supporter always close behind him (Plate XLV, fig. 2). We were told that Nila was now possessed by all three *yaku*, who appear to have entered him as he bent over the posts. The exact moment of the entry and exit of the *yaka* into the person of the shaman was often very ill-defined, although in this instance, and indeed in most cases when more than one *yaka* was present at a dance, it was clear when the first *yaka* arrived, it seemed that the other *yaka* entered the shaman without giving any immediate sign of their presence.

The *yaku* speaking through Nila signified that they were pleased with the posts built for their reception. Then Nila picked up the *wila* and shouting, apparently with approval, held it up by each end and whirled the handle round making the bast strands fly out, then he approached Mari and waved it over [787] her head and rested it there, so that her head was buried in the bast for several seconds while Nila predicted a male child (Plate XLVI, fig. 1)[1]. Nila then danced to Handuna and waved the *wila* over him. No particular reason was given for [554] this, Handuna being no relation to the woman, but he was the most important old man in the community.

After covering Handuna with the *wila*, Nila danced wildly, always with the rapt expression of a man possessed by a *yaka*, showing his pleasure by holding the *wila* aloft and whirling it round and round. Then Nila put down the *wila* and took the *amamula* and dancing with it in his hand he approached Mari stretching it out towards her, but he only stayed a few seconds and passed on to Handuna and falling on the latter's chest spoke and again foretold the birth of a male child to Mari.

[1] The sex of the child is determined by the position assumed by the strips of bast as they fall over the woman's head. If most fall over the woman's face the child will be a girl, if over the occiput a boy.

843
535
796

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman buries his face in the *uruwakaliya* (Sitala Wanniya)

[facing p. 250a]

843
535
796
[787]

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman predicts the sex of the child (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, Nila prays for his daughter's safe delivery (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nila exchanged the *amamula* for the *wila*, and coming to Mari again, raised the *wila* above her head and lowered it to the ground, letting the bast strips brush her face and body and then sweep the ground. This was done in order to wipe away the pain of labour. Then he leapt back to the centre of the cleared space and danced in and out between the three posts, hitting them with the *wila*. This was probably a sign of pleasure, for the driving away of *yaku* by striking their resting place would probably only take place at the end of the ceremony. He again approached Mari and fell back into the arms of his supporter, only remaining quiet for a few seconds until, trembling and gasping, he bent his head over the *usmukaliya* and buried his face in the bast. After doing this over each post he returned to the *usmukaliya* and said he must go, speaking in the usual husky and gasping *yaku* voice; then he fell exhausted into the arms of his supporter. All the Veddas now began to sing the invocation, and it was clear that the *yaku* had not departed from Nila for he soon began to quiver and gasp again, and sprang forward and danced between the three posts; then he began to search for something, lifting the strands of bast on the *usmukaliya*, and after an exaggerated pantomimic search he found the *wila*, turning this in his hands so that the bast swung at right angles, he waved it over each of the three posts; then turning to the *usmukaliya*, bent his head low over it and fell back exhausted. The *yaku* now left him and he recovered consciousness without any quivering or trembling, salaamed to the *usmukaliya* and sat down to rest. All the properties were immediately piled together under a tree. It may be noted that although Vela began to dance with Nila, he did not become possessed and so took no part in the latter portion of the dance.

After a short rest Nila went to the pile and holding a few strands of bast in one hand (Plate XLVI, fig. 2) repeated the following prayer to the Pata Yaku for his daughter's safety a number of times:—

Ané! magé daruwata hisé antarāwak wenda epā mé wara.
Gaba yanta denda ēnna.

Ané! (May) any harm not happen to my child this time.
(You) must permit (her) to land (i.e. to escape from her sea of troubles).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

as a smoker; the other was "just an arrow" and did not appear to fulfil any specific purpose. Small leafy twigs from the surrounding trees were placed on the ground round the arrows, and on these a number of betel leaves and areca nuts were placed as an offering, the twigs being a device for preventing the offering to the *yaks* from touching the ground. 796 778

All the adult men of the community decided to take part in this dance, as only those who become possessed by Dola Yaka would derive benefit from the ceremony, that is, obtain special favour and help from him in gathering honey. In order to provide a supporter for each man, the dance was performed in two parts, Nila, Kaira and Pema taking part in the first performance. The ceremony began by these men walking several times round the arrows singing an invocation (No. XXXI) as they moved clockwise and occasionally salaamed to the arrows. Soon they began to dance and at times passed their hands, palms downwards, over the top of the arrows. This was the old custom; the reason for it was not known. After a little while Nila fell and was supported, soon all three dancers became possessed and bending forward shook their heads over the arrows. Then Nila taking the lead, they all moved to one end of the dancing ground, where they assumed the strained attitude of men listening attentively for the distant hum of bees, with body bent forward, one hand to the ear and the other raised as if to impose silence on their companions. Suddenly they all leapt back to the arrows and danced round them wildly, and shook their heads low over them; again they listened for the bees and beat their chests with joy, crying, "We hear many bees, there will be plenty of honey." 796 535 787

Returning to the arrows they danced round them again, at times falling back into the arms of their supporters, and again springing forward to dance. Nila gave each of us a betel leaf as a sign of favour from Dola Yaka, and then spoke in a gasping voice to Handuna who answered him. All beat their bodies with both hands, driving away imaginary bees. Again they listened for the bees, and this time picked up some leafy twigs and pretending they were alight shook them beneath the *massa*, which now represented a comb, but they soon sprang back and 796 535

L. Seligmann & Seligmann 5-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

rushed to the opposite side of the dancing ground to get away from the angry bees. After repeating this pantomime, Nila, with much gasping and shaking of the arrows, promised *hambara* combs to Handuna, wherever he went. More dancing round the arrows followed and another mock smoking was performed, after which the three men fled from the *maesa* brushing the bees away and even feigning to pick some off their bodies. Then they returned to the arrows round which they danced until they all fell back and Dola Yaka departed from them.

Handuna explained to us that in dancing to Dola Yaka it was usual to hold a cloth over the head, and that Dola Yaka had remarked on the absence of cloths and warned the dancers that evil might befall them if they were to slip and fall with their heads uncovered. So two pieces of white cloth were provided for Handuna and Vela, who put on *hangala* and repeated the dance. The ceremony was identical with that already described except in two respects; in the first part of the dance Handuna and Vela held their cloths in their outstretched arms, frequently putting them over their heads and always doing so when listening for the hum of the bees, and when they prophesied to their fellows each held his cloth so as to cover both the man to whom he spoke and himself. Both men, however, put down their cloths just before the end of the dance and, pulling the arrows out of the ground, went through the pantomime of cutting the combs from below the *maesa* with them.

The Invocation of the Rahu Yaku.

796
796

Sitala Wanniya was the only place at which we saw this ceremony, though the Rahu Yaku were also invoked at the *alutyakagama* ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula. At Sitala Wanniya the Rahu Yaku are called upon to cure sickness and to give good luck in collecting honey from trees. It seemed that they were not invoked to grant protection or good fortune when rock-honey was sought, this being the function of Dola Yaka. The offerings necessary to propitiate them are coconuts and rice, and each dancer must wear a piece of white cloth and cross shoulder straps of bark.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The story relates that there was once three brothers, and one day the youngest was very angry and quarrelled with his wife. He left her in his cave and went out hunting, and when he returned he found a strange man in the cave with his wife. The stranger escaped so quickly that the angry husband could not shoot him; but he then beat his wife, and though he did not kill her he jumped into the fire and was burnt to death and became Gini Rahu Bandar or Yaka. When they died his two brothers became Rahu Yaku also.

A post was placed in the centre of the cleared dancing space, the upper end was split and bound so as to form the support for a pot containing coconut milk, a few areca nuts and betel leaves. This was called the *wilkoraha* (lake pot), for once in the old days water was required to make the coconut milk for an offering to the Rahu Yaku, and as there was no stream near by it had to be fetched from a lake; hence the name *wilkoraha*. A *maesa* (well seen in Plate LXVIII, fig. 1) about 4 ft 6 in. high was built of sticks at one side of the dancing ground, and two pots of cooked rice and coconut milk were put on it as an offering to the *yaku*. A piece of bark to represent a necklace was put on the *wilkoraha*; it was not known why it was necessary to offer a necklace to the Rahu Yaku, but it was always done[1]. Wooden *kaduwa* (swords) were used when invoking Rahu Yaku; these were two flattened sticks about 18 ins. long decorated with bands of red and yellow pigment and with guards made of twigs of fresh green leaves. One of these *kaduwa* without its guard is shown in fig. 11.

The use of the sword (*kaduwa*) and the objects themselves are both curious, for Veddas have never used any weapon but the bow and axe, and Handuna explained that though these were called *kaduwa* they really represented ceremonial arrows

[1] It was quite clear that Vedda men never wore necklaces, but *yaku*, especially dangerous *yaku*, as the Rahu Yaku were declared to be, were sometimes offered necklaces or pieces of bast to represent them. Thus at Unuwatura Bubula, Indigollae Yaka was considered especially dangerous, and the shaman kept a particular string of old and highly valued beads and used it only when making invocations to this *yaka*. These and other instances strengthen the idea expressed in Chapter VIII that beads are prized among the Veddas for their magical properties, the idea of ornament being quite secondary.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

or *aude*, yet *ran kaduwa* the "golden sword" is mentioned in many of the songs and invocations, so that it seems that the whole of the Vedda ceremony of the invocation of the Rahu Yaku has been taken over from the Sinhalese, among whom the cult of Gini Rahu Bandar occurs. This borrowing must have occurred in ancient days, perhaps as long ago as the time when the Sinhalese invaded the Vedda country and carved the drip ledges on the caves, for as already mentioned the Sinhalese Rahu Bandar has become identified with three Vedda brothers whose spirits have retained only traces of the fierce nature of the Sinhalese demon. Once having borrowed the idea of a sword (*kaduwa*) and invocations in which it was mentioned, its name would remain, though in course of time the implement would become assimilated to the Vedda *aude*.

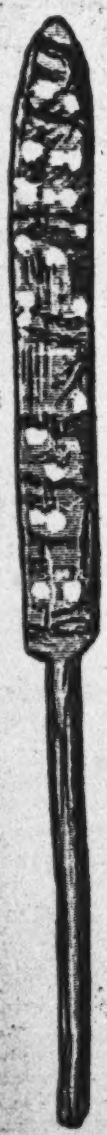


Fig. 11. *Ran kaduwa*. ×½.

Handuna and Kaira put on *hangala* and stood in front of the *wilkoraha* with the *kaduwa* in their hands, and Handuna began to recite the invocation to the Rahu Yaku (No. XXXV). Kaira took up the words and repeated them, always a few words behind Handuna. Soon they began to dance slowly round the *wilkoraha* holding the *kaduwa* in the same way as the *aude* is held in dances, i.e. right hand on point and left hand at the base of the handle, and as they danced they twirled them slowly in their fingers (Plate XLVIII, fig. 1). After a short time they both swayed their bodies more and the dance became more vigorous; then they began to shiver and shake their heads and became possessed by the two elder Rahu Yaku. They shouted, leaped and raised their *kaduwa* in the air, twirled them round with their

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

arms straight above their heads, and then stretching over the *wilkoraha* exchanged *kaduwa*. They danced a few steps and exchanged *kaduwa* again, and yet once more before they bent their heads low over the *wilkoraha*, by which action the *yaku* inspected the coconut milk and pronounced it very good. The exchange of swords was merely in imitation of the Rahu brothers who were said to have done this in their lifetime.

After approving of the offering of milk Handuna and Kaira, both followed by their supporters, danced to Nila, and Handuna placed his sword on the latter's chest while swaying his body and moving from one foot to the other, prophesying that Nila would have good luck in hunting and would take many combs (Plate XLVIII, fig. 2). Nila answered; Handuna and Kaira still gasping and trembling said that the *yaku* possessing them must go now, and that their brother the Fire Chief would come. There was more wild dancing round the *wilkoraha*, and both men were so overcome that had their supporters not held them in their arms they must have fallen. We could not determine the exact time of the departure of the two elder Rahu Yaku and the advent of the younger brother[1]. Handuna and Kaira bent their heads simultaneously over the *wilkoraha*, inspected the milk, were satisfied and continued to dance, and while a bundle of grass was brought and set on fire they raised both arms, and after holding hands over the *wilkoraha* they rushed to the burning grass and danced on the fire till they put it out, then again holding hands they danced and bent their heads over the *wilkoraha*. More grass was set alight, and after repeating their dance on it both fell back into their supporters' arms. In a few seconds they sprang forward and danced up to Nila: Handuna spoke in the gasping *yaka* voice and covered the swords with a cloth. More grass having been set alight the dance continued as before, first round the pot, then on the flames, and then round the pot again. While Handuna placed his sword on the chest of Nila the spirit within him spoke saying he must go soon, but both Handuna and Kaira danced again before

[1] It was perfectly clear that the idea of one *yaka* possessing two people at the same time presented no difficulty to Handuna and the rest of the Sitala Wanniya community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 returning to Nila and giving him their *kaduwa* to hold. Th
535 they did because they wanted to put them down, and they co
78 sidered them too sacred and dangerous to be put on the ground
or even to be held by anyone who was not a grown man wh
had frequent intercourse with the spirits.

796 Handuna took the necklace from the *wilkoraha* and showe
535 it to one of us (B. Z. S.), to whom he gave it, asking for a re
necklace instead of the bast one. Kaira followed Handuna an
gave to each of us betel leaves from the *wilkoraha* as a sign o
favour from the youngest of the Rahu Yaku. Then both wen
to the *maesa*, looked at the offering, and then fell back into thei
supporters' arms. We were told that the *yaka* was well pleased
with the offering and was about to depart from them, but Nil
sang the invocation and soon the two dancers began to tremble
and shake their heads, then shouting hah! hah! they sprang
forward and danced again. They picked up their *kaduwa* from
the *wilkoraha*, where they had been put for safety, this being
considered a sufficiently sacred spot. Using the leaves which
formed the hilts of their swords, they scooped out the coconut
milk from the *wilkoraha* and scattered it about, and those on
whom it happened to fall considered themselves lucky. Then
the *yaka* spoke to Nila saying that he wished to go, and Nila
answered "It is well." But before the *yaka* left Handuna and
Kaira, the two men danced toward that side of the cleared spot
where the women and children were grouped together, raising
[155] their *kaduwa* and pointing at the group. One woman was
carrying a baby suffering from yaws, and Handuna held his
kaduwa over the child's head and promised that its sores should
be cured. Then Handuna and Kaira gave their *kaduwa* to
Nila; both bent their heads over the *maesa* and the *yaka* left them.

796 The necklace was replaced on the *wilkoraha* which was put
with the *kaduwa* on the *maesa*. Handuna and Kaira repeated
a charm over them and all were removed from the *maesa*.
Handuna picked a few leafy twigs, put them under a tree
then took the leaves from the *kaduwa* and placed them on
the freshly picked leaves, so that the hallowed leaves might
not touch the ground; he then poured the remains of the
coconut milk from the *wilkoraha* over them.

Plate XLVIII

796
535

Fig. 1. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

[787]

Fig. 2. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the shaman prophesies good luck in hunting and honey gathering (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 258]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

When later we asked Handuna for the *hadurus* as specimens, the request was not granted until something was given in exchange to the Rahu Yaku, as Handuna said they might cause trouble if their property were taken from them. 796

WANAGATA YAKU.

The story of the Wanagata Yaku was that once a family became imprisoned in their rock-shelter by the fall of rock which blocked the entrance to the cave, so that the whole family died and their spirits became Wanagata Yaku, who are now invoked for help in hunting. In spite of this the ceremonial with which these *yaku* are invoked did not appear to have any reference to the story. 776 773

A sapling rather more than six feet high with its head and branches was stripped of its bark and thrust into the ground in the centre of the space cleared for dancing; its upper end had been split previously so as to form a support for small objects, and long strands of bast were tied to it. A handkerchief was thrown over the top and pressed down between the split ends, and some betel leaves were placed on this. 796 535 778

The shaman wearing a *hangula* danced slowly round the post with a handkerchief in his hand, while the invocation was sung. The handkerchief was soon exchanged for an *aude*, and it was noted that this was not the same one that had been used when invoking Kande Yaka in a previous dance. In order to avoid putting the handkerchief on the ground the shaman tied it round his shoulder. Then taking some betel leaves he danced with these and the *aude* in his hands, then transfixing the betel leaves on the point of the *aude* he raised them to his head, thus offering them to the Wanagata Yaku (Plate XLIX, fig. 1). Soon he became possessed and bent his head, shaking his hair over his face as he clung to the post with one hand while his whole body quivered and shook. With a shout he seized two *aude*, and holding one in each hand came to one of us (C. G. S.) and holding both *aude* over his shoulders said, as he quivered and shifted from one foot to the other, "You have called us, what do you want?" He returned to the post, when a rice 796 535

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

mortar was brought and a bowl containing coconut milk in which betel leaves floated was placed upon it. The shaman placed a betel leaf from the bowl on the *aude* and presented one to each of us in turn, as a sign of favour on the part of the Wanagata Yaku, speaking in a hoarse gasping voice and raising his arms alternately the while. He returned to the post, and, grasping the bast streamers, bent his head (Plate XLIX, fig. 2) and quivered all over before dancing round it with both *aude* in his hands; finally he clasped the post with bowed head, and the *yaku* left him.

The Alutyakagama Ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula

796

The structure of the *alutyakagama* is well shown in a number of the figures illustrating this ceremony, and is especially clear in fig. 1 of plate LII.

It seems probable that this is not a pure Vedda ceremony, but is to be regarded as an amalgamation of a dance to Kande Yaka and the Nae Yaku, whom this people called the Alutyaku (i.e. New Yaku), and of a dance to Gale Yaka only met with under this name here and at Omuni. We were unable to determine whether the *alutyakagama* structure had always been used when dancing to Gale Yaka, and had been carried from his cult to that of the Nae Yaku, or had long been considered necessary for the invocation of the Nae or Alut Yaku. Perhaps neither of these events occurred; indeed, we consider it most probable that both dances have been confused with the *kolmadurwa* or one of its early forms such as the *ruwala* ceremony which is described later on in this chapter, and which is almost certainly of foreign origin.

Unuwatura Bubula is a small and extremely poor settlement of Veddas, of whom a general description has been given on p. 47.

796
535

The dance began by Sela Kaurala repeating an invocation with a handkerchief on his head[1], while Naida Kaurala holding

[177]

[1] Unfortunately we have no exact note stating to whom this invocation was sung. It is most probable that it was to Gale Yaka, as this was the *yaku* by whom the shaman was first possessed. If this is so the fact of the handkerchief being held over the head is of interest, as Mr Parker identifies Gale Yaka with the Sinhalese Gale Deviya who is depicted with a three-tiered hat, which is also worn by his dancer, called

Plate XLIX

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman offers betel leaves to the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)

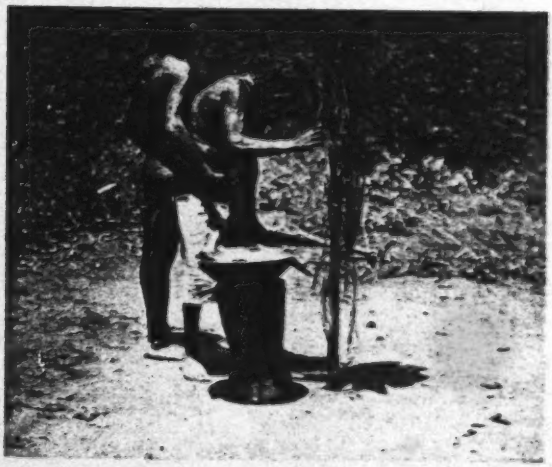


Fig. 2. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 260]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

a handkerchief between his hands danced first round the *alutyakagama*, and then in and out between the posts, at times holding the handkerchief over his head (Plate L, fig. 1). We were told that these handkerchiefs would be kept apart for the *yaku* and would never be used for any purpose other than dancing. The shaman, Sela Kaurala, soon became agitated and was supported, and the Gale Yaka entered his person. Now he assumed the rapt expression of one possessed, pulled down his hair, and with a shout caught hold of the leaves hanging from the *alutyakagama*, where he continued to dance in and out of the structure, shaking and hitting the hanging leaves as he passed, but frequently stopping at the west front to take hold of the bunches of leaves while quivering all over and shouting (Plate L, fig. 2). Now a rice-mortar was brought into the *alutyakagama*, and the shaman placed the offering of cooked food upon it for the *yaku* to see and appreciate the good things provided. The *aude* was then placed on the rice pot, and the shaman, holding the leaves with both hands, shouted and shook his head, and then, taking an *aude* in either hand, picked up a few grains of rice on one of them (Plate LI, fig. 1), which he smelt, and although he did not eat them the *yaka* now pronounced the food to be good. About this time the shaman became possessed by one of the *Nae Yaku*. Three times the shaman inspected the rice, being possessed by a different *Nae Yaku* each time, and each spirit shouted his satisfaction. We were unable to discover the names of these as the shaman was taken ill after this dance, but there seemed no doubt that the dancer would know the *Nae Yaku* by whom he had been possessed. The shaman now wore two long necklaces of beads, putting them round his neck and under his arms, so as to form cross shoulder ornaments; we were told that these were for the *yakini*, but we were unable to discover whether this was one of the Alut Yakini or Gale Yakini who was mentioned in this locality.

The ceremony continued for some time as before, the shaman frequently shaking the leaves, shouting and gasping, and again inspecting the food. There was very little dancing, but this may

[illegible], when dancing to him. Sometimes, however, when a three-tiered hat could not be obtained the dancer held a handkerchief over his head.

[177]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate I.

796
535
778

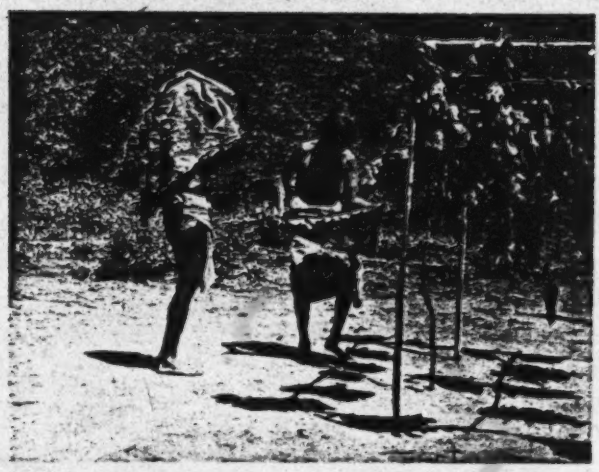


Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the beginning of the invocation (Unuwatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman and his supporter at the *alutyakagama* (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 261 a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LI

796
535

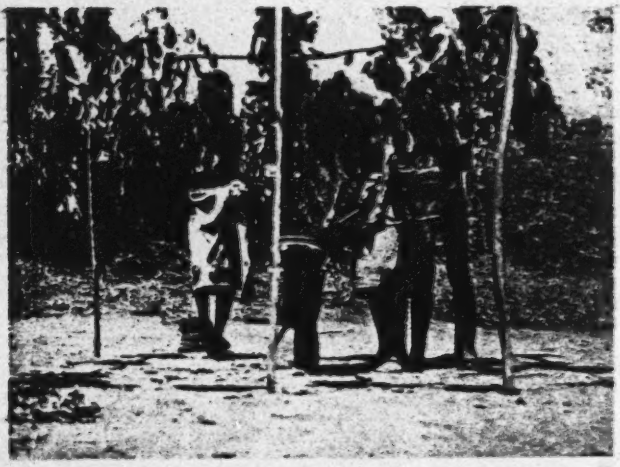


Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, testing the offering (Unuwatura Bubula)

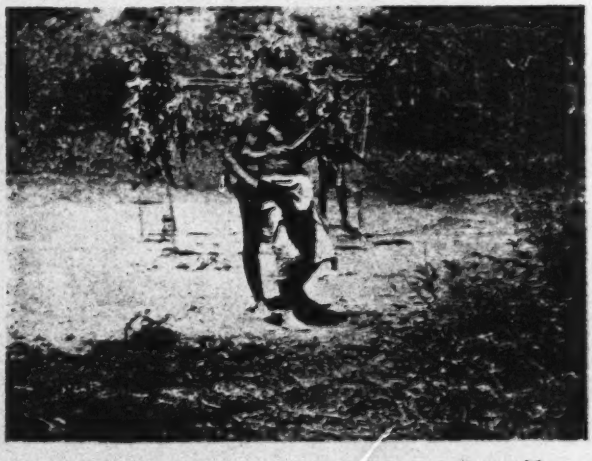


Fig. 2. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman comes to us with an *aude* in each hand (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 261 b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

have been because the shaman was an old man who suffered from a severe cough. At one time, instead of picking up the rice with an *aude*, he did it with the corner of his handkerchief. Great care was always taken that neither the *aude*, the beads nor the handkerchief should be put on the ground, and when the shaman wanted to get rid of either of the two former he placed them on the rice pot; at one time when he did not require the handkerchief he tied it over his shoulder, for to place anything belonging to the *yaku* on the ground would be to offer a serious insult to them.

After some time the first rice pot was removed, and a second one was brought. Sela Kaurala squatted beside it and sang, while Naida Kaurala danced with the handkerchief in his hands. One pot of food was for the *yaka*, and one for the *yakini*. The shaman exchanged the handkerchief for an *aude* and danced with that, but soon picked up another *aude* and danced with one in each hand singing an invocation (No. XXXVII). Now he became possessed by Rahu Yaka, with the usual accompaniment of shivering and quaking and pulling at the leaves hanging from the *alutyakagama*. Some grass was brought and put under the *alutyakagama*; this was lit, and the shaman danced on the fire: more shaking and holding of the leaves followed, and then with an *aude* in each hand, which he held by the blades, he approached us (Plate LI, fig. 2) and spoke. He returned to the *alutyakagama*, and, holding the leaves with both hands, bent over the rice pot, and then danced round and in and out of the structure, hitting the pendant leaves. Meanwhile the Rahu Yaka song was repeated; at last stopping at the west side he bent his head over the rice pot and fell back. After a short rest Sela Kaurala put on the *hangala* and danced in the same way that Naida Kaurala had done, becoming possessed by Gale Yaka. There was no exceptional feature in this dance; the shaman danced at one time with the handkerchief and afterwards with the *aude*, and inspected the food, and there was much holding on to the leaves and shaking and speaking in the hoarse *yaka* voice. Before the *yaka* left the shaman he took the rice pot from the pounder and spun it (Plate LII, fig. 1); the second pot of food was brought and he spun that too. After the *yaka* had left him the shaman,

796
535

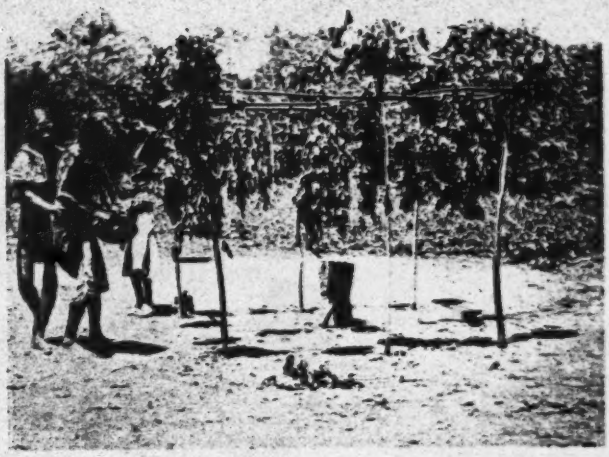


Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot of food (Unuwatura Bubula)

[417
415]

Fig. 2. Ruwala ceremony, the *ruwala* prepared by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

[facing p.262]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

still dancing, stripped the leaves from the *alutyakagama*, and, holding on to the horizontal cross bar, shook the framework violently in order to drive away any of the *yaku* who might still be resting there.

7AL 535

Unfortunately we were not able to get much trustworthy information about this or any of the other dances at Unuwatura Bubula, as Sela Kaurala, who appeared to suffer from asthma and chronic bronchitis, coughed up a good deal of blood after this dance, and was unable to discuss the ceremony with us afterwards. His pupil, Naida Kaurala, was not nearly so well informed. There were several points which we were unable to settle satisfactorily; Gale Yaku, we were told, were many and not one Yaka, yet Gale Yaka or Yaku seemed confused with Kande Yaka, for we were told that the big *aude* was for Kande Yaka and the smaller one for Bilindi Yaka. Nevertheless the shaman held both when dancing to Gale Yaka, and he spun the pot of rice, which in several other communities had been done by the shaman when possessed by Kande Yaka.

[114]

The Ruwala Ceremony.

This ceremony was danced by the Veddas of Uniche. It began by Wannaku, who was wearing a *hangala* of new white cloth, moving slowly round the centre post of the *ruwala* holding a bunch of leaves in each hand and reciting an invocation to Ruwala Yaka and Yakini, who live on Nuwaragala. He stood close to the central pole of the *ruwala*, and at first faced towards the north, that is, not in the direction of Nuwaragala but towards the quarter whence came the *yaku* who live on Nuwaragala and other hills who are invoked in this dance. These *yaku* were not the spirits of the dead, but had always existed as *yaku*. The original home was on the other side of the ocean in Handun Kasle, the "sandal-wood jungle," which the educated, but not the peasant, Sinhalese recognise as being in India. Long ago the *yaku* made a raft and crossed the ocean, and the sail (Sin. *ruwala*) and mast of their raft are represented by the centre pole (*ruwala*) of the structure of that name, while the streamers represent the "silver" and "golden" stays of their mast.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Plate LII, fig. 2 shows the *ruwala* built by Wannaku and his comrades at Maha Oya.

535 The dance began by Wannaku moving slowly round the central post. As he did this he sometimes waved the bundle of leaves which he held in his hands, at other times he held his hands close together in front of his body. As his dancing became quicker and more vigorous, Sina, his eldest son, placed himself behind him, and following his movements prepared to support him when he became possessed. Suddenly Wannaku fell forward assuming a cruciform attitude, his arms held stiffly at right angles to his body and his neck rigidly extended so that his head was pressed against the centre post of the *ruwala*, his supporter bearing the whole strain of holding him in this position. He still grasped the leaves in his hands, and his face was buried in the leaves tied to the centre post of the *ruwala*. He remained in this position for perhaps half a minute, then shaking violently he clutched the post in both hands. It was explained that the *yaku* were in the leaves tied to the *ruwala*, and that thence they passed into the body of the shaman, in whose shaking and quivering person they inspected and approved the structure of the *ruwala*, while the shaman clutched the central post. After a few moments the shaman danced again, this time more energetically than before, moving in and out of and round the structure of the *ruwala*, while he struck at the leaves pendant from its framework with the twigs he held in his hands. His movements became more violent, and he shouted several times. All this was explained as play on the part of the *yaku*, who thus showed their pleasure in the *ruwala* that had been built for them. Wannaku clutched at the side posts and bast streamers, and struck these with the leaves he held in his hands. The *yaku* thus examined the streamers to ascertain if they were properly made and of the right number. Wannaku then danced very energetically, and leaving the *ruwala* dragged Sina to where Mr Perera stood a few paces from the *ruwala*, and shaking and gesticulating violently spoke to him promising him success in all he undertook[1].

[1] Mr Samuel Perera, Forest Ranger, was an old friend of the Uniche community, and it was owing to his presence and assistance at our first interview with Wannaku and his fellows that we were immediately on the best of terms with them.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Wannaku again danced in and out and round the structure, then after striking the leaves and clutching the uprights of the *ruwala* he dragged his supporter towards an elderly Vedda onlooker, before whom he quivered and shouted as he had done before Mr Perera. We were told that in this case he prophesied success in hunting. After this he returned to the *ruwala*, and, still dancing and quivering, took a streamer in his left hand and shouting and dancing wiped its length with the bunch of leaves that he held in his right hand. He began this manœuvre at the east front of the *ruwala*, and taking each streamer in turn, went round in the opposite direction to the hands of a clock, but he soon turned and went round the reverse way; we were afterwards told that he should have gone clockwise all the time, and that when he did otherwise "it was a mistake." After this he danced round the central post, clutching at the leaves that hung from the roof of the *ruwala*, and at last moving so energetically and violently as to get away from his supporter Sina, who had been following his movements as best he could. About this time Sina himself became possessed, and after a few moments of extremely energetic dancing both men fell supine at the north front of the *ruwala*. Wannaku came to himself almost immediately, but Sina appeared to remain unconscious, even when lifted up and propped against the central post of the *ruwala*, while Wannaku shook bunches of leaves in his face and over his head, Wannaku meanwhile dancing energetically and repeating two words, to which the onlookers answered "Eh-h." We were told that the *yaku* in this way announced their satisfaction with the *ruwala* which had been built for them, and indicated that they were now ready to go.

Then Wannaku stumbled to the central post, to which he clung in a seemingly exhausted condition, partly supported by a Vedda, who had been following him since Sina fell to the ground. As Sina, who had been helped up by another man, still appeared in a semi-conscious condition, water was splashed over him, with the result that he soon came to himself. This was the end of the ceremonial as far as Ruwala Yaka and Ruwala Yakini were concerned, but after a short break another Vedda invoked two other *yaku*, Milalane Yaka and Milalane

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5. (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Yakini, who live on a hill called Milalanegala. This Vedda
535 danced in very much the same way as Wannaku had danced,
786 and the few differences noted, such as his less energetic steps, were doubtless due to personal idiosyncrasy. However, he did not bury his head in the leaves tied to the central post on becoming possessed, but shook the leaves which he held in his right hand in his own face, having previously struck these against those pendant from the *ruwala*. After dancing for a short time he staggered up to Wannaku and spoke, the spirits possessing him asking why they were called and whether there was sickness amongst the people. To this Wannaku answered "No," telling the spirits that he had called them at the request of the white man who wished to know them. After this the celebrant again danced in and out of and round the *ruwala*, striking at the pendant leaves. Soon he buried his head in the leaves tied to the central post, his whole body quivering, then he quickly jumped away from the pole and made his way to the Ratemahatmaya of the district, who was an onlooker, and shook the leaves in his right hand against the latter's chest, telling him he would be successful in the business he was about to undertake. This was in answer to a question that the Ratemahatmaya had shouted a short time previously. There was more dancing round the central pole, the performer striking it with the leaves which he held in his hand; after a few minutes he approached Wannaku, and striking him with the leaves said something, and again danced round the central pole which he seized in his hand and shook four times, once facing each of the cardinal points of the compass, shouting loudly as he did so. This was the means adopted by the *yaku* to test the solidity of the structure. We were told that this dance was generally per-
[955 formed in order to cure sickness, and if the pole fell or the
787 structure came to pieces the patient for whose benefit it took place would die or others would become ill. At last with many quiverings and clutchings at the central post the *yaku* took their departure.

796 A similar dance lasting a shorter time, during which the
535 dancer was possessed by Moranegala Yaka, then took place, after which Wannaku, who appeared to have quite recovered

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from his previous fatigue, invoked Walimabagala Yaka and Yakini. The dancing of these *yaku* exactly resembled that described at the beginning of the ceremony, and is therefore not further recorded.

796
535

THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

It seems very doubtful whether the *kolamaduwa* as it exists at the present day should be described as a Vedda ceremony at all, though as it was danced by the Henebedda Veddas at Bendiyagalge it merits a description. It is in any case certain that the *kolamaduwa* is not often performed, as the amount of food and other properties necessary could scarcely have been found by one small Vedda community[1]; also its main objects, the curing of disease in cattle and epidemic sickness among men, would not appeal greatly to small communities of hunters dwelling in healthy surroundings. At the present day the Henebedda Veddas make rough chena and herd cattle for the Sinhalese, but the cattle have not yet become an important factor in their lives, and the people themselves do not suffer from epidemics. Further, at Bandaraduwa, on the borders of the Eastern Province, the only other place where this dance was known among Veddas, we were told that they would perform it for the Sinhalese, and that each dancer would be paid Rs. 5 for his trouble besides being given his food. Our aged Sinhalese informant, mentioned on p. 31, told us that the *kolamaduwa* was not danced by these Veddas when he was a boy, and that he considered it had arisen as an elaboration of the *ruwala* ceremony which used to be performed in those days. The *ruwala*—already described in this chapter—itself shows signs of having been introduced from the Tamils of the east coast, though probably at a comparatively remote period. Great numbers of *yaku* and *yakini* should be invoked at the *kolamaduwa*; some,

755
535
177

[1] According to Timahami all the following offerings were necessary for a full ceremony. Eight measures of rice and two large pots in which to cook it, 10 coconuts, 5 bundles of yams, 50 plantains, 2 sugar canes, 200 betel leaves, 12 candles, 1 lb. sandal wood, 100 balls of jaggery, ½ lb. turmeric, 1 lb. of resin, 4 coloured cloths, 5 yards of white cloth, 4 necklets of beads, 8 small baskets and 8 cloths to cover them, 4 pairs of metal bangles, 1 bottle of ghee and flowers of various kinds.

782

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the spirits of people who frankly were not Veddas, such as Peradeniya Bandar; others, spirits of men like Panikki Vedda already referred to, famous for catching elephants and buffaloes, who were Veddas in little more than name. Others, if Veddas in name, yet behaved like Kandyan chiefs, if we may judge from their deeds quoted in the invocations, such as building dagabas and bringing paddy fields under cultivation. Some of the Maha Yakini are regarded as the wives of such chiefs, and Unapane Kiriamma is in this community regarded as the wife of Unapane Wanniya, the chief who first brought the paddy fields at Unapane under cultivation.

The Kolamaduwa Ceremony at Bendivagalge.

This was admittedly not a full ceremony. Although the bower was built the correct offerings were not made nor were all the *yaku* invoked, and a disturbance which took place the next evening was said to be due to the anger of the *yaku* on account of the lack of offerings (see p. 125). Plate LIII, fig. 1 shows the *kolamaduwa* with bunches of leaves hanging from the horizontal bars of the framework and a circle of leaves called *kolavegena* suspended from the centre, that is, the crossing of the horizontal bars. The shaman, Sita Wanniya, Randu Wanniya and Kaira, holding bunches of leaves in their hands, walked round the circle within the upright posts while they sang an invocation to the *yaku* to come to the leaves of the *kolamaduwa*. Soon they began to dance (Plate LIII, fig. 2) with the usual step, gently at first, but gradually swaying and bending more and more they brushed the leaves of the *kolamaduwa* with those they held in their hands at each step.

A basket covered with a cloth had been placed on a tripod in one corner of the bower, and this should have contained various offerings for the *yakini*, including flowers and beads; not having either to offer, a few leaves had been put in it. Sita Wanniya seized this basket called *pakudama*, and danced with it in both hands, then after a short time he shouted "Ah, ah!" and became possessed by the Maha Yakini. When the Sita

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Kolamaduwa ceremony, the *kolamaduwa* (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kolamaduwa ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Henebedda)

[facing p. 268a]

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Kolamaduwa ceremony, the shaman and Sita Wanniya become possessed (Henebedda)*

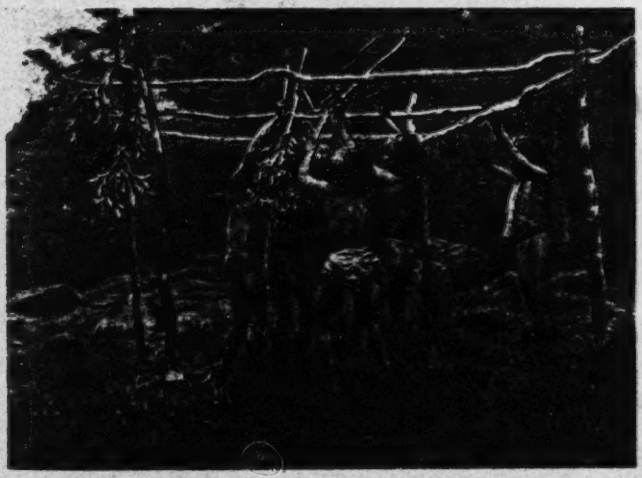


Fig. 2. Kolamaduwa ceremony, slashing the leaves from the *kolamaduwa* (Henebedda)*

[facing p. 268]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

Wanniya picked up the basket the shaman put his head inside the circle, and a Vedda immediately made ready to support him if he should fall. The shaman, now possessed, held on to the horizontal pieces and trembled violently, while his head and the upper part of his body were hidden by the leaves. Soon he left it and danced in and out of the *kolamaduwa*, followed closely by a Vedda ready to support him. Sita Wanniya hid himself in the leaves of the circle in the same way for a few seconds, his whole body swaying to and fro the while. On leaving the *kolavegena* he danced about wildly, but soon returned to put his head into the circle again, and then, swaying and tottering, danced up to us, and, speaking with the voice of the *yakini*, said, "Why have you called us? there is nothing in this basket for us, and there is no food provided." Then he returned to the circle, into which he thrust his head, while several men surrounded him and fanned him with leaves. When he emerged he again came to us, and in the person of the *yakini* asked us for bangles, and again returned to the *kolavegena*; then several of the dancers pushed their heads into it at once. Sita Wanniya returned to us and placed the basket on each of our heads in turn, presumably as a sign of favour. Then the shaman put his head into the *kolavegena*, and all the other dancers, having put down their bunches of leaves, now held peeled sticks to represent swords, and raised these over the shaman's head, and then slashed the leaves off the *kolamaduwa* (Plate LIV, fig. 2). Shouting and gasping, they all came to us, those possessed by the *yaku* gasping out that they must leave; then they returned to the *kolamaduwa* and danced in and out, raising and crossing their sticks. This was continued for a little while, the shaman several times putting his head into the circle and all using their sticks as before. The spirits left those who were possessed quietly, without producing collapse, and the performers ended the dance by silently putting their sticks on the top of the *kolavegena*, this being done to avoid putting them on the ground, as they were now sacred to the *yaku*.

After the dance the shaman cut the *kolavegena* from off the *kolamaduwa* and tore off the leaves still remaining on it, in order to prevent the *yaku* returning to it.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1].

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe.

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated.

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*.

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarale*.

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 796 shows the site selected for the dance and the arrangements made. The dancing ground consisted of one of those sandy spaces surrounded by a growth of scrub and low trees which are so common on the east coast. A *kudaram*, the upper part of which was covered with leaves, had been prepared, the top of this was depressed so as to present a sort of tray upon which a white cloth was laid; within the tray were laid flowers, which in this case did duty for the food offered in the ceremony. No model of a ship was hoisted to the top of the pole, which was encircled by wreaths of small leafy bunches at heights of about 6 to 12 feet from the ground.

There were five dancers, each of whom held a bunch of leafy twigs in each hand, which when the dance began were held against the body just below the umbilicus.

535 796 787 The leader of the dance was an old man who held a piece of cloth instead of a bunch of leaves. Behind each dancer stood a man who supported him by clapping his hands round the dancer's body below the latter's hands, i.e. over the hypogastric and epipubic region. At first the dancers faced the *kudaram*, their hands being held low against their thighs, but soon they began to move round the altar in single file (Plate LXX, fig. 2). As they danced they began to quiver, the rippling motion of their muscles from the knees upwards becoming progressively more violent, until as the dancers moved round the altar the majority of their superficial muscles all over the body were twitching irregularly. As the dance became quicker the dancers feigned exhaustion, leaning or falling back into the arms of their supporters, but this did not last long and dancing was not interrupted; soon the men left the altar and danced round the pole, the irregular quivering of their muscles being very striking. At times they shouted and raised the bunches of leaves which they held in their hands above their heads. They continued to dance round the altar and round the pole alternately; as they danced round the pole their movements became more violent, the men supporting the dancers let go and the latter now danced and leapt round the pole and beat the leaves tied to it with the leaves they held in their hands. As the vigour of their movements lessened, their supporters, who had been following their

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796
291

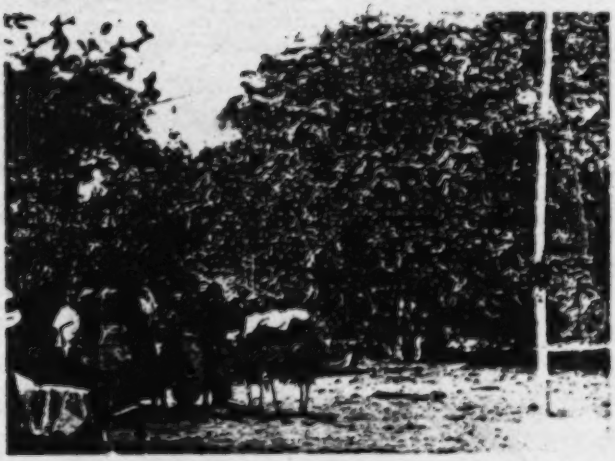


Fig. 1. Site of dance at Vakarai, showing *kudaram* and pole

Fig. 2. Dancing round the *kudaram*

[facing p. 338a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXXI

535
1796
291

The end of the dance at Vakarai

[facing p. 338 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

motions, once more put their arms round them, soon after which the dancers fell limply into their arms. The leader of the dance seemed especially excited at this stage and, trembling and quivering all over, stood back to the pole and wildly waved his scarf in the air. Soon his movements became less vigorous, his head nodded on his shoulders and hung down on his chest as he addressed the other dancers in a harsh and broken voice (Plate LXXI). In view of the Vedda ceremonies which we subsequently saw we have no doubt that he prophesied good fortune. It appeared to us that this old man really presented the ordinary characteristics of Vedda "possession," i.e. the dance, though only a rehearsal, had produced the customary effects associated with it, and certainly this old man's muscles continued to quiver irregularly for some time after the dance was over. As for the remaining dancers we have no doubt that the dance remained for them as it had begun, simply a rehearsal and an amusing piece of acting.

535 796 787

Such dances are held only to cure sickness or in return for good crops, and it was emphatically denied that anything similar took place after childbirth or death.

535 796

Very little was elicited concerning death and mourning ceremonies. The corpse is washed, and it seemed that although this is usually done by a barber or *dhobie* (professional washerman) it might be done by one or more of the relatives of the dead man. The grave must be at some distance from the habitations of the living and also from their cultivation patches. No fire is lit on the grave. A feast is held a few days after burial, which appears to be called *bati bane*, and the food for this, especially rice, is provided by the near relatives of the dead man and distributed. A *kudaram* is built upon which the food is placed for "a short time" as an offering to Kapalpei, after which it is eaten by the assembled people.

764

This account agrees with that given by the Sarasins, who record that a coast Vedda, Pereman, when asked about his religion laughed and said they had that of the Tamils, they honoured their dead by cooking rice in front of their house, folding their hands, saying a few words and then eating the rice. As they did this they spoke the name of the deceased and said: 'Help

769 177

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 796 guidance I touched the flowers in acknowledgement. After this the rice which had meanwhile been cooked in the enclosure in front of the shrine was offered to the goddess at the shrine, and the enclosure itself was removed.

The offering of the rice appeared to mark the conclusion of the first stage of the ceremony, for it was followed by a procession of those who were to take part in the subsequent dancing,—apparently accompanied by the image of the goddess,—out of the clearing and, as I was informed, down to the river about half a mile away for the sacred bath.

Time dragged by. The moonlight flooded the clearing, showing the ranks of the spectators sitting in their places with oriental patience and talking in undertones. At last the procession of dancers re-entered the clearing and advanced to the open space in front of the shrine. Here a ritual was gone through which seemed to be intended to induce in the dancers a state of "possession,"[7] and after the performance of this ritual the dances began.

First of all two principal dancers, wearing what were evidently ceremonial jackets of red cloth, took, each of them, in one hand one of the wooden swords previously mentioned and in the other [535] a bunch of leaves, and went in and out among the people with a queer shuffling step and a curious rhythmic brandishing of the swords and leaves. Once or twice the leader stopped, and laying his sword upon the head of some person in the crowd began to [787] prophesy.[8] One prophecy, as interpreted to me by the Chief Headman, concerned the outbreak of cholera, and was in the form

[7] The Seligmanns, on pp. 134-5 of *The Veddas*, discuss at some length the nature of "possession" in the Vedda ritual dances.

[8] My impression at the time was that in uttering these prophecies the [114 197] leader of the dance used the Vedda language. Certainly the language used did not appear to me to be either Sinhalese or Tamil. It is true that the Seligmanns say, in the passage quoted in the text, that the "old Vedda language" as spoken by the coast Veddas was found to be Sinhalese; but (i) it seems at least possible that the Vedda language may remain to some extent in ritual use among them; and (ii) I am inclined to think that in the ceremony here described the invocation of Rahu Yaku, described by the Seligmanns on pp. 254-9 of *The Veddas*, was combined with the worship of Ammal and Kapalpe, described by

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a prophecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *choregos*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wach! wach! wach!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announcement was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[9]

them on pp. 335-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were not coast Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one of some interest; but as, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[9] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

turned in like a child's, fell to my share. I was contemplating the proposition with disgust, when, to my surprise, I saw my companion bravely tackling his; he recommended the meat as savoury. Not to be outdone, I gingerly followed his example, remembering that the nearer the bone the cleaner the flesh. While our chauffeur not only refused his share, but turned away with green-visaged disgust at the behaviour of his masters. The Veddas meanwhile applied themselves heartily to the meal, crunching hungrily bones and all; the brain and liver they regarded as special delicacies. 262

Our next course was a fragment of *kurrukhan* cake garnished with a pungent *sambol*; this was a more feasible dish—but for the sand one crunched with every bite. A handful of honey-comb brought the dreadful meal to a welcome close. It did not occur to our hosts that water for cleansing would be acceptable; a procedure they ignored, wiping their hands instead on the posts of the hut, their own bodies, or filthy loin-rags. The chatty in which they brought us water could no more stand on its base than an egg. 515

So far we had seen none of their women, but had heard subdued female voices in the adjoining room, and surprised the glint of dark inquisitive eyes between the bark-slats. It required no little persuasion to bring them out. Even to pose for their portraits these people wanted presents! There was not a woman among them who had the remotest pretensions to comeliness; what little of it they might possess, their graceless rags disguised. 123

About a half-mile from Handuna's hut were the dwellings of the one-eyed Poromola and the sophisticated Kaira. We found the former disconsolately seated in his airy shed, with a little child on his lap, no less wistful than its grandsire. Patiently they awaited the return of the old man's wife and daughter, with the handful of grain they would earn for the day by working on a *chena*. 361 464 465

We secured some bows and arrows of fine workmanship here, and an *aude* which we mistook for a large arrow-head; but Kaira taking it said, "This is what we dance with," and suiting the action to the word, twirled the implement, tang and point, between his fingers, or shouldered it gun-wise, while he performed the shuffling semi-circular movements of a Vedda dance. 411 535

Thus ended our visit to Henebedde. That night, as we lay in bed, we heard a Vedda stave shouted lustily into the dark. It came from the watcher of a neighbouring field on his lonely look-out, and served as a variant to the "hoos" with which he kept away foraging animals. The refrain, *Ma mini, ma mini, ma deyya*, (Oh! great man, oh! great man, oh! great God) told of soul-hunger even in a people so primitive. We took it for a token of hail and farewell from the land of the Veddas. 241 533

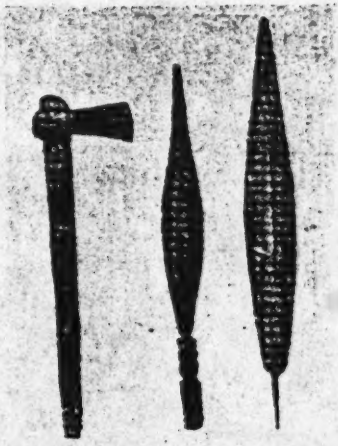
Embillene's only claim to a name lay in the open *ambalam* (travellers' lodge), built high on strong posts that elephants might pass through without being tempted to destroy it. Here we found a team of pack-bulls and their drovers. The head of the *tavalam** was a loquacious fellow who took the whole forest into his confidence. People as a rule talk quietly in the jungle, subconsciously respecting, as it were, its solemnity; not so these drovers; their discourse is high-pitched, from 000

*Team of pack bulls.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

372
412
535

Strike-a-light and flint. (Page 74)



Vedda axe and audes

372
516

Fire making by rubbing sticks. (Page 74)

[facing p. 74]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

322 is taken, barked, and straightened by being passed rapidly a few times
411 through a flame, and then bent over the knee or between the hands. It is shaved down to uniform thickness with an arecanut-cutter or arrow blade, and cut to suitable length, roughly gauged by holding it along the outstretched arm from the nearer nipple to the end of the middle finger, giving it an average measure of two and a half feet, or slightly less. An arrow belonging to the great bow I have mentioned, measured three and a half feet. The nock or notch is a quarter of an inch deep and cut square.

411 The arrow is feathered with the wing plumes of the owl, devil-bird,
237 jungle-cock, or large crane (*mana koka*); the owl's, besides being the
284 best, are easily picked up along dry stream beds, on the trees bordering which the birds usually roost. A feather is split unequally down the rachis, only the larger segment being used. Four such segments, about two inches long, are arranged equidistantly round the shaft, an inch and a quarter from the end, and bound neatly down with *aralu* fire, the mouth helping in the process. The first turns are merely taken round that part of the shaft, which is immediately below the feathers, then round the bared lower ends of the rachis, and then carried along, at spaced intervals, between the carefully separated barbs. Should a strand not prove long enough, it is finished off by having its end tucked in between rachis and shaft, and another is similarly begun. Finally the ruffled barbs are straightened out between the thumb and fingers moistened with saliva. A few turns of fibre just below the notch serve to give grip to the drawing fingers.

411 The arrow-head is made of flattened iron obtained from local black-smiths. It is three to five inches long, of lanceolate shape in imitation of the *na* leaf, and sharp at the edges; serving as much as a cutting implement as an arrow. By a tang it is let into the end of the shaft to which it is firmly secured with fibre. All the strung parts of the arrow,
[824] as well as the bow-string, are finally dressed with the sticky milk of *kiri-wel* to prevent untwisting. Both bow and arrow, being very liable to the ravages of boring insects, are always kept hung over the smoke when not in use.

The method of stringing the bow is by placing one end of it, to which the string is knotted, on the ground, and then pressing on its centre either with the bent knee or by a foot thrust. A correctly strung bow should measure at its centre a span between string and belly of bow; this is rather more than the "fist-mele" (clenched fist with thumb upright) the rough estimate of European stringing.

The arrow release favoured by the Veddas is that in which the cord is drawn with the first joints of the index and middle fingers, the arrow being usually placed on the left of the bow. The style of archery is often peculiar: the arrow fitted to the bow is raised head high; the right elbow is now swung up in an awkward flourish above the head, and then brought slowly down to alignment with the eye, as the string is drawn out to its fullest extent and the arrow delivered.

DANCING

177 The ceremonial dances of the Veddas have been minutely described
535 and illustrated by Seligmann. The dance we are about to describe seems to have been performed before him in its greatest purity at Henebedde. The differences between his description and ours must be

5: Spittel · D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

attributed to Sinhalese influence, especially the substitution of the mortar for the tripod, the drum for the slapping of hands and thighs, and the introduction of the coconut scraper and betel leaves.

The *kirihoraha* (milk-chatty)* dance has for its object the co-operation of certain ancestral spirits (*Nae Yakku*) in hunting enterprises. The occasion for it is a period of repeated ill luck, which is attributed to the disfavour of these spirits, whose names are, *Kande Yakka*, the great hunter, his brother *Bilinde Yakka* and their wives *Kudu Hora* (nest thief) and *Pol Hora* (coconut thief) respectively; also *Hath-kudu Hora* (seven-nests thief), elder brother of the two she demons. Significant signs in the ceremony are the fine bubbles that form when the coconut milk is handled, and the manner in which the coconut divides; if the halves are equal the omen is good, in unequal, bad.

In a clearing was placed a mortar and on it a bowl containing a coconut with two arrows laid across the brim. Kaurala, the dancer, took care to eat no meat that morning. Having smeared his head with lime-juice and his body with saffron, he would have worn a white cloth borrowed for the purpose, had we not dissuaded him from covering his picturesque nudity, much to the disapproval of the other Veddas who feared the anger of the spirits invoked.

The dance began quietly enough. Taking up the coconut and an arrow, the performer clasped them together in his hands which he placed now on the shoulder, now on the head, now well before him, as he walked round the mortar chanting a supplication to *Kande Yakka*. Soon he began hopping alternately on each heel, making half-turns with the body so characteristic of Vedda dances, and sweeping his arms semi-circularly. Gradually the monotonous song loudened to the drum-beats, and more and more vigorous became the contortions of the dancer, whose shaggy hair covered his face and whose body streamed with sweat. So he danced for perhaps a half hour, when suddenly he became as one possessed. *Kande Yakka* had "covered" him. Shouting the fearful name he staggered to the mortar and, bending over the bowl, split the coconut in halves. He stood by panting, while the coconut was scraped, the milk prepared, and seven betel leaves were arranged around the sides of the bowl, which was then replaced on the mortar with a single arrow across it. The other arrow, with a betel leaf transfixed in its point, was now in the hands of the dancer who holding it at both ends resumed his movements. *Bilinde Yakka*, the spirit next invoked, soon possessed him. The dance was then continued to each of the other spirits, male and female, in turn. By each of these he was successively possessed. With each possession the strange, wild-eyed figure before us, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, shouted the name of the mastering demon,† and threw lifeless hands on the shoulders of one or other of the onlookers as if for support. Eventually, when the frenzy was at its height, he had just breath enough to gasp out the inspired message that the spirits were propitious and success was assured‡. With his forearm he indicated the length of the quarry's horns and, pointing to the heavens, the favourable time for starting. Then, taking up the two arrows and the bowl containing the two halves of the coconut, the milk and the betel leaves, he danced

*Coconut milk is the juice obtained by squeezing out with water the scraped kernel of the coconut.

†*Pana biyanawa.*

‡*Hoey galgawara magalah alla thenawa.*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

535 to all the spirits combined. Suddenly he stooped, twirled the chatty on the ground, and shouting " hooy ", fell swooning into the arms of one who had for some time been waiting to catch him. The dance was over. He was artist enough to impart something of his wild fervour to his spectators.

224 The next day at the appointed hour we set out, the Veddas buoyed up with the certainty of success. We had not gone far when Kaurala, who was leading, suddenly levelled his gun (or rather mine) and fired. A fine buck bounded away.

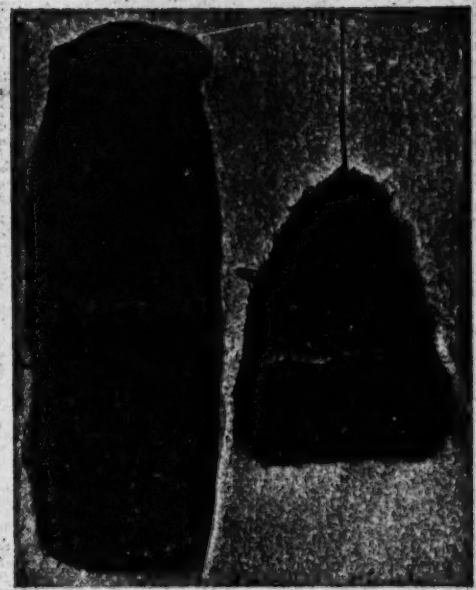
" Cha ", he said, examining the spot where the animal had stood; " now why did that animal not fall? So close too. That was the *kirikoraha* deer right enough; did you not see the horns?" When he discovered that he had fired the barrel containing small shot and not the bullet, he fell to cursing my gun.

782 224 Should an animal be killed after a *kirikoraha* ceremony an offering of boiled rice, with flesh from the head and chest, is made to the propitious spirits. Of this offering the hunters may themselves partake with a view to continuance of success.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Habbaka, a weighted frame-work for trapping animals. (Page 48)

The dancers of Bowala. (Page 48)



Bag made of threshed *rili* bark and monkey skin pouch. (Page 48)

[Facing p. 49]

224
292
534
535

281
287
415

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

ladders prepared for us beforehand, we made the laborious ascent; 000
finally shinning up the interlacing roots of an obliging banyan tree
that gripped a great hump of rock, we attained the summit of
the northern bastion. Here we found the usual signs of old-world [172]
occupation: cisterns and seats cut out of the living rock, fragments of
brick and pottery, and strong stone walls overrun with scrub and pine-
apple.

The height was desolate but for wild cats, and songless but for the 133
boom of wanderoo far below. A ceaseless drizzle blanketed in mist the
superb view of forest and hill we commanded; but every now and then
the mist lifted and showed the graceful contours of the ranges. There,
crouching like a headless beast, its neck indrawn, was magnificent Wadina-
gala; to the south was the long straight ridge of Moneragala; and close [103]
at hand were the twin domes named by the Veddas *Thanagoda* (breast
mounds) and behind them *Thanakirigoda* (breast milk mound) with
wracks of milky mist caressing their summits.

On our descent we were better able to discern certain features of the 222
rock the rain had so far hidden from us. Out of long horizontal fissures 481
high on the perpendicular face of the hill, projected numerous sticks
driven in for foot-hold by honey-gatherers; and dangling from the
summit was a long cane that had once borne a daring fellow within reach
of seemingly unassailable hives. Here we heard a marvellous tale:
A Vedda of Bowala once saw a heap of wax that had accumulated on a
ledge which an overhanging brow of rock made inaccessible. Nothing
daunted, he armed himself with a torch and sambur-horn, descended by
just such a cane as we now saw, and swung himself to and fro within
reach of the wax, heating it with the torch each time he approached it.
When he thought the mass sufficiently molten he stuck the horn deep
into it and waited till it set. Then swinging himself once more towards
it and seizing hold of the embedded horn, he leaped on to the ledge
collected the wax, and swung off again. He did this year by year.
On the last occasion, the horn not being sufficiently secure, the poor
fellow was dashed to death among the trees and stones below. His wife
who had witnessed the tragedy carried back word, "*Meena kalangkal-
angme popahorai*," which being onomatopoeic hardly requires rendering.

Our departure from Bowala was ceremonial. On the path stood a 535
drummer, with two boyish figures disguised from head to foot in dry 302
plantain leaves, that were plaited into tails behind. Their faces were
hidden by speckled masks made from fragments of gourd-rind, with
slits for eyes and mouth, and a blob of resin with fibres attached for nose
and beard. Their bare feet and hands were the only indications that
these scare-crows were in reality human beings.

The drummer struck; the dance began. The time twelve noon. The 535
floor a root-ridden path bestrewn with elephant droppings and intercepted
by beflowered streams. The walls, bordering forest trees festooned with
great lianas on which parrots chattered. The dazzling sky above. For
orchestra, the staccato rhythm of the drum, the jangling bells that [534]
studded the deerskin greaves of the dancers, the sound of a falling branch
perhaps, or the short, sharp clamorous outburst of chirping cicalas. For
a mile or more the performers led the way with a swaying two-step
dance, hopping circularly on one leg to let us catch up did they out-
distance us. At the next village the drummer wore the greaves, and

A [the hill called Westminster Abbey. — Analyst]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A 303 man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 755 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarming blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a 252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the G picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company 101 of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike 105 those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of 361 that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

ooo V [132] A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

so as to project downwards between the legs: the radiating lines above the head were said to represent hair. In the lower part of the photograph in the centre is a dog. The next three figures represent a bow and arrow, a woman and a man, looking at them from above to below. On the right is a group of men. The lower figure in this plate shows a sambar deer in the centre and four dogs, two men and a woman. Plate LX shows a leopard, a dog and several men and women. 532

The figures of elephants and a man with a bow and arrow on Plate LXI were drawn on grey millboard and were so faint that it was necessary to blacken them before reproduction. The carelessness with which the trunk is put in is noteworthy.

The only other occasions on which we saw pigments used were at the Bambura Yaka and Rahu Yaka ceremonies described in Chapter IX, black and yellowish-brown marks being made on the properties prepared. The black marks were made with charcoal paste, the brownish marks with turmeric. [386]

PANTOMIME.

The only other art practised by the Veddas is that of pantomime from which they undoubtedly derive real pleasure. Within the limits of their daily experience they are good actors, and will most faithfully portray their own method of doing things. The zest with which a number of Henebedda Veddas spontaneously prepared the properties for a pantomimic exhibition of honey gathering, and then enacted the scene at Bendiyagalge caves, was very striking and has been referred to in Chapter IV. 536

Another piece of pantomime which we never saw enacted spontaneously but which was performed at our request, was the stalking of game. Directly the object to be "stalked" had been indicated, the stalker fixed his eyes on it, and then approached noiselessly and warily, with body bent and head forward, every muscle ready for instant action, till within a few paces of the object when he would straighten his body and return to the rest of the party at his usual easy pace.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

LEGENDS.

773 538 There is an extraordinary absence of legend among all groups of Veddas who have not been greatly influenced by Sinhalese. Concerning the origin of men, natural features, and things the Veddas seem absolutely incurious, nor do their songs refer to any of these subjects. There are no stories of talking animals or of how their rock-shelters were formed; they have not even a tale of their own origin. Apart from a few accounts of the origin of particular *yaku* and the deeds they performed (e.g. the pig-hunting of Bambura Yaka) the following two legends were all that we could hear though the most diligent inquiry was made.

The Origin of Fire.

773 There was a man who had fire; he distributed this to animals, trees and stones, but a little remained to him at the end and this he swallowed. His name was Wasawatiya. "We cannot say whether he was a Vedda. Because he swallowed this fire we all get hungry, for we all have fire within us. There were men before Wasawatiya but they could not talk; otherwise they were as ourselves. Wasawatiya made and sent the first dog to those people, and the dog barked at them; so that those people feared greatly and stammering and stuttering began to talk, and the first words were *ballakai, ballakai*—'dog will bite.'" Handuna of Sitala Wanniya was our informant and he also gave the following account of the rainbow.

The Rainbow.

[821] When there is rain there is a "kind of yellow bow" (rainbow) in the sky. One of our women made a bow of wood like it and that is all.

How the hill Yakagala came by its name.

The following story was told by Wannaku of Uniche a variant occurs as a song at Sitala Wanniya and is given in Chapter XV. Once upon a time two families of Veddas lived

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Turning now to the message sticks, certain conventional signs scratched on leaves or flat slips of wood were at times sent by Sinhalese chiefs to the Veddas as an intimation that they required them to bring venison and honey. These signs always took one form, representing a carrying stick (*pingo*), to each end of which a circular object representing a pot of honey was attached. By the side of the pot of honey there were generally drawn two short vertical lines, immediately beneath which were a number of rather longer horizontal lines. Each pair of horizontal lines represented a joint of venison and the vertical lines immediately above them the cord by which they would be suspended from the *pingo*. As far as we could determine no other form of written message ever passed between the Sinhalese and Veddas, but there is no doubt that although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas knew nothing of such messages the Danigala Veddas recognised their meaning and acted on them. Mr Bibile told us that on one occasion when he had sent this message scratched on an *ola* leaf to the headman of the Danigala Veddas he had received the honey and venison he had asked for in about a week. We were told that on receiving this message a Vedda might say

202
648

[539]

Dik, dik, ewuwā; kac kuṭṭā
Waṭa kuru ewuwā; ṭaeni muṭṭā[1]
Koṭa koṭa ewuwā; mac kuṭṭā[2].

Long long (ones I) have sent; cut pingos
Round (ones I) have sent; honey pots
Short short (ones I) have sent; cut meat.

and represent this modified to suit the convenience of the peasant Sinhalese who, as already mentioned, have much Vedda blood in them.

[1] *Muṭṭa* may be a verb, *muṭṭiya* is a pot.

[2] *Kuṭṭa* appears to be derived from v. *kutanawā*, to chop or cut; compare colloquial *kuwā*, "I have drunk," from v. *kuwanā* and other instances. We are indebted to Mr Parker for these notes as well as for the transliteration and translation of the message.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 other, but betel leaves and areca nut are often added and the oldest survivor of a small group of comparatively unsophisticated Veddas seen at Godatalawa stated that in the old days this offering would have consisted of yams and water, if, as was often the case, coconuts and rice—which were only to be secured with difficulty and by barter—could not be obtained.] In each
775 community there is one man called *kapurale* or *dugganawa*, who
769 has the power and knowledge requisite to call the *yaku*, and in
791 the ceremony of presenting the offering called *Nae Yaku Natanawa* (literally the dancing of the *Nae Yaku*), this man calls upon the *yaka* of the recently dead man to come and take the offering. It was stated that *dugganawa* was an older word than *kapurale* and was in fact a Vedda word, though it was soon obvious that only a minority of Veddas knew it. The *dugganawa*[1], who throughout this book will be spoken of as the shaman, becomes possessed by the *yaka* of the dead man who speaks through the mouth of the shaman in hoarse guttural accents, declaring that he approves the offering, that he will assist his kinsfolk in hunting, and often stating the direction in which the next hunting party should go.

Each shaman trains his successor, usually taking as his
791 pupil his own son or his sister's son (i.e. his actual or potential son-in-law). Handuna of Sitala Wanniya learnt from his father. At Henebedda we were told that a special hut was built in which the shaman and his pupil slept, and from which women were excluded. It seems probable that this is only done among Veddas who have come under Sinhalese influence, as among them, but not among the wilder Veddas, women are considered unclean, and there was no isolation of the shaman and his pupil at Sitala Wanniya.

Sella Wanniya of Unuwatura Bubula was instructed by his father, and during his apprenticeship he resided with him in a hut into which his mother was not allowed to come.

The pupil learns to repeat the invocations used at the various ceremonies, but no food is offered to the *yaku*. At Sitala Wanniya we were told that the shaman recited the following
[534] formula, explaining to the *yaku* that he is teaching his pupil:

(1 See footnote, p. 16.)

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

791
[539]

(Ayu bowa. Mama ada sita man golayek hadanawd
Eyin kisi waradak ganda epa.
Mage golayata man kiya denawa me puda topata denda

"May (your) life be long! From to-day I am rearing a scholar of the mind. Do not take any offense at it. I am explaining to my pupil how to give this offering to you."

The yaku understand that although the formulae invoking them are recited they are not really being called, and so the pupil does not become possessed while learning, nor do the yaku hurt him. The puil avoids eating or touching pig or eating fowl in the same way, as the shaman, and Sell of Unuwatura Bubula stated that while learning he avoided rice, coconuts and kurakan, eating especially the flesh of the sambar and monitor lizard.

The shaman exercises complete control over his pupil and, we believe does not usually train more than one disciple. We heard of one instance in which a shaman, considering his pupil unfit, advised him to give up all idea of becoming a shaman. This happened among the Mudigala Veddas, apparently between 20 or 30 years ago. No man, however highly trained, is accounted the official shaman of a community during his teacher's life, although with his teacher's permission he will, when he is proficient, perform ceremonies and become possessed by the yaku.

791
826

At Sitala Wanniya we discovered that a shaman must not cut his hair unless he takes special precautions. One of us was collecting specimens of hair, and on asking Handuna for a lock, was answered affirmatively but told that as he (Handuna) was a shaman a cloth must be held over his head "because of the yaku." As we had used a great deal of cloth, we asked if a piece of newspaper would do; Handuna replied that it would be as good, but he must keep it always to cover his head when he danced. We explained that the paper would probably rot; the said he, "I shall die." He said he did not know why, but he believed this, as his father had told him that even should his son want a lock of his hair (hair is given as "seisin") he must cover his head with a cloth when it was cut, and ever afterwards must cover it when dancing, or else the yaku would kill him. Yet such was his politeness that rather than refuse our request

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the *yaku*, might expect to have especially good luck on account of their close association with the spirits. Many instances occurred which showed how strong was the feeling of good fellowship which the living had for the spirits of their dead. Thus at Sitala Wanniya, on the occasion of the performance of a *Nat Yaku* ceremony got up at our request, Handuna, the shaman and leading man in the small community, volunteered the statement that he and his people were delighted to hold the ceremony, since it was seldom that they were able to offer their *yaku* such food as that provided by us. After his own father had been invoked and had expressed his unqualified pleasure at the good things provided for him, there was some discussion as to further dancing, because the dancer really felt exhausted, but all urged the continuation of the ceremony, since there were other *yaku* who might well be invoked on an occasion when an unusually plenteous supply of food was provided for them. Again, in the ceremony which insured the safe taking of rock honey, it was explained that every male member of the little community must perform the dance, since only thus could they certainly expect to share in the benefits to be reaped from the goodwill of the *yaku*. But perhaps the best example of the feeling of affectionate regard and of kindly good-fellowship existing between the living and the dead is afforded by the end of the invocation on the occasion of the *Nat Yaku* ceremony at Sitala Wanniya, for surely there could be no closer communion between the quick and the dead than that implied in the invocation, which is fully carried into effect by every member of the community sharing in the food that has been offered to the *yaku*.

"Salutation! Salutation! Part [of our] relatives having called [you] in time (i.e. at the right time) [we] give you white rice. [You] eat [and] drink. Do not think any wrong (i.e. do not form an unfavourable opinion of us). We also eat and drink [the same food]."

The above account is an outline of the simplest form of death ceremony such as was described to us at Godatalawa, but usually the matter is complicated by the invocation of certain *yaku* other than the *Nat Yaku*. Many generations ago there lived a Vedda called Kande Wanniya, a mighty hunter, who at his death became Kande Yaka, and under this name is constantly

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ADDENDUM.

The following translation of the invocation of Godegedara Bandara has been prepared by Mr Parker from a manuscript given me in Ceylon by the Arachi of Potuliyadde.

782
539

The Song of the God Godegedara.

1. He is a god of a distant country in the Uva region,
   Having come to this side in the Wellassa region,
   Having raised my joined hands to my head I worship (him) that there may be good luck.
   He is coming, I shall say, the God of (this) region.

2. Is not every one staying in (some) place?
   Having died in its heart what pulse will ripen?
   The God sleeps in the upper heavens.
   The God Godegedara is coming.

3. For an endless time being on the watch we utter songs to the God.
   Should there be mistakes (in them) in the name of charity (or merit) pardon the mistakes.
   Endlessly songs are sung accompanied by beating of the five (kinds of) tom-toms.
   The God Godegedara is powerful (enough) even to give a tusk elephant.

4. When it rises the dusk of the moon lights up the round universe and Dambadiva (India).
   The God Godegedara appears like an inextinguishable lamp (lit. a lamp with its fire enduring by (divine) orders for many years).
   The hair of his head sports in the midst of his back like the play of golden rays acting as his retinue.
   Should King Godegedara come to the seat I shall now receive the betel altar (i.e. the offering will be made, and the officiator will then get the betel which has been offered).

"In the last line there is some doubt about the title of Godegedara; either the expression *dera(na) devi* means king, that is literally 'god of the earth,' or *dera* has been written by mistake."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776
775

was but too anxious to assimilate and practise all that the Arachi would teach him. The knowledge he thus acquired spread to the younger members of the tribe, such as Sita Wanniya, who obviously took more interest in the ceremonial observances of his religion than any other of the younger men we met, and it was said that he would probably be the next shaman. The older men, on the other hand, appeared to know little of the developments introduced by the Arachi. To them Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nas Yaku* were not only the most important spiritual powers, but appeared to be the only ones who were at all well known; the simplicity of the eschatological beliefs of these older men has already been referred to on p. 126 and agrees wonderfully well with those described by Bailey in 1863. "The result of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than evil. ...They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread....But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their 'nehya yakoon,' kindred spirits. They describe them as 'ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting.' In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, 'bilindoo yakkoon,' or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke....

775
769
539

"The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following: an arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm:

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

'Mâ miya, mâ miya, mâ deyâ,
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâh!'

'My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?'

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions, when the intervention of the guardian spirit is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.

"Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

"Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. 'Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come! wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!' and they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.

"They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. 'Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!' was the only reply I received to repeated questions. They have no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings[1]."

Although in essentials this account is accurate, certain corrections and suggestions must be made. The "bilindoo yakkoon" are not "infant spirits" but obviously represent Bilindi Yaka who became a *yaka* while still a child. The arrow dance is clearly described and agrees with the dance we saw and photographed near Bendiyagalge, figures of which are given in Plate XXVI.

With regard to the spirits of the dead appearing in dreams and stating where game will be found, this, which is quite contradictory to our experience, has already been referred to on

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* pp. 300—303.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
177

far as a leader can be said to exist, and he told us that he had learnt these invocations as a boy.

789
539

We regret that the names of our informants were not noted in every case in the following charms, but we give them where possible. The transliterations and translations of these charms as well as the comments on them are by Mr Parker who points out that the word *Ōn* occurring in a number of them is the Indian *Ōm*[1].

The first two charms are directed against bears.

Arini kurini, nāgu ṗatā gē ja kurē, jaḵ.

Venerable one of noble family (?). O Lord, born in a house in a rock-hole. Be off!

Mr Parker writes, "I do not know the meaning of the first two words of the spell, *arini kurini*. Probably *arini* is derived from *ārya* and the honorific ending *ni*, meaning 'the venerable one.' In that case the second word may be *kulīna*, 'of noble family,' and the whole translation would be as given. *Patā* for *ṗataha*, a hole, hollow or pool."

This charm was given us by Poromala of Bingoda who said he had known it a long time. Its meaning could not be ascertained in the field. The next charm was obtained from Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, who said it had been used in his youth by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas.

Ōn Dahasak Budunnē kunu goḍen upan Nīla Kandīgē baḍē upan Nīlāda Nīlīda, nil, ṗō ādā, nil, ṗo adī, ṗoḵ.

Ōn! Born in the womb of Nīla (the blue-black) Kandī, born from the heap of filth of a thousand Buddhas (or sages), whether (you are) Nīlā or Nīlī (the blue-black one, m. or f.). Stop! Go thou (m.)! Stop! Go thou (f.). Be off!

The first part is ordinary Sinhalese; the orders to go are in Tamil.

1 "This word begins nearly all invocations, and it is stated in the *Vishnu Purāna* (Wilson, p. 273) that 'The syllable *Ōm* is defined to be the eternal monosyllabic Brahma.' On p. 274 Wilson adds (f. n.) 'The daily prayers of the Brahman commence with the formula *Ōm bhūḥ, bhuvaḥ, svar*; *Ōm*, earth, sky, heaven.'

"In the *Sacred Laws of the Āryas* (Bühler), I. 4, 6 (Aphorisms of Āpastamba) it is said 'The syllable "*Ōm*" is the door of heaven.' At I. 4, 8 also 'And in common life, at the occasion of ceremonies performed for the sake of welfare, the sentences shall be headed by this word, as, for instance, "(*Ōm*) an auspicious day!" "(*Ōm*) welfare."'

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

Mr Parker writes, "This looks like a very modern spell. The speaker treats the bear contemptuously; but I cannot explain the reference to the sages. He wishes the bear to understand the very inferior position he occupies, in his opinion."

The next charm applies to the elephant.

Ōn! Aeri sinna wayirā naeri sinna suwāgayā, namā. St.

Ōn! Excited (or strong) elephant, angry one, stout elephant. Salutation! homage! Be off!

We could obtain no satisfactory translation of this charm. Mr Parker writes, "The difficult words in this spell are *aeri* and *naeri*. Such spells as these almost always commence by applying honourable epithets to the animals, and therefore a probable derivation of the former word is from *airya* (Skt root *ir*), with the meaning 'excited,' 'aroused,' or from *iraya* 'strong.'

"*Naeri* is perhaps derived from *neriyanawā*, to grow stout or obese, although the change from *e* to *ae* is unusual. The translation would then be as above.

"*Sinna*, for *śṛiṅga*, a horn; compare *śṛiṅgin*, an elephant, derived from the same word.

"*Wayirawā*. This was translated in Ceylon as Bhairava, but the Sinhalese form for this deity is Bahirawā, and I prefer the meaning given above, from the Tamil *vayiram*, angry, and *avan*, he.

"*Suwāgayā* appears literally to mean 'may you go to heaven,' *swarga*; but compare *swāgata* 'salutation' from *suwa* and *agata*."

Mr De Zoysa gives the following charm as a protection against elephants but he does not give its origin.

Ichchata vallay
Pachchata vallay
Dela devallay
Situ appa situ.

A hanging member in front (trunk)
A hanging member behind (tail)
On two sides two hanging members (the two ears)
Stay, beast, stay!

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
537

The next two charms were given by Tissahami the Vedda Arachi as protections against the leopard and the buffalo respectively. They were said to be in use at Bandaraduwa but owing to an oversight this statement was not verified.

Ōn! Sinhan Sivattha vediṗpulayā nam ata kata āru. Sī.

Ōn! O Lion, for the sake of Siva, if you are one who has escaped from shooting, may (your) foot and mouth be appeased. Be off!

The words of this charm are chiefly Tamil.

Sivattha from *Śiva* and *atthaṃ*, on account of.

Vediṗpulayā for *Veḍiṗpiḷeiyār* (honorific) from *Veḍi* "a shot," and *piḷei* to escape from a danger.

Āru, v. *āṟu*, "to cool," "be appeased," "repose."

Sī for *isī*, an expression used in driving away cats.

Mr Parker points out that "remembrance of the danger from which he himself escaped is expected to cause the leopard to sympathise with and to spare the man."

Ōn. Nā Waeraellīgē puṭā Rana Dēvatāwā Andungrī paruwatē waṇḍa indagena Kalugal rusiyāṭayi tō annē maṭa no weyi. Hōwu āḍā howu.

Ōn. Rana Devata, son of Nāga-Waeraellī (f.), thou shalt strike the Kalugal (Black-rock) Ascetic who sits on the Andun-giri (Black-hill) mountain; not me. Be off, be off!

Mr Parker does not know anything about the Rana Devata (Godling of Fighting) or his mother, or the Ascetic, but the charm suggests to him that the Devata is believed to inspire the buffalo to attack men.

Bailey gives the following charm against an animal called *okma* which he says is the wild boar, though Mr Parker considers that the *okma* is the buffalo and this view is also taken by Mr De Zoysa. We are inclined to agree with them and therefore quote this charm here.

Iri deyyanné ōkma
Sanda deyyanné ōkma
Pasé Budunné ōkma
Situ ōkma situ

Okma of the Sun-god!
Okma of the Moon-god!
Okma of the Pase Budu!
Stay, *Okma*, stay!

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

The great interest of this spell is that Bailey obtained it from the Nilgala Veddas over fifty years ago, and that he was able to trace the Sinhalese charm against toothache—from which it was derived.

Ira deyené æyā!
Sanda deyené æyā!
Passé Budunó æyā!
Daté nositoo dat æyā!
Worm of the sun-god!
Worm of the moon-god!
Worm of the Passe Buddha!
Stay not in the tooth, thou tooth-worm.

Bailey recognised the importance of this discovery, for he wrote, "These are identical; yet the Veddahs and the Sinhalese certainly do not associate so closely as to borrow one another's charms....The term okma I can get no satisfactory explanation of. It is not Sinhalese, certainly I assume it means 'wild boar,' and this is the charm to arrest a boar in the path; but it is not the term used by the Veddahs for a boar in ordinary conversation. The allusion to the Pase, or Pache Buddha, is curious as occurring in both....The other Veddah charms are, I believe, quite unlike those of the Sinhalese, but on that point I am still making enquiries...[1]."

The next two charms are against snakes and were obtained from Poromala (Walaha) of Henebedda and Poromala of Bingoda.

It is necessary for the efficacy of the first of these charms that a string of human hair be bound round the limb above the bite. The hand of the operator is then carried down the limb repeatedly as he mutters the charm, the thumb nail being flicked against the ground each time the hand has passed down the leg[2]. This is to drive the poison into the ground. The string of hair is not the purposeful beginning of rational treatment; we believe that it was not considered necessary to tie the hair

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 304.
There can be little doubt that this and similar charms crept into the beliefs of the wilder Veddas at the same time and in the same way as the *yaku* of village Veddas, e.g. Unapane Kiriamma, became known to the wilder Veddas.
[2] Snake bites in the jungle are invariably on the leg.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

string at all tightly and our informants were perfectly certain that the benefit derived from this treatment (which Poromala assured us he had seen succeed more than once) was due to the virtue of the hair of the head which might equally well be that of the snake's victim, or of any one else.

Namō. Nayin gini helīmi, polangun darana halīmi, karawalu mālu halīmi, pansiyak sarpayin in aes gaesi, is gaesi, dala gaesū, wisa baesi maha polowaṭa dīswāhā.

Salutation! I set fire to cobras, I coil up (or split up) polongas (*Daboia russelli*), I make curry of karawilas (*Bungarus sp.*). From five hundred snakes the eyes are knocked out, the heads are beaten, the teeth are knocked out, and the poison is sent down to the earth. Ēswaha!

"*Namo* is a Pali expression, borrowed from Buddhist works etc. in which it takes the place occupied by *om* in India. It is derived from the Skt. root *nam*, to bend, bow etc.

"*Malu* is the colloquial word for curry; also for meat, but the latter word is not suitable here. The Sinhalese never say 'I made meat of' anything.

"*Deswaha* from *da*, the conjunction 'and' in combination with *īswaha*. The last two words of the charm should be *polowaṭada īswaha*."

Ahasaṭa guru kawuda guru? Aha(sa) ṭa guru ira sanda de guru.

Polawaṭa guru kawuda guru? Polawaṭa guru Mihikat devuru.

Nayinḍa guru kawuda guru? Nayiḍa guru Nāga guru.
Visīṭa guru kawu(da) guru? Visīṭa guru mamayi guru.
Visī basin tilō guru mātā. Me desī guruṇ anen yayi dīsī.
Poloṇ visī dāra visī. Tō nedana tō daesṭa kalī nam.
Man daena visa bannam, visī naeti baku Gurupprarāja yānam.
Ōn namō.

The preceptor of the sky, who is the preceptor?

The preceptor of the sky, the Sun and the Moon are the two preceptors.

The preceptor of the earth, who is the preceptor?

The preceptor of the earth, the great Goddess Mahikantawa is the preceptor.

And the preceptor of the cobras, who is the preceptor?

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

The preceptor of the cobras, the Naga is the preceptor.
The preceptor of poison, who is the preceptor?
The preceptor to poison, I am the preceptor.
For casting down poison (there is) the mother of the teacher of the three worlds (Buddha).

The preceptor of this country will go to another country (after death).

The poison of Polangas is the limit of poison. If thou, not knowing (me), shouldst make (it) for (thy) two eyes, I will bind (on thee) the poisons which I know, going (afterwards, out of thy reach) to the excellent king of many *garuda*, who have no poison. *Ōn!* salutation!

"A *guru* is a teacher or preceptor, one who has complete knowledge of the subject. A student's teacher is his *guru*. The word is also especially used to indicate a Brahman who is thoroughly acquainted with the Vedas and the forms of religious ceremonies, and who acts as a king's chaplain. Brihaspati, the deity of the planet Jupiter, was the *guru* of the Gods[1].

"Mahikantawa is the Earth Goddess, or personification of the earth.

"*Nāga* are supernatural beings who take either a human form or that of cobras, at will. I think the reference to Mayā, the mother of Buddha, means that by bringing into the world such a son she has reduced the poison of evil deeds and thoughts, which are compared to those of the poisonous snakes. The poison of the polanga (*Daboia russelli*) is said to be the most powerful of all snake poisons. It is stated that persons sometimes die within five minutes after being bitten by this snake, and usually within half an hour. There is an idea that some snakes have the power of projecting poison from their eyes.

"The *garuda* is a fabulous bird which feeds on poisonous snakes, especially cobras."

We failed to obtain any coherent account of the meaning of

[1] In the *Ordinances of Manu* (Burnell's translation) ii, 1 and 2, it is stated "That Brahman is called Guru who performs according to rule the rites on conception and the like, and feeds (the child) with rice (for the first time)." At ii, 149 it is said, "He who confers the benefit of the Veda on anyone, be it little or be it much, he should know him to be here his Guru, by reason of that benefit through the Veda."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

this charm in the field and are indebted to Mr Parker for the following explanation. "I think I understand the meaning of this invocation quite clearly. The reciter says 'As the Sun and Moon are the preceptors, or the beings or deities who have a complete knowledge of the sky; as Mahikantawa has complete knowledge of the earth; as Nagas have complete knowledge of cobras, so I have complete knowledge of all poisons.' He first wishes to impress the snake with a belief in his powers, and then he threatens it."

The next charm given by Poromala of Bingoda cures the bite of the centipede, but neither Poromala nor Tissahami the Vedda Arachi could tell us the meaning of the spell.

Nāngara guru, nāngara guru, nāngara potakun aeragena visakuṇ.
Man atu bindagena, rattaeyā pāgāgena, aeli moḍarā piṭa siṭagena, apī guruṇ sihikaragena, mama yannē visa bāgena, tō nedana tō daesṭa kalē nam maṇ daena visa baemnaṇ, eyin taekae(?) visē naeta baku Gurupprarāja yanam. Ōn namō!

Vile preceptors, vile preceptors, poisonous ones taking (with you) vile young ones!

I, breaking branches, trampling on the Centipede, sitting on the back of the White Peacock, reflecting on our preceptors, I will go (only after) casting out the poisons. If thou, not knowing (me), shouldst make (poison) for (thy) two eyes[1], I will bind (on thee) the poisons which I know, after (?) that going to the excellent king of many *garudas*, who have no poison. *Ōn*, Salutation!

"The centipede is here treated with much less respect than the vertebrates, and the last two words must be said ironically. The breaking of branches refers to the custom of making offerings of leafy twigs when asking for the protection of the forest Deities. I do not know the white peacock, *aeli monarā*. (The bird is sometimes colloquially called *moṇḍarā*.) It may be the peacock that is the riding animal or *vahana* of the God Skanda, which is carved at the Tanjore temple with a snake hanging from its bill. Peacocks kill centipedes as well as snakes.

"The preceptors on whom the exorcist reflects will be those mentioned in the spell for cobras—that is Buddha, the Sun and Moon, Mahikantawa, and the Nagas who are guardian deities. Possibly also Skanda and Ayiyanar, the Guardian Forest Deities

[1] Another reading is, If thou (even) unwittingly, hast made (poison) for (thy) two eyes.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the Sinhalese. I do not understand *taekae*, there may have been some mistake in writing down the charm." 789 539

Charms to Obtain Food.

Neither amulets nor verbal formulae are used to insure straight shooting or the killing of deer or sambar, the two animals providing the greater part of the flesh consumed by the Veddas; nor are there amulets or charms to obtain success in pig hunting. Doubtless this is because the *yaku* when properly invoked give success in these matters. There are, however, no *yaku* whose special business it is to give success in the monkey drives which are, or were until recently, practised, and we found that certain formulae were sung by the members of the driving party, and in some case muttered by the men who waited in ambush for the monkeys to be driven to them. And we were told that the singing or reciting of these formulae was necessary to the success of the drive. 789 224

Mr Parker uses the diminutive "doggie" in the translations of the two following charms collected at Bandaraduwa in order to retain the sense of the originals, which clearly indicates that the reciter is speaking coaxingly to the monkeys. The words of the charm are literally "dog" and "bitch," the use of which in the translation would give a wrong impression. In one charm the hunters call the monkeys to them assuring them that they are quite safe, for certainly they cannot shoot them. 789 224 539

Charm sung while driving Wandura monkeys (Bandaraduwa).

Ammā maya nā kolandāni
Kolandan kandō ṭiṭa yanni
Ekī kiyalā innō kaṭō,
Ēkit awalā yaṇḍama yanni.
"Taek, taek," kiyalā wāren ballā.
"Kik, kik," kiyalā wāren baellī.
Nāwini nūgan kandō ṭiṭō,
Ēkiṭa dunnak widala kōḍoyi
Ēkī yaṇḍama yaṇḍama yanni.
Keliyen keliyaṭa wāren ballā,
Keli madalāgena dewagena wāre.

Mother mine, the leaf-clad chief,
Pops behind a leafy trunk;

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
221
539

Tells another who is there;
She, excited, runs away.
"Tsak, tsak," crying, doggie come;
"Kik, kik," crying, doggie come.
In the Na-tree forest hid,
Safe behind a banyan trunk,
With a bow she can't be shot,
Setting off to go, to go.
Playing, playing, doggie come.
Stop your games and running come.

Charm sung while driving Rilawa monkeys (Bandaraduwa).

Ammā māyē nā rōsāni
Rōsan handā piṭa yanni
"Rō, Rō" kiyala wāren balla.
Burutak handā piṭa yanna.
Keliyen koliyaṭa duwagana wāre,
Keli maḍalāgena duwagena wāre.

Mother mine, the lovely chief,
Pops behind a cotton trunk,
"Ro, Ro" crying, doggie come.
Behind a satin stem she goes.
Playing, playing, running come;
Stop your games and running come.

The Sinhalese heading of this charm, collected at Henebedda (where it was dictated by Poromala of Bingoda) runs *Wanduraṇ nawa tawaka wiya*, the translation of which is "said at a place where *wandura* stay."

Ātu surā damanni
Ō man handīṭa pāninni.
"Ah, Oh," kiyā wāri nam
Kola surā damanni,
Mī man handā naṭanni.
Balā siṭa aeyi dennā?

The branches they scratch off and throw down,
They spring on to that trunk (?).
Come, indeed, saying "Ah, Oh."
They scratch off and throw down the leaves.
They dance on this trunk (?).
Why did they stop and look, both of them?

789

We could find no trace of any ceremony having for its object the control of the supply of game and honey or the increase of the number of yams and edible berries. It is assumed that

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

these are beyond human control, though the *yaku*, who in an indefinite way are considered to be concerned with them, give success in hunting, yam digging and honey gathering. 789

Nor could we discover any trace of weather magic in spite of the preference for rain indicated in a number of the invocations given in Chapter X, as well as by the remark on this subject made by Handuna, quoted upon page 84.

We could not discover among the wilder Veddas any magic connected with the bow and arrow, and certainly these were never personified or named. We, however, obtained the following "song" from the village Veddas of Bintenne. It was taken down just as we were breaking camp and so no special attention was paid to it, as we were assured that it was of the same nature as other songs we had collected. Mr Parker, who has provided the following transliteration and translation, points out that, in his opinion, this "song" must be regarded as a charm said over an arrow in order to kill monitor lizards. To our suggestion that this song might be sung mockingly to a particularly bad shot, urging him to try again and see if he could not hit the lizard in some part of its body, Mr Parker replied that this did not seem probable to him. "If this were addressed to a person who was a bad shot I hardly think expressions would be used such as *i maela* which would then require to be translated 'younger brother of arrows.'" We accordingly treat this formula as a charm and include it in the present chapter. 789 539

Mundi Kanda pipa wattirí gá,
Ehaṭa widaṭá hiri kurí.
Ettama arupa i maelá,
Pipaṭa aceru palágu.
Etanama arupa i maelá,
Tommaṭa lerṭṭen (palágu).
Ettama arupa i maelá,
Tommaṭa aceru palágu.
Etanama arupa i maelá,
Bellaṭa lerṭṭen palágu.
Etanama arupa i maelá,
Baḍaṭa lerṭṭen palágu.
Etanama arupa i maelá,
Kíbila maddin lerutágu.

789
539

Go and drop behind the body of the monitor lizard ;
Pierce it, dear cousin.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle (or edge) of the back.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle of the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the neck.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the stomach.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and fix (yourself) in the middle of the armpit.

"In order to rhyme all the lines ought to end in a long a.

"*Ethenna* is an evident mistake for *etanama*.

"*Tomma* is for *tumba*, a Vaedi word for tail, the Sinhalese is *tubu*.

"*Accen* and *aeccen* are for *assen*, abl. of *assa*, angle or corner.

"*Laeffen* is a word I have not previously met with. The only probable derivation with which I am acquainted is the Tamil *iraffa*, Sin. *reffe*, double, two-fold.

"*Mnaid* means younger brother.

"*Kiri hurd*, lit. milk cousin, simply means dear cousin."

Love Charms.

822 Love magic or charms to compel love do not seem to exist among the wilder Veddas, though in the Bintenne we were told that women may charm the waist strings they give to their husbands, in order to ensure their fidelity.

Amulets.

301 Before discussing the existence of these it is necessary to determine to what extent the Veddas now wear, or formerly wore, ornaments.

Disregarding the stories current among the Sinhalese that the Veddas formerly had valuable jewellery and pots of pure gold—legends of which the Veddas themselves are quite

[errata — see p. xx. — Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nila exchanged the *amamula* for the *wila*, and coming to Mari again, raised the *wila* above her head and lowered it to the ground, letting the bast strips brush her face and body and then sweep the ground. This was done in order to wipe away the pain of labour. Then he leapt back to the centre of the cleared space and danced in and out between the three posts, hitting them with the *wila*. This was probably a sign of pleasure, for the driving away of *yaku* by striking their resting place would probably only take place at the end of the ceremony. He again approached Mari and fell back into the arms of his supporter, only remaining quiet for a few seconds until, trembling and gasping, he bent his head over the *usmukaliya* and buried his face in the bast. After doing this over each post he returned to the *usmukaliya* and said he must go, speaking in the usual husky and gasping *yaku* voice; then he fell exhausted into the arms of his supporter. All the Veddas now began to sing the invocation, and it was clear that the *yaku* had not departed from Nila for he soon began to quiver and gasp again, and sprang forward and danced between the three posts; then he began to search for something, lifting the strands of bast on the *usmukaliya*, and after an exaggerated pantomimic search he found the *wila*, turning this in his hands so that the bast swung at right angles, he waved it over each of the three posts; then turning to the *usmukaliya*, bent his head low over it and fell back exhausted. The *yaku* now left him and he recovered consciousness without any quivering or trembling, salaamed to the *usmukaliya* and sat down to rest. All the properties were immediately piled together under a tree. It may be noted that although Vela began to dance with Nila, he did not become possessed and so took no part in the latter portion of the dance.

After a short rest Nila went to the pile and holding a few strands of bast in one hand (Plate XLVI, fig. 2) repeated the following prayer to the Pata Yaku for his daughter's safety a number of times:—

Ané! mayi daruwata kisi antarāwak wenda epā mi wara.
Gada yanta denda ōnas.

Ané! (May) any harm not happen to my child this time.
(You) must permit (her) to land (i.e. to escape from her sea of troubles).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

forest near the hunter to make him believe that the game he is following has run away. 796 782 773

Bedi Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who breaks sticks and causes dead branches to fall and so frighten game away.

Kili Mas Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who cut up the animal whose flesh and blood were used at the first *avana*.

Polu Mas Vedda, who smoked part of the meat of this animal.

Melihi Vedda, the *yaka* who blinds hunters so that they cannot track the wounded game.

Ahuru Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first snapped his fingers to call his dogs.

Ihurun Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first whistled to his dogs to come hunting.

These eleven *yaku* are considered strong enough to kill folk and to send sickness; it appeared to us that the individuals of this group were not carefully differentiated but rather regarded as one power. [753]

The Korala of Bakiella who has already been mentioned said that a leaf cone (*goṭuwa*) containing blood was placed on a heap of leaves with flesh from the throat, tongue and ears of the kill and the whole offered to the 64,000 Maralu Yaku and 64,000 Kadawara Yaku. The leaf cone is a distinctly Sinhalese feature and the ceremony described by the Korala had become entirely Sinhalese in character. This is borne out by the invocation which was written down for us by the Korala. 796 782 177 539

Atu avanē lē dena mantraya Kaḍawara Rīri Yakaṭa Yakinniṭa.

Vītāla nuwara sīnāpoti bisawun wahansēge hradaya palā bihi unu Kaḍawēra Riri Yakshayā Yakshiniṭa atu awanak aetun koṭu awanak aetun, amu mas amu riri aetun.

Adat mama anḍagasā kaepa kera dennē. Mama yana issaraṭa rubera an munayak genādiṇ, ellē pāḍu kera dīlā, veḍī munē is(sara)ṭa kera dīla, amaren giyat (a) mareṇ piṭat wilā, marana paṭkera dīlā, waessī langaṭa mīden ennā wāgē, kambe kanuweṭa magul astek baenda palikera wāge, ella pāḍu (ka) ra denḍa Kaḍawera Riri Yakshayā Yakshīgen warami.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
782
177
539

"The invocation to Kaḍawara Rīri Yakā and Yakinī, when presenting blood in the shelter (made) of branches.

"There was (on a former occasion) an (open) shelter of branches, there was an enclosed shelter, there were fresh meat and fresh blood for the Kaḍawara Rīri Yakshayā and Yakshinī, who having guarded (?) the pool of the General Queen at Vētāla Nuwara (the Goblin city) became demons.

"To-day also having summoned (you) I present the (same) offering. Before I go I solicit from the Kaḍawara Rīri Yakshayā and Yakshinī that they will bring a head with beautiful horns (to me), that they will make good all deficiencies, make my shots unerring [lit. present (the game) before the point of the shot], should I get into difficulty that they will overcome it, decree that I shall kill (game), (enable me) to approach a calf (fem.) like the buffalo cow comes up (to it) [i.e. without alarming it], rope a lucky tusk-elephant to the post, as though defending it (?), and that they will make good all deficiencies."

The above transliteration and translation have been prepared by Mr Parker who points out that the written invocation is full of errors, and therefore difficult to translate, but it does not contain any "Vaedi expressions" and "only a few difficult words." We have consulted Mr Parker in the hope that he might be able to throw some light on the matter of the origin of the *avana*, but although his remarks are in many ways interesting and suggestive, they do not really explain the origin of the ceremony, though he is inclined to agree with us that the ceremony is of Vedda origin[1].

[1] Mr Parker writes: "The Sinhalese have also some Vaedi Yakas though these have no connection with the eleven spirit yakas of your ceremony, who are chiefly protective. There are also 'Vaedi' Kadawara who are minor subordinates of the Kohomba (Margosa) demon or Yaka. *Kaḍawara* is a compound Tamil word meaning according to a story that was related to me both in Ceylon (N.C.P.) and at the Tanjore temple, 'the celestial who escaped' compression by Siva the Indian god, when he clasped in his embrace six others created by his wife, and thus made them into the Kataragam God Skanda, the Indian war God, called also Kanda Kumara, with six faces and twelve arms."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

special dialect be employed while they are in the forest, they cannot expect to meet with any success in seeking honey, or hunting, or in avoiding dangerous animals. 782 192 198

"This dialect...consists of the employment of new words not only for animals but also for a few other nouns, and for verbs used to denote acts most commonly performed on such trips. In addition, all negative (that is, unlucky) modes of expression are totally debarred from use on such occasions, as well as the words meaning 'insufficient' and 'too much,' which are inauspicious as indicating dissatisfaction with the number or quantity to which they are applied."

Although in some instances the word used when addressing the *yaku* is not the precise word used by the same Veddas while hunting it is convenient, and we think reasonable, to regard the *yaku* language as a part of the *kaele basa*.

The only other linguistic feature of these invocations that requires comment is the abundant use of the adjective *ran* "golden." The significance of this in a particular and somewhat puzzling instance is discussed in a footnote to invocation No. XXI, so that it suffices here to record our belief that among the Veddas the expression is laudatory and is the equivalent of "excellent," "admirable." In invocations used while collecting honey the expression "jewelled" is used with almost equal freedom, e.g. "golden jewelled cord" in invocation No. XXVI, and is simply to be understood as a laudatory expression.

Invocations to the Nae Yaku.

782 539

Sitala Wanniya.

I. *Āyu bōwā. Āyu bōwā. Nae koṭṭaewī*[1], *nae sināwā.*
Hudu hambā welaṭa aḍagaha dunnā kaewā bunnā.
Kisi waradak sitanna epā, epit kanawā bonawā.

Salutation! Salutation! Part of (our) relatives!
Multitude of relatives! Having called (you) at the (right) time (we) gave (you) white sambā (rice); (you) ate, (you) drank. Do not think any wrong (of us); we also eat (and) drink.

[1] *Koṭṭaewī* for *koṭṭāsaya*, a part, section.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Dambani.

782
539

II. *E lowa giya apu appā mi lowa warā. Depaṭullan aenō kālāpiṇ. Huḍa mangaccapawu hankunā boṭa dammanna, kabaraya boṭa dammanna. Mā paengiri kola aenō kālāpin. Hani hanikaṭa mangaccapawu. Ammalayi aette huḍaṭa mangaccapawu. Depaṭullan aenō kālāpiṇ, gal miccak aenō kālāpiṇ, paengiri kola aenō kālāpiṇ. Kankunā boṭa dammanna, kabaraya boṭa dammanna nani haniyaṭa mangaccapaw.*

Our father who went to that world come to this world. Take the rice. Come quickly to place (for us) the sambar deer, to place the spotted deer. Take this betel leaf. Come very quickly. Come quickly my mother's people. Take the rice, take the rock honey, take the betel leaf. To place the sambar deer, to place the spotted deer, come very quickly.

"*Depaṭullan* from *depaṭa*, 'double' and *ula*, 'point.' Rice is the grain with two points, not rounded like millet.

"*Mangacca* from *man*, 'path,' and *gassanawā*, 'to strike (with the feet),' hence to proceed in either direction, that is, to come or to go.

"*Kankunā boṭa*, 'the dirty-eared beast,' the sambar. The long ears of some animals are liable to become dirty inside with the wax, etc. and ticks often collect in them. Hence the application of the term 'the dirty-eared beast' to the sambar.

"*Kabaraya boṭa*, 'the spotted beast,' the axis.

"*Paengiri kola*, 'sour leaf,' may include any leaf of acid taste for chewing, but the expression is especially applied to betel, as in the *kaele basa*. The commonest word for 'sour' is *aembul* but *paengiri* is also often used.

"*Aenō kālāpiṇ* for *anna* (*aran*) *karāpan*, 'take.' In another invocation (No. IV) we have *aenō kālāñña*, 'I will make another's,' that is, 'I will present.'"

Godatalawa.

III. *Ayu bōwā! Mal paennaī wannā. Ada rakshāwak naī. Bis baṭewwa ada denṭa ōnaṭyi. Hatarak pā aettanṭa goyun allā denṭa ōnaṭyi. Eyin paeyin pussā anguru mas yahaṇak oppu-kara dennayi. Ada raekuma rakshāwa balī baendala denṭa ōnaṭyi.*

Salutation[1]! Driver away of Vaeddas[2]. Today (there is) no livelihood.

[1] Lit. may life be long.

[2] *Mal paennaī wannā*. "The word *mal* in another invocation of the *Naī Yaki* is evidently applied to the Vaeddas, and therefore there cannot be much doubt regarding the meaning, here and elsewhere, of the expression *mal paennaī wannā*, when

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Today you must give wild brinjal; you must allow the four-footed persons[1] to catch iguanas. Having roasted (part) of them in an hour[2], I will make and give (you an offering of) an altar (furnished with) meat (fried on) charcoal[3]. Today (you) must furnish (and) give protection (and) livelihood by (your) power.

782
539

Wellampelle.

IV. *Depaṭullan aeno kālāñña, paengiri kola aenō kālāñña, gal micciyak aenō kālāñña appalaye aettanna mori yānak aeno kālāñña. Kankunā mayē ekaṭa aenō kālāpa adana iti boṭa damā.*

I will present rice, I will present betel leaf, I will present rock honey, I will present an altar for the dead to (my) father's people. Make over as mine the sambar, having placed (for me) the wearing-spikes beast (i.e. the porcupine).

"*Aeno kālāñña* for *Anya karañña*, I will make another's, that is, I will present or make over.

"*Mori*, from root *mri* (Skt) to die.

"*Yānak* for *Yahanak*."

Godatalawa.

It was stated that the following invocation was said to determine whether the deceased had attained power as a *yaka*.

V. *Hāmaduruwō, Alut mal paennae wannā, haskam tiyenawā haebae nam eka wal mandiyak wal marāgaṇa ena wēlāṭa maṭa gawara māgallek hambewenda ōnae. Mē unkiri daluwaṭa, mal paennae Wannā, eli bānawā.*

Lord, New Driver away of Vaeddas, if it be true that there are miracles[4], killing one wild iguana in the jungle at the time while coming I must meet with a sambar deer. (Be pleased) to drink[5], Driver away of Vaeddas, this young coconut[6].

applied to the spirit of the recent dead. Dr Seligmann learnt that the cave in which a Vaedda has died is avoided by his relatives as a residence for several years afterwards; and this appears to afford a satisfactory explanation of the expression."

[1] Dogs, a *haelī bāsa* term.

[2] The Sinhalese unit of time here translated "hour" has a duration of twenty minutes.

[3] Lit. charcoal meat altar.

[4] "The words *haskam tiyenawā haebae nam* 'if it be true that there are miracles' were explained to Dr Seligmann as signifying 'if it is true that you have attained power (or become powerful) as a *yaka*.'"

[5] "*eli bānawā* means 'having thrown down (the throat), to swallow.' In the *haelī bāsa, boṭa bānawā*, which means 'to eat,' is literally 'having chopped, to swallow.'"

[6] "*Unkiri daluwa* is 'the bud deficient in milk,' that is, the young coconut before the 'milk' is formed in it."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Kalukalaeba.

782 539

VI. *Ayibō tamunnānsē raekima rakshāwa laebeṇna ōnae yana taeṇaṭa ena taeṇaṭa eben kiri dalu itireṇna wāgē maha maedē*[1] *wārakan ennā wāgē raekima rakshāwa diyunu diyunu karala denna ōnae.*

Hail. You must (cause us) to receive protection and means of support while going and returning. As the young shoot springs up from the eye (of the seed), as the south-west wind comes (causing) great delight, you must bestow two-fold two-fold protection and maintenance.

Bandaraduwa.

VII. *Willin mārāl nangī siṭō, gangin marāl nangīt siṭō, peliyen peliyaṭa williṭo no bin no bin kiyannō. Ayiyō Deyyā.*

From the pool the Brahmany kite has risen, from the river the Brahmany kite has also risen, from line to line at the pool (i.e. flying round it in circles) saying "no place, no place." Alas! O God.

"*Māralu* is a *kaelē bāsa* word for the Brahmany kite. Its cry is said by villagers to be *no bin, no bin*, one meaning of which is 'improper,' which does not appear to be suitable in this invocation. 'There is no place for me now' seems to be the meaning. The spirit of the deceased is compared to the kite which is accustomed to circle round high above the water, uttering this cry."

Uniche.

VIII. *Pelaka nagā marāṇa gat, pelaka gangī marāṇa gat wiliṭa siṭagana no bin kiyālō.*

Wanni allapu dunu kaṇu ital simin simiṭat no bin kiyālō.

Me goḍanwala goḍa taraṇa mal kaḍanna kaḍanna mal aḍu wēlu. Ayiyō, Deyiyā.

The part (? of the dead) whom the cobra killed, (and) the part whom the river killed, having said "(There is) no place (for us)," are stopping at the pool[2].

The bow-sticks (and) arrows[3] seized in the Wanni (the forest), having said "(There is) no place (for them," go) from boundary to boundary (? in other people's possession).

(Through) continuing to break, in these lands, the Vaeddas[4] that pass over the land, the Vaeddas[4] have diminished. Alas, God!

[1] *Maedē* is the genitive case of *mada*, "pleasure," "delight," "rejoicing."

[2] "The context may possibly imply that the spirits of those who die of snake-bite or drowning are left to fly about like the kites, as homeless shades, that is as *prēta*."

[3] "This doubtless refers to the bows and arrows of the deceased."

[4] "The word here translated Vaeddas usually means 'flowers.' It is however quite clear that it is also used to mean 'Vaeddas,' cf. invocation No. III."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bulugahaladena.

IX. *Demaṭamali Demaṭamalā Koṭakaecci uccumbaye māhammā, uccumbaye māhappā depaṭullan pojja mālā weda māl puccal topanṭa aenō kālae wī topaenut kaepallowu.* 782 539

Demaṭamali and Demaṭamalā, excellent Great Mother (and) excellent Great Father of Koṭakacciya, (we) having washed rice in a pot (and) having roasted meat shot with the arrow, may they be made over to you. Eat ye also.

"*Uccumbaye* for *usaba*, excellent.

"Kotakaecci appears to be the name of a place.

"*Pojja* for *pocca*, pot.

"*Weda* for *vaidya* or *vidha*.

"*Māl* for *mālu*, meat.

"*Puccal* for *pulussalā*, roasted."

"Demaṭamali and Demaṭamalā are two flower names, which like numerous others in Sinhalese are used as personal names. Demaṭamalā means flower of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) the last vowel being lengthened by the addition of *a*, as is usual in personal names. Demaṭamali is simply the feminine form."

X. *Demaṭamali uccumbaye mā ammā, Demaṭamalā Koṭakaecci uccumbaye maha appa kankundwa, kabareya, hocca dikkā, mundi, perumā, gayi bokka mā maeda aenō kalapa aena baccapa.*

Demaṭamali, excellent Great Mother, Demaṭamalā excellent Great Father of Koṭakacciya, make over (and) take (and) send down (to us) the sambar, the axis deer, the pig, the iguana (fem.), the large buffalo (?), (and beehives) inside trees hollow (and) large.

"*Hocca dikkā*, 'the long-snouted one.'

"*Mundi* is the fem. of *mundā*, the noosed one.

"*Perumā*. This word is doubtful. It has the form of a *kaelī bāsa* word like the others, and thus must be descriptive of the animal; it may mean 'the large Great one.'

"*Gayi*, pl. of *gā*, tree.

"The word for beehives, *maehikaeli gam*, has been omitted."

Sitala Wanniya.

XI. *Arō rajō Kappun selliya peṇena, nillin anduru deyiyā Aluta Wanniyā, tamāgē haṇaṭa taṇapi hanī kaḍukkan kanamaediran sī dilennaw kalenna dewana warew, Aluta Wanniyā.*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Kapunselliya (Monkeys' Hill) appears (like) the king of health (?), the god dark with verdure, O New Wanniyā. The ear-rings made for his ears shine[1] like fire-flies. Come running to look (at it), O New Wanniyā.

Mr Parker writes: "This invocation is a poetical description of Monkeys' Hill, on which the fire-flies remind the reciter of shining ear-rings. The speaker of the invocation hopes by his glowing description to attract the 'new spirit.'" Our informants at Sitala Wanniya stated that Kapunselliya was a hill on the far side of Walimbagala (Friar's Hood) where their ancestors gathered honey. They said that the invocation first stated that Kapunselliya was dark, and they informed us that this was due to mist or fog. The invocation then appealed to the spirit invoked as "new Wanniya," asking that he should come running to see the ear-rings which had been prepared for his ears and which shone like fire-flies. In spite of the more practical appeal made to the *Nae Yaka* according to the Vedda version, this account coincides in essentials with Mr Parker's translation, since both agree that the object of the invocation is to attract the spirit of the deceased.

Dambani.

XII. *Urōgamat gama Aembulōgamat gama wē aeta kehelan watti, paela kehelan watti waetten de waetta kola wikuduwana parakkuwayi. Mē parakkuwa milame nilā ē Kamburā galaṭa waedalā piluuwan pālā idinnā wēda.*

On some occasions (lit. from occasion to two occasions) in the wild plantain garden and the house (i.e. cultivated) plantain garden at both Urōgama village and Aembulōgama there is delay in the unfolding of the leaves. On account of this delay will the chief Nilā having proceeded to that Kamburā-gala, by the great amount of (his) skill cause the trees to fruit and the fruit to ripen?

We give this invocation with all reserve. As stated elsewhere in this volume the Dambani folk are village Veddas accustomed to parade their "wildness," and it was difficult to work with them, so that it is not improbable that this formula has really nothing to do with the *Nae Yaku*. These remarks apply equally to the following invocation (No. XIII). Mr Parker suggests the possibility that it implied "that as the chief Nilā could twice preserve the plantain trees he might have preserved the Vaeddas if he wished."

[1] "Wrongly put in the Imperative mood."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

XIII. *Acē nidīna gaṇna nedunut Āeakalā Devi visin tamā, ṭolowt mihi haṭa gaṇna nedunut ṭolowt Mihihat Devi visin tamā, kiri boṇa wacaṭa bonna nedunut Kandē Ahut Devi visin tamā.*

Sat mudē e dīsē siṭa me dīsīṭa ennēda nalalī ṭalāgaṇa bo lalī ena wellmā, uṭu wiyan hasdagaṇa waṭa wiyan hasdagaṇa ennamo no weyi. Raṇ andūwa elin teraṇ ati elanut warē deva rodi allāgaṇa ennama. Ehewan allanna gawuraṇ allan hossa dikkā allanno ennō tewē.

To take the hidden treasure of the sky is not permitted by the Goddess (of the sky) Ākāsakālā herself; on the earth to take the gems of the earth is not permitted by the Goddess of the earth, Mahikāntāwa herself; the milk drinking calf is not permitted to drink, by the new Goddess of the hill herself.

Are you coming from that country of the Seven Seas to this country, having split the forehead (i.e. made your appearance out of the forehead), and shaking violently at the very time when you come? You will not come (?unless we) have tied clothes overhead and have tied side cloths (at the shed or *maṇḍwa*). Come and hold in your hand ornamental arches (*teraṇ*) in which is suspended a golden chain. You will come holding a divine wheel (?). Goat catchers, sambar deer catchers, pig catchers will not come (i.e. to ask your assistance on this occasion).

"*Acē* for *ākāsē*, in the sky.

"*Kaṭa* appears to equal *Kāntah*, a gem; or it is derived from the root *khan*, dig, excavate.

"*Wacca* for *wassā*, calf.

"*Andūwa* for *andu*, chain.

"*Rode* may be *rōdaya*, a wheel, but it does not occur elsewhere, and the meaning is doubtful.

"*Hossa dikkā*, 'long snout,' a *kaelī bāsa* word for pig."

With the possible exception of the reference to the "New Goddess of the Hill," which may refer to one of the Maha Yakini (Kiriammā), there is nothing in this invocation belonging to the Vedda form of belief, and we do not doubt that the whole formula has been taken over from foreign sources. Mr Parker writes that he has "no knowledge of Ākāsakālā, the Sky Goddess," but that "Mahi-kāntāwa is well known as the personification of the earth, literally 'Earth' (*mahi*), 'woman' (*kāntāwa*)."

The appearance of divine children by other means than birth *per vias naturales* is a common Hindu belief of which Mr Parker cites the following instances: "Ayiyanār, the son of Mōhinī,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

an incarnation of Vishnu, is said in Ceylon and India to have appeared from Vishnu's hand.....there is the well known story of the production of the four castes from the body of Brahma[1]."

Henebedda.

The heading of this invocation *Paṭṭiwelaṭa Panikki Yakā makuṭa kiyana kavi* signifies "Song sung for the cattle herds to Panikki Yaka the Chief." The *yaka* invoked is the spirit of the sixteenth century chief Panikki Vedda, whose history is given in Chapter I. To some extent this invocation bridges the gap between the nameless *Nae Yaku* and the Vedda heroes, though it is obvious that the worship of Panikkia Yaka is allied to the *Baṇḍaru* cult to which we have alluded elsewhere. Our informants, however, did not regard Panikkia Yaka as a Baṇḍāra.

XIV. *Asa guru kapayi, Bola tōpā yāluwā.*
Polō guru kapayi, Bola tōpā yāluwā.
Gasannli sulanmayi, Bola tōpā yāluwā.
Igalennli pa(n)daralmayi, Bola tōpā yāluwā.

Kasā iraṭa piṭen iru kīndi ādinnawu ādinnawu,
Muna muna pārakkuda, Nīlamī Nīlā?

Kuḍā naṇbi ralē naewatuṇ, bālaññada, bālannada?
Kudā naṇbi raelat hodīmayi, Bola tōpā yāluwā.
Mahā naṇbi raelē naewatuṇ bālaññada Bola tōpā yāluwā?
Madā naṇbi raelīt hodī Bola tōpā yāluwā.

Dunna gatat sonda widaman, Panikkiyā.
Polla gatat sonda naewatuṇ, Panikkiyā.
Manda gatat sonda bandaman, Panikkiyā.
Ada mutanata eyi, Gembaru Panikkiya.

[1] This is given in the Purana as follows (Wilson's translation, p. 44): "Formerly, oh best of Brahmans, when the truth-meditating Brahma was desirous of creating the world, there sprang from his mouth beings specially endowed with the quality of goodness; others from his breast,...others from his thighs,...and others from his feet...."

The Vishnu Purana records (p. 30) that when Brahma found that his mind-born progeny were unsuitable for peopling the world, "he was filled with wrath capable of consuming the three worlds, the flame of which invested, like a garland, heaven, earth, and hell. Then from his forehead, darkened with angry frowns, sprang Rudra, radiant as the noon-tide sun, fierce, of vast bulk, and of a figure which was half male, half female."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

The sky is becoming purple, O thou Friend!
The earth is becoming purple, O thou Friend!
Blows even the wind also, O thou Friend!
Even the small birds are flying also, O thou Friend!

From behind the yellow sun, draw, draw the sun's rays.
What is the (reason of the) delay, Chief Nilā?

Shall I look, shall I look if a small heifer has stopped in the herd? (that is, is in the herd).
Even a small heifer is not in the herd, O thou Friend!
Shall I look if a large heifer has stopped in the herd, O thou Friend?
A large heifer is also not in the herd, O thou Friend!

Should he take the bow, he is able to shoot well, the Panikkiya.
Should he take the cudgel, he is good at stopping (the buffaloes), the Panikkiya.
Should he take the noose, he is able to tie well, the Panikkiya.
Today he will come here, the speckled Panikkiya.

Invocations to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka.

With a single exception (No. XXIII) all these invocations are recited in order to procure game. No. XV was sung whilst dancing round an arrow struck in the ground as is described in Chapter IX. [224]

The remainder (with the exception of No. XXIII already noted) are sung at the *kirikoraha* ceremony. Although the invocations used at the *kirikoraha* ceremony present almost every stage of development, and some invocations such as Nos. XVIII and XXII are obviously composed of fragments belonging to different strata of belief, in every case the *yaku* called upon are the spirits of Kande Wanniya and his brother Bilindi.

No. XXIII is especially interesting, as it shows that such powerful foreign spirits as Riri Yaka and Indigollae Yaka when adopted into the Vedda system assumed Vedda characteristics, and so became subject to Kande Yaka.

Bandaraduwa.

XV. *Kandē sifa Kandahaṭē nā hola andan*
Bē hola andan-tāla tanā
Sonda sonda gal gewarungē piyen piyana
Ōṭu yannē maya kandē mul pola Wanniyā.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Having made arrow-heads of the shape of Na leaves,
Of the shape of Bō leaves, from hill to hill,
From foot-(print) to foot-(print) of excellent sambar deer,
There (he) goes, my Wanniyā of the Chief Place of the hill.

Mr Parker explains that the "chief place of the hill" is its crest or summit, but in every case in which the expression *Kandē mul pola Wanniyā* occurred in an invocation our informants explained that the expression was one of the names of Kande Yaka, and they clearly regarded these words as constituting a proper name. *Wanniyā* is a common constituent of Vedda names, and has something of the significance of chief or leader. Mr Parker points out that it means "he of the Wanni" or "he of the forest track," and that it is a title given to Vedda chiefs in former times. Mr Parker considers this invocation important, [411] "since it shows that the arrow heads were of two shapes, a narrow one with nearly parallel sides (resembling the leaf of the *nā* tree or ironwood) like some Sinhalese arrows, and a broader one (resembling the *bō* leaf"). At the present day the heads of Vedda arrows are long and relatively narrow, that is, roughly of the shape of a leaf of the *nā* tree. We have not seen any arrow heads whose shape recalled the leaf of the *bō* tree.

Invocation to Kande Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

XVI. *Kandaha siṭa handahaṭa yanna yanna handu nirindu wasi wasinnaw. Rēranne damaṭa siṭa handē damunsṭa sonda sonda gal-gowrupul piyen piya kurippi elayanna handē mul pala Wanniyā.*

King of the Hills, who continues to go from hill to hill, cause rain[1]. (He is) the Wanniyā of the Chief place of the hill, who causes to fall the hoofs of excellent sambar deer, from foot (print) to foot (print), from Rēranne Damane (the grass plain of teals) to Kande Damane (the grass plain of the hill)[2].

"*Nirindu* from *nara* and *indra*, a poetical expression meaning 'chief of men.' It is never used colloquially by Sinhalese.

"*Kurippi* = *kuṛippu* (Tamil) 'mark,' 'traces.'"

[1] "Lit. rain rain."

[2] "These names signify respectively 'the grass plain of the teal' and 'the grass plain of the hill.' Dr Seligmann was told that these hills teemed with game though on inquiry it appeared that no man had visited them or knew their situation."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Invocation to Kande Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Uniche.

XVII. *Mī hunda piṭa yanna yanna mī handī mul pela Wanniyayi. Mī guru pāsu nili pada wassī wahinna wahinna honda honda māgallannī piyen ādī ivā yannī handīd mul pela Wanniya.*

It is the Wanniyā of the chief place (crest) of this hill who continues to go onto this hill. The Wanniyā of the chief place of the hill, who continues to cause (lit. to rain) this rain of great drops, drops from a dense (cloud), makes out foot-print by foot-(print) of excellent sambar deer.

Invocation to Bilindi Yaka at Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

XVIII. *An aṭi ālī nan nasti gōnā atin alla dena saṭi Bilindi Rajā. Tandena tānina tāna tandena tānine. Masā māyā mudu maddī e ran haṭiyahi suwanine.*

Like (one) catching with (his) hand and giving the nameless sambar deer in the country where there are horns, (is) King Bilindi. Tandena tānina tāna tandena tānine. There is a golden flag in the midst of the sea full of fish, O Lord!

We consider that this invocation is certainly corrupt; further there can be no doubt that it should refer to an unnamed country and a horned sambar, as in invocation No. XXII, where, as pointed out by Mr Parker, the "unnamed country" is the applicant's own country which it was unnecessary for him to name.

Dedication of flesh and rice to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka[1].

Henebedda.

XIX. *Āyibōhōwā, āyibōhōwā. Kandī hasta hat hattuwahata nāyahawā Kandī mustola ahat deyiyannānshīta Kandī Wanniyāta; Kan Mīran Wanniyāta, Mīran ahat deyiyannānshīta; Dalumura Wanniyāta, Dalumura*

[1] This was recited at Henebedda over the food the dedication of which we have described on p. 220. Plate XXVIII, fig. 2 is a reproduction of a photograph taken while the shaman dedicated the food.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

alut dayiyannānshīṭa; Ru aḍukku Wanniyāṭa, Ru aḍukku alut dayiyannāmshīṭa; Daḍayan Wanniyāṭa, Daḍayan alut dayiyannāmshīṭa; Bilindi Wanniyāṭa, Bilindi alut dayiyannānshīṭa. Adat man mē eppu haradena ru aḍukkuwaṭa tamunnānsilā thāren weḍiāren bokāāren ḷiyāāren diwas harunā haragena mē daḍa wacaddāṭa asli gawarun gal gawarun atin allā di tmunsīṭa weḍimunṇ awu harawā druḍa yahapoti. Ayibōhōwā, ayibōhōwā.

Long life, long life to Kandē Wanniyā, to the new god of the chief place of the hill who has become the chief of the Group of the Sixty-Seven of the Hill; to Kan Mīran Wanniyā, to the new god Mīran; to Dalumura Wanniyā, to the new god Dalumura; to Ru aḍukku Wanniyā, to the new god Ru aḍukku; to Daḍayan Wanniyā, to the new god Daḍayan; to Bilindi Wanniyā, to the new god Bilindi.

Today, also, granting your divine favour to the beautiful cooked food of this offering which I give, as quickly as an arrow, as quickly as a gunshot, as quickly as an egret, as quickly as flying, having caught with the hand and given to this hunting Vaedda axis deer and sambar, may it seem good (to you) to arrange them at the point of the arrow, at the point of the gun-shot, and give (them there). Long life, long life!

"The 'Group of the Sixty-seven,' the *Haṭṭa-hat Kaṭṭuwa*, is well-known in the North-western Province. These are nearly all Baṇḍāra or deified chiefs. Though still called 'the Sixty-seven,' their number is now well over a hundred.

"Kan Mīran Wanniyā and his three associates are the subordinates or the attendants on Kandē Yaka. I cannot explain the duties of Kan Mīran Wanniyā; Dalumura Wanniyā is the one who presents Kande Yaka with betel; Ru Aḍukku Wanniyā presents him with cooked food, and Dadayan Wanniyā kills game for him.

"*Weḍi* is the word always used for a gun-shot by Sinhalese and Tamils; also for the explosion of the charge when blasting."

Godatalawa.

XX. *Hāt Bilindīvatāwā anguru mas yahana balāgalla.*
Kandē Wanniyā anguru mas yahana balāgalla.
Dalumuru Wanniyā anguru mas yahana balāgalla.
Puluṭṭā anguru mas yahana balāgalla.
Riddē Wanniyā anguru mas yahana balāgalla.

Seven Bilindi godlings, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Kandē Wanniyā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Dalumura Wanniyā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Puluṭṭā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Riddē Wanniyā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

This formula was given us by an old man Handuna of Godatalawa, both as a dedication of food to Kande Yaka, and an invocation asking for game. We cannot explain the expression *Hāt Bilindīvatāwā*; to Handuna it was a synonym for Bilindi, and he assured us that the first line was addressed to Bilindi Yaka. Mr Parker points out that Puluṭṭā may mean "fried meat Wanniyā" and Riddē Wanniyā, "the Wanniyā who caused pain." If this be so Puluṭṭā must be regarded as the Wanniya who fried meat for Kande Yaka[1]. We can offer no suggestion as to the significance of the expression "the Wanniyā who caused pain."

Invocation to Bilindi Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Menebedda.

Sung while the shaman dances with a coconut and *aude* as shown in Plate XXIX, figs. 1 and 2.

XXI. *Tundana, tānina, tāna tandna; tandana tānina tānina.*
Appuga wayasai bos 'wel(ri)di nati, sāt awuruddayi pain uni.
Sāt awuruddīpa ādāt wela gos e ran Bandāra, Sāmini.
Tandana tānina tāna tandna; tandana tānina tānina.

Appustuniṭa wiyapu hacciya piyun dāsayi, Sāmini.
Appustuniṭa wiyapu puprud piyun dāsayi, Sāmini.
Elamai kiru mā aendapu hatiya atma gangā rasli vikidumi.
Tandana tānina tāna tandna; tandana tānina tānina.

Kuvi kiyandat bayi hari mapu, udahasak wai wida? āyiyā!
Nan nati baddā au asti gāna āten allā dena Sawāmi.
Kande upin dasmu sulan nillapu nawan handulen tema mini.
Kuti upan nubtma malayā nacrawi mama tanikamapada, Nayidā
Kuti upan nubi malayat aragena ellan hāraupan, Nayidā
An asti gawara allā dena hahi Maonih-talāwi Bilindi āviyā.

Tandana etc.
The age of the Chief's Son was not many years; seven years had gone by.
A time equal to seven years having gone (he became) the Forest Chief, O Lord.
Tandana etc.

[1] There is another possibility; on the analogy of the *avana* ceremony described at the end of this chapter it may be suggested that Puluṭṭā was held to be the first Veddin to offer fried meat at this ceremony. We do not consider this probable however.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
639

There were a thousand flowers on the cloth woven for the Chief's Son, O Lord!
There were a thousand flowers on the seat plaited for the Chief's Son, O Lord!
The cloth he wore, worked with *alamel* flowers and the parrot (?), like the waves of the river is spread out.
Tandana etc.
Through fear I cannot sing songs (properly). Will there be any anger (on account of it)? Alas!
The (rain) wind which he sent down from above the hill to the verdure is wetting with tears the face
(Of) the Lord who in the nameless jungle catches with his hands and gives the sambar deer possessing horns.
For what (fear of) solitude did (you) kill your own younger brother born of the same mother, O Nayidē?
Taking your younger brother born of the same mother play games (with him), O Nayidē.
(Addressing Bilindi) You are able to catch and give sambar deer possessing horns, O God Bilindi of Maenik-talāwa.

The words *ran Baṇḍāra* which are here translated Forest Chief might also mean Golden Chief. As already stated it appears to us that in the majority of these invocations the adjective "golden" is used to signify "excellent" or "admirable," but concerning this Mr Parker writes:

"*Ran* as an adjective almost always means 'golden,' but in such a case ought to be spelt with ṇ. I inserted preferentially 'Forest' in this case, as there is no reason given why he should suddenly become golden. I should generally understand 'golden' to mean 'of a golden nature or colour'; I do not think it would ever be applied to a person or deity who is dark coloured, however excellent he might be. I have heard a path termed 'like gold' by way of emphasising its excellence, but it is very unusual to employ it with this meaning."

In spite of the weight that must be attached to Mr Parker's opinion we do not agree with him in this matter, and in support of our opinion adduce the expression "golden jewelled cord" in invocation No. XXVI. We may also mention that in the invocation to Kosgama Baṇḍāra, the hero's corpse is described as "golden[1]."

[1] Cf. *Man*, 1909, where is given the translation of the invocation used in calling upon Kosgama for assistance.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mr Parker points out that in line 7 *mā* may stand for *mahā* or *masā*, sewn. Line 12 may be understood in two ways according to whether we read "For what (fear of) solitude," etc., or "For what need of solitude," etc. According to one account Kande Yaka killed his younger brother Bilindi because he felt lonely as a *yaka* and yearned for his company. This was the legend we heard at Henebedda, but another version makes Kande Wanniya kill his infant brother in a fit of temper because Bilindi being hungry annoyed him by constant whining. The thirteenth line, in which Kande Yaka is addressed as Nayidē, suggests that the Henebedda version of the legend is here referred to in the preceding line. We were told that Nayidē was here used as a name for Kande Yaka but could not discover the reason for this. Mr Parker points out that in Sinhalese *nayidē* simply means artificer.

782
539

Invocation to Bilindi Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Uniche.

XXII. *Kapā maṇik gal obtā, bāpata lela-diti tamā, ela kirala aendapu hacciya sīma rasīpata vihi-dunā. Appugu*[1] *wayasat bohō halak atti tun aburuddayi pasu wunā. Nan natti desē, an atti gīnā allā denawada Bilindi Rajā.*

Having cut the Gem-rock thereby himself removing the command (regarding it), like the folds of the waves are spread out is the bleached cloth he wore. It will be a long time since three years of the Chief's son's age passed. In the unnamed country will you catch and give a sambar deer with horns, King Bilindi?

This invocation obviously consists of two parts, embodying ideas belonging to very different strata of thought. The last sentence requires no more than a reference to invocation No. XVIII, to explain "the unnamed country." The sentence before this refers to the belief that Bilindi was three years old when Kande Yaka killed him. Probably these two sentences belong to the same stratum of belief, and certainly the Veddas understood what they meant. It was otherwise with regard to the first part of this invocation, our informants could not tell

[1] Appu for Appuhāmi, the former title of the son of a chief.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

7182
539

us what this meant or even translate it, though our interpreter stated that he thought it had something to do with the dress of the *yaka*. Clearly this part of the invocation is foreign, and Mr Parker suggests that since Bilindi means "the child" there is "a possibility that he is Ayiyanār, the guardian Forest Deity of Ceylon, who is represented at Tanjore as a youth. Bilindi is said by Nevill to be the son of the (Indigollaewa) Kiri Amma, who is identified by the Sinhalese as Mohini, a female personification of Vishnu; and Ayiyanār is the son of Mohini." This is supported by the reference to the Gem-rock, for as Mr Parker writes "the Kiri Amma split the sapphire gem at the sapphire mountain." Thus in the later part of the invocation, Ayiyanār may have been assimilated to Bilindi Yaka.

INVOCATION WITH BOW TO DETERMINE WHAT YAKA HAS CAUSED ILLNESS.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXIII. *Ayibōwā, āyibōwā. Tummaṇkaḍa suwāmin wahansa gul pīnata, duru pīnaṭa, suba pīnaṭa ahu harala deṇḍa ōnae. Mayē pīnaṭa eṇḍa ōnae. Kandē Wanniyā heru pīna at-haera leḍa kala yakā maṭa ada ahu karawaṇḍa ōnae. Riri Yakā Indilegolle Yakā, Rāhu Yakun, Paṭṭa Yakun, mē suba pīnaṭa ahu harala deṇḍa ōnae.*

Long life! Long life! Lord of Tamankaduwa, through (my) stones' soothsaying, through bows' soothsaying, through auspicious soothsaying, (you) must catch and give (him). Through my soothsaying, (he) must come. Kande Wanniya, having laid aside false soothsaying, (you) must cause me to seize today the Yaka who caused the sickness. (Whether) Riri Yaka, Indilegolle Yaka[1], Rahu Yaku, or Patta Yaku, through this auspicious soothsaying (you) must seize and give (him).

Riri Yakā or Siri Yakā is the blood demon of the Sinhalese. The Rahu Yaku appear to correspond to the Sinhalese demon Rahu Yaka[2]. We consider this invocation important as it definitely expresses what we found to be the general opinion among the

[1] Clearly a slip for Indigollee Yaka.

[2] He was originally an Asura who surreptitiously drank some of the ambrosia produced by the Gods and Demons. Mohini cut off his head, but it had become immortal and was transformed into the planetary sign (personified) which causes eclipses by trying to swallow the sun and moon because they drew the attention of Mohini to him. For the substance of this note we are indebted to Mr Parker.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

wilder Veddas. Kande Yaka is called upon to help, he is the spirit of a dead Vedda, one of themselves, and would never be suspected of sending sickness. It is only the stranger who brings evil things. But Kande Yaka is more powerful than the foreign *yaku* and by his help it is discovered which of them has caused sickness. In the field we found reason to believe that Indigollae Yaka and Riri Yaka and the Rahu Yaku were foreign in origin, we did not however suspect Patta Yaka, but Mr Parker says, "The Patta Yaku are diseases personified, and are male and female. The Sinhalese enumerate twelve or eighteen called Garā (m.) or Girī (f.); of these two are Paṭṭa Garā and Paṭṭa Girī. They especially afflict women and children."

782
539

Invocations used while collecting Honey.

Godatalawa.

XXIV. *Alut divi hāmuduruwō, mashibili gamak fennanja ānal ada. Kapala hangatī yaṭṭāna.*

Lady New Goddess, (you) must show (me) a bee-hive today. Having chopped (it out) I will hide (it) and go.

Mr Parker suggests that the honey gatherer "hints to the Goddess that he and she will divide the honey between them, unknown to the other Vaeddas and that thus she will obtain a larger share than usual." This would be quite contrary to Vedda ethics, and it seems to us more probable that the honey is hidden in order to prevent the bees carrying it away. The gatherer might well be fatigued after his exertions and would certainly not attempt to rest in the immediate neighbourhood of the bees he had robbed, nor would he leave the honey exposed where it would attract the bees.

Unuwatura Bubula.

XXIV a. *Raja Ommangalliyā*
Mī gurawen Ammā.
Guru halī rakiyā
Mī wawwal hapāla hennalā
Dum fāliyen fennalā
Kaḷuwen hapāla

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Paliyaṭa damālā
Mīrae mīriya ṭaeni geṇaedin
Geṇen geṇen baḍagiṇi
Aerenna hanna.

O Omungalla Sovereign!
Mother—by this respect (paid to you)—
Who protects (us) by (your) great authority!
Having cut and lowered the (ladder of) great cane,
Having driven off (the bees) by the shield of smoke,
Having cut (the comb) with the sword,
Having put (it) down into the vessel,
Having fetched the sweetest honey[1]. Bring (it),
Bring (it) (for us) to eat, to lay aside (our) hunger.

Nevill has recorded a very similar invocation which he obtained from a Vedda of Walimbagala (Friar's Hood)[2]. He also records the following invocation which was given him by a Vedda of Omuni.

Maehi-keli Waniyā
Gal naewili Waniyā
Maehi kelanne maehi urāl
Hinā-maten keli kōpayen
Oppu ganawā tobā deyiyen.

Bee Wanniya,
Wanniya of rock worship!
(Of) the honey-comb of the bees,
Laughing at the anger of the bees,
Be pleased to take the offering,
O thou from the Gods!

The above translation has been prepared by Mr Parker and is rather more literal than either of Nevill's translations, for he gives two. That printed below shows "the sense that the construction and words of this invocation convey" to a Vedda

"Oh Lord of the Bees!
Oh Lord of the Rock!
Honeycombs of honey bee,
With laughter and with merriness,
I offer them to Thee."

[1] Or "sweet honey like toddy."
[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. ii, p. 187.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Nevill records that "after each line" his informant "threw a little honey, the first cut from the cliff, to the Spirit of the Rock, and then proceeded to take the rest of the combs. He told me it was an ancient custom his ancestors followed, called 'paeni adina yadinda,' or to 'charm the drawing of honey.'"

Henebedda.

XXV. *Bori, Bori, Wanniyē.*

Nilwan pāliya neden kiyā, ē kimaṭa kāṭū ipal wēlen gāsā widinnayi kiyā daelen daelaṭa. Aendun waeṭī enni māyē kumala Wanniyē.

Ekē mēkat kōdeyi kiyā, daelen daelaṭa katu ipal gāsā widinnī widinnī.

Diya aendūn waeṭigena yanḍōmō yannī nan yannī.

Mal aendun waeṭigena yanni nan yannī.

Guru aendun waeṭigena yanḍōmō yannī nam yannī.

Ela aendun waeṭigena yanḍōmō yannī nam yannī.

Aenga wāṭī baendigena yanḍōmō yannī nam yannī.

The translation of the heading of this invocation is "Stanza said by Veddas when cutting *bambara* on a hill or tree."

(Their sound is) *bori, bori,* O Wanniya[1]!

When (I) said[2], "(I) will not give (you) the dark-coloured vessel[3]" (containing the honey), at that remark company by company (of bees) said, "From (this) time, having beaten (you as if with) thorny rods, (we) will pierce" (you with our stings). (My) clothes are falling off (on account of the stinging), O my dear Wanniya!

When (I) said "There is nothing in it" (the vessel), company by company (of bees) having beaten (me as if with) thorny rods are piercing, are piercing (me with their stings).

(My) watered clothes (i.e. cloth with waved pattern) falling off, (I) am indeed setting off to go, (I) am going.

(My) flowered clothes falling off, I am indeed going, I am going.

(My) dark clothes falling off, I am indeed setting off to go, I am going.

(My) white clothes falling off, I am indeed setting off to go, I am going.

Tying (the clothes) round (my) body I am indeed setting off to go, I am going.

"*Maligi* is presumably *mālinī*, a form of stanza.

[1] *Bori, bori* is onomatopoeic of the humming of bees.

[2] Lit. "having said."

[3] Mr Parker considers that *nilwan pāliya* should be translated "blue-coloured" but that it may also mean "black" or "dark-coloured." As the result of our examination of the colour sense and colour names of the Veddas detailed in Chapter XIV we are convinced that in the present instance "dark-coloured" is the correct reading.

782
539

"*Pilipu*, a vessel. The word occurs with this meaning in another invocation.

"*Kumala*, that is *kumala*, tender.

"*Yandinu yanni* for *yandinu yanni*, a common expression in Sinhalese.

"*Aendun* (properly *aendum*), 'clothes,' is in the plural, and means much more than a loin cloth. A European's dress—the various articles collectively—is called *aendum*.

"*Guru* often applied to a purple sky may also mean 'excellent'; perhaps it might here mean dark."

This is one of the invocations of which we obtained no satisfactory translation in the field. Mr Parker holds that "the whole invocation is devoted to explaining to the Wanniya the suppliant's urgent need of his assistance, without which he will be compelled to abandon the work."

We consider it far more probable that the honey collector is essentially talking at the bees while apparently talking to the Wanniya and his companions at the top of the crag[1]. While helping himself to the honey he explains—for the benefit of the bees—that having heard their determination to sting him, he was hurrying away in such haste that his clothes are falling from him, notwithstanding that he has told the bees that there is nothing, i.e. no honey, in his collecting pot.

Invocation before taking Bambara honey, sung by a man as he is lowered over the cliff.

Bandaraduwa.

XXVI. *Tobā deyiyani, tobā deyiyani, alut mala upān narwini sināwa hitu, hamādiyan, machihellanni machi ural eipu aragana, issara ahi machicci alut mala upan narwini sināwa, pasai ahi machicci mala upan narwini sināwa, machihellan ammā appā wāgē hella, mē ran mini hendaja diva diwas pāla, tobā deyyani, tobā deyyani, tobā deyyani.*

Ara maya, ara maya, aluta Wanni Hurun, daelen daelaja hātu ipal gasi yanni, aluta Wanni Huruniyi.

[1] There is nothing to show who is the Wanniya addressed. If—as appears certain—the honey gatherer speaks to another Vedda on the cliff above him, this formula scarcely comes under the heading of this chapter (Invocations), but it is undoubtedly convenient to keep this with the other invocations sung while collecting honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Ara maya, ara maya, tellun bāḍe nangi ḍāḍama kawudat aḍun paḍun kādoyi biyalā, tiaṭa karaṭa piṭen duwā yanni, ālula Wanni Hurunḷyā.

You Gods, You Gods! By the good will and superiority (?) of the newly dead and reborn new host (of spirits), taking (these) offerings of honey-comb of the bees, you who may be the first destroyed of the newly dead and reborn new host (of spirits, and) you who may be the subsequently destroyed of the newly dead and reborn new host (of spirits),—having caused the bees to sport (round me) like a mother or father, protect this golden jewelled cord (i.e. the ladder of creepers) by (your) divine eyes, you Gods, you Gods.

That (honey) is mine, that is mine, New Wanni Lords. Company by company, (as if with) thorny rods, (you) keep beating (me), O New Wanni Lords (i.e. the bees).

That (honey) is mine, that is mine. (Regarding your) hard (or excessive) blows on the very feet that ascended (the ladder of creepers), no one having said there are deficiencies, (yet) you are going running from my back to my head and neck, O New Wanni Lords (i.e. to give still more blows or stings).

"This invocation contains several expressions not met with previously, and I can only give doubtful translations of part of it.

"*Naewini* probably *nawīna*, 'fresh' or 'new.' I think it has nothing to do with *nāī wenawā*, to become a relative, the first word of which is always pronounced with a long vowel by both Vaeddas and Sinhalese.

"*Hamādiya*, from *sasma* 'all' and *ādiya* 'first,' or *ādika* 'great.'

"*Oipu* for *oppu*, proofs, evidence; but used by Vaeddas and Wanniyas for offering.

"*Maskicca*, from v. *mākanawā*, 'to obliterate,' 'to destroy.'

"*Kella*, from v. *kelinawā*, 'to sport.'

"*Aekī* for *haekī*, possible.

"*Ara maya* is unlikely to be *asruma*, verbal noun of *arinawā*, 'to leave,' or 'to let go.'

'*Tellun*, pl. of *taelluma*, v. noun of *talanawā*, 'to beat.'

"*Bādā* may be *bāḍa*, 'hard,' 'solid' or *bāḍhā*, 'promise' or 'much,' 'excessive.'

"*Aḍun paḍun*, pl. of *aḍupāḍuma*, 'deficiency.'

"*Kādoyi* means 'it is not,' or 'there is not,' from *haḍaṭa*, 'not.' In the last paragraph of this invocation the negative is expressed thus: 'some having said there are not deficiencies.'"

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

This is one of the invocations of which we could only obtain an explanation in part, but luckily our informants were perfectly clear as to the meaning they attached to the first part of the invocation, and we feel confident that the following lines give the significance attached by them to this part of this invocation.

You spirits, you spirits of the recently dead and of the old dead, you *nae* (relative) spirits, take this offering of honey comb and protect me as a father and mother. Protect this rope.

Concerning the word *upan* which in this invocation Mr Parker translates "reborn," this authority writes, "*Upan* which I have translated reborn, literally means 'born'; but the other word more correctly expresses the meaning....The view I should take of the matter is that the person died and was buried. Then when the Vaeddas find him or his spirit in existence again they term it a re-birth in the world of spirits. This kind of expression is common in Buddhism; compare *kelawara devlowa uppannēya*, 'he was (re)born in the final god-world' (Dhātuvansa)."

Although the Veddas of Bandaraduwa have come very much under foreign influence we feel convinced that they have no such carefully formulated ideas of re-birth as Mr Parker suggests, and we believe that the words of the invocation and the significance that the Veddas attach to it, can be harmonized without doing violence to Vedda modes of religious thought, by considering the translation as being from the comparatively unimportant *preta* to the full powered *yaka*, though as pointed out by Mr Parker, this would not be re-birth in the usual Sinhalese (Buddhist) sense.

With regard to the expression *nāī* (relative) spirits in the Vedda version, Mr Parker writes: "If *naewini* were a mistake for *nāī wena*, the translation of the first part after 'Gods' would be, 'By the goodwill and superiority of the newly dead and *reborn host who are becoming* (*our*) *relatives*.'" The words in italics indicate only the meaning of the words *alut mala upan naewini sēnāwa*.

Nāe wena sēnāwa is *nāī*, "kinsfolk," *wena*, "becoming," and *sēnāwa*, "host," "multitude."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Invocations to Bambura Yaka.

The invocations to Bambura Yaka are the most puzzling of all those we collected. None of our informants understood them and the translations given were fragmentary, or else we were told that although the words of the sentences could be translated so as to make some sort of sense, the significance of the invocation was unknown, or if appreciated did not necessarily agree with the meaning of the literal translation. Further, although it is certain that Bambura Yaka especially gives success in searching for yams and hunting pig, Mr Parker's translations make it quite certain that these invocations really apply to honey collecting. The reference to the "golden creeper," i.e. the ladder made of jungle creepers and used in taking honey, lowered across the face of the Inginiya rock makes this certain. Nevertheless both at Sitala Wanniya and Uniche, invocations with these expressions in them were recited as invocations to Bambura Yaka to send pig, and none of our informants regarded Bambura Yaka as having anything to do with honey. It may be suggested tentatively that the resemblance in sound of Bambura the home of the *yaka* and *bambara*, the word for the rock bee, may have brought about this confusion.

[222
417]

Sitala Wanniya.

XXVII. *Mē mage Bamburaṇi, Bamburaṇi. Magē Bamburō bat haddī nāḍaw nāḍaw gala gala suniyaniyē.*

Mē mata muratata gaḍu maḍanā maḍubat hāpu hapata sindu dendō hapa no hiyandō. Mē kuḍā Inginiyā galata hāpu rap wata galat gala gala mē wara waeṭī golō.

This is my Bamburā, Bamburā. While my Bamburā is eating rice make a sound, make a sound, "gala, gala"—save, save (him)—by magic.

At this very instant destroying the mounds (on the face of the rock) be pleased to give to the mouth that has eaten honey (the power to sing) songs (correctly and) not to speak nonsense. Save, save (both) the golden creeper that has been lowered down this little Inginiya rock and the rock, (or otherwise) this time the rock will fall.

*Bamburō (pl.) and Bamburani are honorific forms of Bamburā. Compare *Makaraṇiṇi*, used in addressing a king.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

"*Nādaw* for *nāḍa karapan*, or perhaps *nāḍa weyan*, 'may there be a sound.'

"*Gala gala*. Compare *galawanawā*, 'to save,' 'deliver.'

"*Masā*, probably *mṛiśa*, from root *mṛiś*, Skt. 'to touch.'

"*Murata* for *muhūrta*, a moment.

"*Goḍu*, pl. of *goḍa*, a mound.

"*Maḍānī* for *madaṇa*, from root *mṛid*, Skt. to crush, destroy.

"*Bāpu* from v. *bānawā*, to lower.

"*Bana kiyanda*, 'to repeat the Buddhist Scriptures,' is used colloquially with the meaning here given.

"*Golō* for *galo*, 'rock,' as in another invocation addressed to this *yaka*."

Mr Parker writes: "This is a prayer for the protection of the ladder of creepers down which the honey gatherer descends, and also to prevent the fall of loose pieces of projecting rock on his head. First the suppliant asks for magical words to arouse the attention of the *yaka*. The rest of the invocation is evidently addressed to the *yaka* himself."

Uniche.

XXVIII. *Mī Iṅgiṇiya galaṭa bāpu raṇ waela waelat wael mī wara waeṭiyī. Mī apa Bamburō bat kaṇa raṇ maṇḍī. Mārtu mal andan saḍī galō. Mī apa Bamburō bat haḍdī nādaw, nāḍaw gal gala suniyanī.*

The golden creeper and the jungle creepers lowered down this Inginiya rock will fall this time (unless protected by the Yaka). This (rock) is the golden plate off which our Bambura eats rice. It is a rock made in the form of the Marut flower. While this our Bambura is eating rice make a sound, make a sound, "gal, gala"—save save (him)—by magic.

"*Waelat* is probably *wala* plus *t*, forest or jungle.

"*Mārtu* for *marut*, a plant.

"*Andan* for *andama*, manner, state.

"*Galō* for *gala*, rock.

"Apparently it is the rock which is expected to emit a noise that will arouse the attention of the *yaka*. The suppliant praises it in order to propitiate it."

This invocation was not understood by our informants, nor could we ascertain that it was sung to any *yaka* other than one who was called Mulpola Hitiye Yaka, "the *yaka* who stopped a

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the summit of the hill[1]." Unfortunately we omitted to ask whether this was a synonym for Kande Yaka who, in other invocations, is addressed as Kande Mulpola Wanniya, but the tone of the whole invocation with its reference to the "sword called Golden" is as unlike any other invocation to Kande as it well can be. This invocation is thoroughly foreign in form and sentiment.

782
539

Sitala Wanniya.

Invocation addressed to Mulpola Hitiye Yaka, "the yaka who stopped at the Chief Place," i.e. the summit of the hill, at the Bambura ceremony.

XXIX.

Raṇ nan kaḍuwē nawa danitot
Apalā Wannige nawa no kiyā.
Apalā Wannige nawa danitot
Raṇ nan kaḍuwē nawa no kiyā.

Angara naṭun naṭaṇa Wanniṭa
Sonda sonda bera ṗada gasāṗaw.
Sellan naṭun naṭaṇa Wanniṭa
Sonda sonda bera ṗada gasāṗaw.

If you know the eulogy of the sword called Golden
Do not say the praise of our Wanniya.
If you know the eulogy of our Wanniya
Do not say the praise of the sword called Golden.

To the Wanniya who dances gesture-dances
Beat excellent tunes (lit. verses) on the tom-tom.
To the Wanniya who dances sportive-dances
Beat excellent tunes on the tom-tom.

Our informants, though providing a translation of the words of this invocation which approximates to the translation given by Mr Parker, could not tell us the significance thereof. Indeed they were only clear on one matter, that in spite of what the invocation said they had no drums and never had had drums. Handuna stated that the translation of the second verse should be:—

Sing loudly to him who dances the *angeru* dance.
Sing loudly to him who dances playful dances.

None could say what the *angeru* dance might be.

[1] Or perhaps the *yaka* to whom the Mulpola Hitiye belonged. Hitiye whatever else it may signify is also the ancient name for a particular form of pointed weapon.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Mr Parker suggests that the meaning of the first verse "may be that the Wanniya is too important a personage for anything else to be praised in the same breath (even his golden sword), and that 'at the same time' is to be understood at the end of the second and fourth lines of the translation."

Mr Parker also suggests that Mulpola Hitiye Yaka may be a synonym of "Gale Yaka (Yaka of the Rock) who danced on hills, and whose worshippers dance on many hills or crags of the Vaedi-rata as well as the North-western Province. *Hitiye* is a participial adjective derived from *hitinawa* to stay or stop; the literal translation of *mulpola hitiye Yaka* is 'Chief-place-stopped-Yaka!'"

Invocation at Pregnancy Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

Us Mukkāliya[1] Song, at pregnancy dance.

XXX. *Us mukkāliya waṭo, maeda mukkāliya waṭō, bāla kaṇuwa waṭō paena daewaṭī ennau, dēvatāwayi.*

Having jumped round the high tripod, round the middle tripod, round the small post, come, wrapped up. (He) is a Dēvatāwa (godling).

This invocation was recited by the dancers at the pregnancy ceremony described on pp. 247 to 251. We do not understand to whom the last sentence "(He) is a Devatawa (godling)" applies. On receiving Mr Parker's translation we suggested that this might refer to the unborn child, but Mr Parker pointed out that he would not expect a child to be called a *devatawa*, and that "it is of the worst augury to speak in terms of praise of any child." Mr Parker therefore understands "the word *devatawa* to refer in a complimentary manner to the spirit which is asked to come." This idea agrees with the information we obtained in the field, where a somewhat doubtful translation of this invocation was given as follows: those who jump between the *us mukkāliya*, the *meda mukkāliya*, and the *balakanuwa* are *devatawa* (pl.). It was explained that the invocation referred to the performers, and that the expression "are *devatawa*" was the

[1] *Mukkāliya* is formed from two Tamil words, *mūndu* "three," and *kāl* "legs."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

equivalent to saying "are possessed of *yaku*," since to Veddas of Sitala Wanniya *devatawa* was a synonym for *yaka*.

1782
539

Dola Yaka Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

Invocation to Dola Yaka.

XXXI. *Kaḍat kaḍa Doliyē. Mal bandinā taepa andagōlā saddamayi. Bindōli damanna damaṇna bindōliyē, mal bandinā ṗamawayi.*

Our informants could not translate this invocation or even state its meaning. Mr Parker supplies the following "doubtful translation":

Bit by bit, O Doliyā. At the place where the flowers (or necklaces) are tied there is a noise of calling (for us). The fixing of the demon offerings (*dola*) on the ground, the fixing of the demon offerings on the ground causes delay in tying the flowers (or necklaces).

"*Doli* is usually a swing, but apparently this cannot be the meaning here. *Dola* is especially an offering to evil spirits who are demons, such as Riri Yaka.

"It is uncertain if the first *doliyē* should be translated 'O Offering!'

"In Clough's Dictionary one meaning of *kaḍa* is 'arrow,' but it is very doubtful if the Vaeddas ever use it with this signification, indeed, I have never known *kaḍa* used for arrow. Everywhere the Vaeddas and Sinhalese say *ī, īya, igaha, itala.* The translation—'arrow by arrow'—would, however, suit the ceremony."

Invocation to Indigollae Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXII. *Itiriya-handa Madaras gala wāḍiyā. Ī dahasak gena surasāṗu dunu ḍiyā, Indigollā devi waeḍiyot subā wiyā. Mini riri eruwakaṭa ṭhamiṗ bewiṗ lamā.*

Madara-gala at Itiriya-kanda (is your) lodging. Having brought a thousand arrows (and) decorated bowstrings, God of Indigolla, should you

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
●539
[177]

come may (you) be fortunate. While putting (your mouth) to a boat (shaped vessel) of human blood (and) while drinking (may you be) delighted[1].

At Sitala Wanniya Indigollae Yaka was regarded as an attendant upon Kande Yaka. It is therefore obvious that this invocation did not arise at Sitala Wanniya or among any Veddas retaining their original *yaka* beliefs, and it is in fact an excellent example of the foreign element in the Vedda religion, and is especially interesting because it is possible in this case to indicate how an invocation of horrific nature has been introduced.

This matter has been discussed in the addendum to Chapter VIII; we may, however, suggest that the boat-shaped vessel of blood may refer to the murder of the 60 priests.

What we have written on p. 165 concerning the attributes of Indigollae Yaka among the village Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula shows that he has entered their beliefs as a powerful but beneficent spirit, though revengeful of neglect or insult. At Sitala Wanniya he is a *yaka* attendant on Kande Yaka. He may have attained this position immediately on his adoption, in which case his terrifying invocation must have been subsequently introduced and carelessly attached to the friendly *yaka*. Or the invocation, which is clearly only a fragment of a long formula, may portray something of his character when first adopted, and though his attributes have been softened to the usual friendly quality of Vedda *yaku*, a portion of the invocation appropriate to him may have lingered. We consider the first of these hypotheses the more likely, but in any case the existence among the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya of the foreign Indigollae Yaka as a beneficent attendant on Kande Yaka, who is nevertheless invoked with a formula typical of a bloodthirsty Sinhalese demon, is a most interesting example of the foreign elements that we now find in the Vedda religion.

Invocation to the Maha Kiriamma.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXIII. *Sorambara waewē sonda sonda nehun aeti. Ewā nelunnaḷu sonda sonda liyō yati, eka muṇu baḍu*[2] *baendana yati senaga ḍam barā Sorambara ḍasu haraṇa yati Pangara-gammanā.*

[1] Deriving *lamā* from *ram*.

[2] *eka munu badu* for *ek-emunu badu*, things strung together.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

In Horabora tank there will be excellent lotus. To gather them excellent women go; tying on strings of beads they go. The multitude who cherish affection, leaving Horabora behind, go to Pangara gammana.

782
539

The Veddas of Sitala Wanniya told us that they did not invoke the Kiriamma with offerings for the cure of sickness though they had heard that the Veddas of the Bintenne did so and Handuna gave us these lines as part of the Bintenne invocation, which he said he had learnt from his father. He only understood the first few words which he translated "There are fine lotus in Horaboraweva and fine women go to pluck them." A variant of this invocation—if such it be—has been published by Mr Louis De Zoysa[1] as a song of the Veddas of Horaboraweva.

Sorabora vevé sonda ofu nefum ę
Mlwá nelannafa sonda liyó e
Kalu karalá kudu karalá uyá de
Ofu sálé bat kannafa máfu nę.

Fine, fine water-lilies and lotuses grow in Sorobora tank!
These to gather come fine, fine women.
They make them into black and white curries;
To eat the water-lily-seed rice there are no curries.

Obviously both versions are corrupt and have been derived from an invocation (No. XXXIX) sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony.

Invocation to the Kiriamma of Indigollaewa asking for success in hunting.

Bandaraduwa.

XXXIV. *Irś kanda Monara galada wādiyā*
I dahasak wida tara karapu dunu diyā
Yanda enda diya pā man balāpiyā
Indigollā Devi waedīyot subā wīyā

Asli gigiran pifa inda walu kafina lamā
Diya gigiran pifa inda diya damana lamā
Naddunnā dunu diya ata kudā lamā
Riri oruwa pifa sakman karana lamā

[1] Note on the Origin of the Veddas, with a few specimens of their songs and charms. *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1881, Vol. VII, Part II, p. 102.

[113]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Oba tula rajuṭu oba tula wāḷi aeraṭu là
Meba tula rajuṭu meba tula wāḷi aeraṭu là
De ṭili rajuṭu de ṭili wāḷi aeraṭu là
Tawa mana nidida? Dan tula raju marāṭuḷu là.

Iri-kanda (Sow-hill) and Monara-gala (Peacock-rock) are (her) resting-places.
(She has) a thousand arrows, and bow-strings made with strength to pierce.
Look at the path on which her watery feet come and go.
Should the Goddess of Indigolla proceed (along it) there will be good luck.

(She is) the Lady who spins the clouds (in order) to sit behind the thunders of the waterfalls,
The Lady who subdues the water (in order) to sit behind the thunders of the water.
The Lady whose hand is small for the bow-string of the sounding bow (?),
The Lady who walks behind the boat (shaped vessel) of blood.

To the great king on that side that great resting-place was given up, it is said;
To the great king on this side this great resting-place was given up, it is said;
To the kings on both sides the resting places on both sides were given up, it is said.
What (opportunity was there) still for sleep? The wealthy great kings were killed, it is said.

"*Oba* and *meba* are Sinhalese or Elu words for 'there' and 'here' according to Clough; but are never used colloquially by Sinhalese, whereas they are in common use by the Vaeddas, and I was told by them they meant 'on that side' and 'on this side,' *otta* (Sin. *ohaṭa*) and *metta* (Sin. *mehaṭa*) being used for 'there' and 'here.'

"The penultimate *là* of the last line appears to be pleonastic.

"The translation of the third line of the second verse is doubtful. It may mean 'the little lady whose hand (guides) the bow-string of the sounding bow,' and this would agree with her title *Lamā*, but as she is not elsewhere referred to as being young or small I have not inserted this translation in the verse."

This invocation was written down for us by Tissahami the Vedda Arachi. It is therefore not surprising to find that it contains little that belongs to the Vedda stratum of thought. The invocation is headed *Indigollae Kiri Amma daṭayamaṭa*

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

natana kavi "Song danced for hunting to Kiriamma of Indigollae." We did not have the opportunity of discussing the meaning of this invocation in the field, and indeed knew nothing of its contents until Mr. Parker translated it. With regard to the significance of this invocation Mr Parker writes: "Indigollae Kiriamma is here treated as the Huntress Goddess of the waters, who sends the rain which enables the hunters to track the deer. The boat of blood is referred to in an invocation of her husband, the Indigollaewa Yaka.

"Apparently two other Yakas endeavoured to take from her the two hills which she haunted, but in the end she killed the intruders and regained these resting-places[1]."

782
539

Invocations to the Rahu Yaku.

These are invocations to a Sinhalese demon who has been taken over by the Veddas and assumed Vedda attributes. The most striking alteration that the demon has undergone is that instead of the single Rahu Yaka of the Sinhalese the Veddas speak of three Rahu Yaku (Sitala Wanniya) or of male and female spirits Raku Yaka and Yakini (Bandaraduwa). The Sitala Wanniya story of the Vedda brothers who became the Rahu Yaku has been given in Chapter VII, but we do not know anything concerning the origin of the Yaka and Yakini who are completely foreign in character.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXV. *Ran adukku ustuwa, rán hadu ustuwa, gas mada ustuwa, hudu hauka ustun bara dunna. Yam antarituwah wenda epa. Oppu galla.*

Together with golden cooked food, with golden swords, with toddy (lit. tree spirit) we gave white samba rice. We do not want any danger to occur to us. Take the offering.

With Handuna's help a translation of this invocation was prepared which is practically identical with that provided by Mr Parker. Handuna explained that in this invocation *gas mada*, lit. "core of a tree," stood for "coconut."

[1] "Her origin has not been mentioned in any of these invocations; the Sinhalese say that she is Mohini, the beautiful incarnation of Vishnu, and mother of Ayiyanar, the great Forest God of Ceylon."

Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

XXXVI. *Nārusayi saduna, borusayi saduna. Gini Rāhu Bandāra ona velata hadu kīwahamah saadi ga.*

The Nā tree is made, and the Bō tree is made. At the time when the chief, Gini Rāhu, comes, a fight with swords will be made.

The Veddas could neither explain the meaning of the words of this invocation, nor state the significance of the whole.

Unuwatura Bubula.

XXXVII. *Gini wahalak sadala, rup kāla pandamah sadāla, rup i iti sadāla, Gini Rāhu Bandāra rup i iti sadāla nā magul maḍuwaja wadinna rup mālat balanna.*

As we have constructed a Fire Palace, as we have made a light (resting) on a golden support (?), as we have made with wax golden arrows, O Chief, Gini Rāhu, as we have made with wax golden arrows, be pleased to proceed to this festival shed and to look at the golden mortar also.

The Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula understood this invocation in a somewhat different sense.

Gini Rāhu Bandar come to this shelter, look upon the golden mortar. The shelter has a roof of fire, within it is a golden torch and golden bees'-wax.

Invocations sung at the Kolamaduwa Ceremony.

782
648

We were told that the *kolamaduwa* ceremony was performed until recently with considerable pomp and circumstance by the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, gave us the following invocations as some of those that he learnt to sing when as a youth he lived among the Veddas. Tissahami wrote down these invocations after the partial rehearsal of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which was arranged for our benefit at Henebedda, a description of which is given in Chapter IX.

When discussing the *kolamaduwa* we were told that Veddas were sometimes sent for by the peasant Sinhalese because of the superior protection afforded to the cattle fold by their invocations and dances. The tradition as to this practice was quite definite

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and we do not doubt that it occurred formerly, but we could hear of no recent instance in which Veddas alone officiated. 782 648

This did not surprise us for we met with no Veddas who knew these long invocations, and we believe that this practice must have ceased throughout the Vedirata at least two or three generations ago. The necessary conditions existed in those days when, as we were assured, there were communities of village Veddas with shaman of repute such as no longer exist, and we may instance the history of Lindegala given on pp. 171 and 172 as a case in point. Nevertheless the custom survives in a modified form, for Tissahami with three Veddas performed a *kolamaduwa* ceremony at Damenegama in 1903 with the object of stopping an epidemic, alleged to be dysentery, which was then raging in the neighbouring villages. [n 31] [n 55]

A very large number of spirits are invoked, but as has been indicated in Chapter IX Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, and the *yaku* of the recent dead were not of the number. This demonstrates that the ceremony as it at present exists is essentially foreign, and therefore the length and nature of the three invocations given are not surprising. The invocation to Unapane Kiriamma which recites her deeds agrees well with all we could find out about her independently, and suggests that these invocations arose among such settled village Veddas as those mentioned in the Sinhalese chronicles referred to in the first chapter. 782

The four invocations written down by Tissahami were discussed at length with him, the shaman of the Henebedda Veddas sitting with us, though as this man—a half bred—knew only parts of these invocations and greatly admired Tissahami, the translations obtained in this way only represent the opinion of Tissahami, and presumably that of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from whom he learnt them in his youth. In these circumstances it is not surprising that two of these translations differ considerably from those furnished by Mr Parker, and this difference is so great in the invocation (No. XXXIX) which should be sung while the leaves are being slashed from the *kolamaduwa* (cf. p. 269) that we have thought it best to give our field version as well as Mr Parker's translation. Some of the allusions, for instance, the reference to the shark contained in the first portion 782 539

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782 of No. XXXIX, were equally unintelligible to our field informants
539 and to Mr Parker.

Invocation of Unapane Kiriamma at the Kolamaduwa Ceremony.

XXXVIII.

1. *Udu-nāwara hāṭāgena*
Yaṭi-nāwara hāṭāgena
Sal āyan sādāgena
Pol āyan sādāgena

2. *Aeli āeti sādāgena*
Ru mīwā sādāgena
Uḍu wīyan sādāgena
Waṭu wīyan sādāgena

3. *Raṇ piyāwili sādāgena*
Netti mālī sādāgena
Raṇ hara gal sādāgena
Moṭṭaekkili sādāgena.

4. *Siṭinā ātaraṭa*
Mālāwak waṭi siṭa
Miya gudin sat dawāsaṭa
Raṇ diwas waṭi siṭa.

5. *Sat Pattini Deviyannem*
Teda wīran labāgena
Moṭṭaekkili labāgena
Kataragan wāhalen

6. *Kaṭa hāngal labāgena*
Teda wāraṇ ladāgena
Sidda Māngra Deviyannem
Kiri dāluwā labāgena

7. *Valli nam Ammā gā*
Kalu ambara paṭṭiyeṭa
Hudu ambara paṭṭiyeṭa
Rā wākun muṭṭāweṭa

8. *Deva diwas ātpā*
Unāpāne Kiri Ammā
Sat pīretu Kumārī
Uḍu wīyan Kumārī

9. *Waṭu wīyan Kumārī*
Moṭṭaekkili Kumārī
Raṇ piyāwili Kumārī
Raṇ hara gal Kumārī
Vādāgama Kumārī!—

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

10. *Aeyi pānā muna pāmāda*
Hun kirī sādāpumu
Kaḍa hāṅgal sādāpumu?
Raṇ diwas elāpan
Raṇ naḍu kiyāpan.

1. Cutting Udu-nuwara (jungle),
Cutting Yati-nuwara (jungle),
Planting Sal gardens,
Planting Coconut gardens,

2. Training elephants (f.) and the tusk elephant,
Training the riding buffalo,
Making ceiling cloths,
Making side (wall) cloths,

3. Making golden coverings,
Making forehead ornaments,
Making golden necklaces (?),
Making head cloths,

4. While (you were) living;
Having fallen into adversity,
Seven days after (your) fatal sickness,
After (their) golden divine eyes had fallen (on you),

5. From the seven Pattini Goddesses
Receiving their gifts of power;
Receiving head coverings
From the Kataragam palace,

6. Receiving a pair of robes;
Receiving the gift of power,
From the deity the God Mangala
Receiving coconuts[1].

7. (Receiving from) the mother called Valli, cattle
For the black cattle (lit. horn-bearer) fold
(And) for the white cattle fold,
(And) beautiful chatties for cooking-pots;

8. (You) who cast down (on us your) divine eyes,
Kiri Ammā of Unāpāna,
The Princess foremost of seven (Kiri Ammas),
Princess of ceiling cloths,

9. Princess of wall cloths,
Princess of head coverings,
Princess of golden coverings,
Princess of golden necklaces,
Princess of Vidāgama!—

[1] Cf. note [2] p. 277.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

10. Why (are you) late, what is (the cause of) the delay
When we have made ready young coconuts,
When we have made ready a pair of robes?
Cast (on us your) golden divine eyes;
Declare (your) golden decision.

"*Meṭṭaekkili* is formed of two Tamil words, *meṭṭi* (pronounced *mettei*), a bald head, and *kili* a strip of cloth. The word does not occur in Winslow's dictionary.

"*Piyowili* is a verbal noun derived from *piyanawa* to cover or shut.

"*Kara gal* may here mean 'stones for the neck,' i.e. beads; the usual meaning is whet-stones.

"*Ambara*, horn-bearer, is a *kaelt bāsa* word which usually means buffalo.

"*Peretu* for *peratu*, foremost.

"*Sadapumu* is a peculiar form, the past participial adjective with the termination of the first person plural."

The first three verses enumerate the works that Unapane Kiriamma is traditionally supposed to have performed during her life on earth. The fourth and fifth verses indicate that she died after a prolonged illness and on the seventh day after her death received power, i.e. became a *yaka*. Verses four to seven mention her and the gifts presented to her by various superior gods who, as Mr Parker writes, are all Tamil deities, "by Pattini the Goddess of chastity and controller of epidemics, who has seven manifestations or forms; Skanda the god of the Kataragam temple; Mangala, who may be Ayiyanar; and Walliamma the wife of Skanda, who according to the traditions of Ceylon married her at Kataragama." Mr Parker suggests that in the third line of the eighth verse "The Princess foremost of Seven" refers to the position of Unapane Kiriamma as "the most important personage among the seven minor Kiriammas to whom worship is paid by the Southern Vaeddas. Four others among them are local princesses or chieftainesses, and two are the *sakti* or female manifestations of minor deities. In another district Miriyabaedda Kiriamma is considered to be the most important one of this group, and the Unapane Kiriamma is there held to occupy only the third place."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

INVOCATION SUNG AT THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

XXXIX.

1. *Masāmasa mādā maddē masa mārā hapāgena ā keliyaṭada mas keliyaṭada giyā ara Wālimba gala dun wāṭi panikkiyā.*

2. *Nā haṭuwen haṭa Bā haṭuwen dinun dakinkayi.*
Bā haṭuwen haṭā Bo haṭuwen dinun dankayi
Dinun dakinkayi, tāpā yālwā.

3. *Kadu kruthan karugunā*
Hat kruthan karunkada karunā(da)?
Hat kruthan karugunā
Kadu kruthan karunkada karunkadae?

4. *Obama obama oba Horabara warwā nā;*
Mobama mobama moba Māwilingangā nā,
Aṭā diya dawana Māwilingangā nā,
Enawā kiyannan Nilmal gangā nā.

5. *Horabara warwā kānwwa piṭa inkada?*
Aela welā wel eliyen enkada?
Dawa walabu nada dilā enkada?
Kāriya kiyannaṭa Nilmal enkada?

Pālu raṭayi, Wanniya, atanin bhaṭa;
Gālu gena panini wael hinnā arngaṭa,
Reru arwit diya helinā sonda-rawaṭa.
Yālu tepit giyeda Sorabara warwaṭa?

Sorabara warwā egoḍat innan Vaddā;
Sorabara warwā wa goḍat innan Vaddā;
Sorabara warwā de goḍama innan Vaddā,
Apaṭat nelun mal awulanda dedā?

Sorabara warwā sonda sonda elu nelun aṭi;
Ewawā nelannaṭa sonda sonda liyā eti;
Kalu haralā kudu haralā uyā deti.
Olu ālā hat hannaṭa mālu mati.

6. *Mā hahumal aella wicārā*
Atat damā yana warā gamanayi hālanā
Mā Kaḍagat gāla wicārā
Ināṭa dāmā yānā is meṭṭarkhili hālanā
Mā Niyandawarā gala wicārā
Ātaṭa payaṭa dāmā yanā gigiri māndu atenā.

Kalumal Nangiṭa hāendaṭu pacni mula hālen raṭa warṭi gā.
Kahumal Nangiṭa hacendaṭu amā mula hendan rāṭā warṭi gā
Ängura waṭan naṭana Wanniṭu honda honda heru ṭada gāṭāṭā.
Keri hat heri hat āpaṭa ṭpā tāha pacngiri hala hindāṭā

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Koko hirtilen ähiwat mähi pitati Hawanahaligé wärä gaman pitahu
Ätuju wäpan pituju wäpan dasta gigiri ähiwat,
Mähi pitati Hawanahali mulipilipyi dewa ewat.
Mini bibé ähiwat mähi pitati Hawanahali wärä gäman haruwat.
Dästa ätwat dasta gigiri ähiwat.

1. Cutting the shark fish in the midst of the Masämasa Sea, did that skilful elephant catcher to whom Wälimba-gala is given go for the sport with blood or for the sport with fish?

2. Having cut with the Nä sword I shall see victories (i.e. I shall be victorious) with the Bö sword.
Having cut with the Bö sword I shall gain victories with the Bö sword; I shall see victories, You Friend.

3. (When) fighting with swords shall I fight shall I fight with (my) hands (also)?
(When) fighting with (my) hands shall I fight shall I fight with swords?

4. There, there, there is Horabora waewa;
Here, here, here is the Mahawaeli-ganga
The Mahawaeli-ganga in which the water laments as it flows.
"I am coming, Nilmal-ganga," I shall say.

5. (He longs to return to distant Horabora, and his thoughts now dwell on it.)
Shall I stop on the sluice of Horabora?
Shall I come from the open ground of the field on the channel?

Shall I come now, making my bangles resound?
Shall I come to Nilmal (ganga) to declare the matter? (i.e. to tell the truth about the district. He means that he need not go there to tell it).

It is a deserted district, Wanniyä, from end to end (lit. from there to there);
Bringing their pupils (young ones, with them) the small creeping ants spring on to my body.
Teal come (to the tank) and sport very beautifully in the water.
Friends, have you also been to Sorabora waewa?

There will be Vaeddas on this side of Sorabora waewa;
There will be Vaeddas on that side of Sorabora waewa;
There will be Vaeddas on even both sides of Sorabora waewa.
Will they permit us also to collect lotus flowers?

There will be very lovely white lotus in Sorabora waewa,
Very handsome women will have been sent to pluck them;

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

After preparing and cleaning and cooking them they will give them (to be eaten). 782
For eating (with) rice made from seeds of the white lotus there is no meat (the game having been driven away). 539

6. (When I examine) this Kalumal waterfall
It looks (as though) I am joining in a love (making) journey.
In the examination of this Kadagat-gala what is fixed on the head (? of the rock) looks like a head-cloth.
In the examination of this Niyandawarā-gala the sound of the jingling bangles placed on the hands and feet is heard.

From the end of the bundle of honey tied up for Kalumal Nangī it is falling (? on the ground).
From the mouth of the bundle of rice (?) tied up for Kalumal Nangī it is falling (? on the ground).
For the Wanniyā who dances the *angara* dances beat excellent tunes on the tom-toms.
We do not want lame women's pingo loads, or sham (or refuse) loads; tie up desirable betel leaves.
The reed pipes of Kaha Kirillantalawa (Orioles' plain) being in front, it seems to be the love (making) journey of Hannaehelā (hill).

Having garlands for the hands and garlands for the feet (she) shakes the jingling bangles of both hands.
The reed pipes being in front Hannaehelā comes running to the Chief place (summit)—(or, they come running to the chief place of Hanaaehelā).

7. The reed pipes of Mini Kōbōtalāwa (turtle doves' plain) being in front, Hannaehelā makes (her) love-journey;
Having placed them on both hands (she) shakes the jingling bangles of both hands.

"In this song the Masāmasa Sea is again mentioned; there is probably some legend regarding the shark that was killed in the olden time. In *Ancient Ceylon* I have given reasons for believing that the early Vaeddas were in part a race of fishers.

"The 'blood-game,' *li kaliya*, of the first section may have some connection with blood offerings to demons. The other expression, *mas kaliya*, would commonly mean 'meat-game,' but as meat is termed *mālu* at the end of the fifth section it appears to mean here 'fish-game,' the sport of fishing.

"In the fourth section, the singer, living near the Mahawaeli-ganga, thinks he will hear the Nilmal-ganga, apparently a river near Horabora, calling him back to that district. The last

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

words of the fifth section give the reason why the Vaeddas have left it,—the want of game. The expression *kalu karalā*, 'having made black,' must refer to some part of the process in preparing the lotus seeds.

"I do not understand the sixth section, in which I have adhered as closely as possible to what appears to be the literal meaning. It would be much more intelligible if pronouns had been inserted; there is only one, *apata epā*, 'we do not want,' which explains nothing.

"Apparently the hill Hannaehelā, with reeds growing in pools on the plains near it (from which the reed pipe, *nalāwa*, is made), reminds the singer of a girl decked with garlands, who is going to be married (or possibly only visiting her younger sister), preceded by men playing these pipes. As I understood it, she takes with her pingo loads of betel, honey and cooked rice, to present to her younger sister, the Kalumal waterfall.

"The meaning of *raṭā* in the second verse of this section is uncertain. The word *amā* may be *hambā* or *sambā*, a kind of rice. *Angara* is defined in Clough's Dictionary as 'anointing the body after bathing with perfumes made from sandal wood.'

"*Paengiri kola* is a *kaelibāsa* expression for betel. *Mini kobo* should be *mini kobeyiyō* (jewelled) turtle doves; some other pigeons are called *bōwā* in Sinhalese, an onomatopoietic word imitating their cooing.

"*Kori kat bori kat* is an expression I have not heard, and the meaning is doubtful."

On account of the great difference between Mr Parker's translation and the meaning of this invocation as it was explained in the field, we now give the translation we wrote down while discussing the matter with our informants. It does not pretend to do more than explain the significance which our informants attributed to the invocation, and at the time we noted it we realised that it was far from being a literal translation. Explanatory remarks are enclosed between square brackets.

(1) Did the Panikkia of mist covered Walimbagala go to the great sea to kill the great shark and bring his flesh and blood?

[The Panikkia is a spirit whose home is Walimbagala

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

(Friar's Hood). He is doubtless the Walimbagala Yaka of other groups of Veddas.] 782 539

(2) Friends I will cut with my sword of Na and Bo and I will be victorious. [The Panikkia speaks to a host of spirits known as the Maha Yakino.]

(3) Did he go to fight with the sword, or to charm with his tongue?

(4) Horaborawewa is far away, the Mahawelliganga the waters of which are blue, is far away. [It was explained that this verse referred to the Veddas of Horabora being far away.]

(5) Are you on the sluice of Horaborawewa? [The *yaku* of dead Veddas are thus addressed.]

They [the *yaku*] will be coming by the fields of Elavella [well-known rice fields].

Are you coming shaking your bangles in your hands?

Nilmal (Kiriamma) are you coming to favour us?

The country of the Wanniyas is abandoned in that direction.

Bears growl and roam (in the abandoned country).

Friend have you been to Horaborawewa where teal swim?

There are Veddas on the far side of Horaborawewa.

There are Veddas on this side of Horaborawewa.

There are Veddas on both sides of Horaborawewa.

Will they allow us to pick lotus flowers?

There are fine *olo* [a plant] and lotus in Horaborawewa.

Beautiful women come to pick them.

(They) cook and give white and black (seeds) [i.e. cleaned and uncleaned seeds].

(There is) no curry to eat the *olo* rice [i.e. the seeds].

(6) See how (they) go along Kalumalella [the stream below the sluice] swinging their hands;

See how (they) go along Kadagangala [a hill] with their heads covered.

Hear the jingling of bangles on the hands and feet of those going to Niyandawaragala [a hill].

The parcel of honey [tied up in leaves] for Nilmal Nangi is slanting.

The parcel of rice for Kalumal Nangi is erect.

Beat the tom-tom for the Wanniya to dance well.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782 Do not give small and torn betel leaves to us.

See how Pereti Hannasheia going and coming from Kaha

539 Kirillan *talawa* jingling the bangles on her hands....

Pereti Hannasheia is coming running to the Kolamaduwa.

(7) Pereti Hannasheia of Minikobo *talawa* comes jingling bangles on her hands.

Invocation of the Maha Yakino Ceremony.

XL. *Kolamaduwa hat mul ba(n)dina-ḉuta kiyana haviya.*

Kāyē rajē rajē gamē yanḍada mē ran āmā mul bādinnē badinnē. Kāya wat rajē gamē yanḍa nāwāyi. Tāpē rajē gamē yanḍayi mē ran āmā mul badinnē badinnē. Muna muna wel gan kōtāla dē mē ran āmā mul badinnē bādinnē. Kāyē rajē gamē yanḍada mē nā kola wīyan badinnē badinnē. Tāpē rajē gamē yanḍa mē nā kola wī bādin dinnē, bādinnē.

Song which is sung while tying up the bundles of rice for the *kolamadutva.*

To go to a village in whose countries are (we) tying, are (we) tying these bundles of golden Ambrosia? Not to go to a village in the country of anyone (else) whatever, (but) to go to a village in thy country (we) are tying, (we) are tying these bundles of golden ambrosia. Having cut which fields are (we) tying, are (we) tying these bundles of golden ambrosia? To go to a village in whose country are (we) tying, are (we) tying these *na* leaf canopies? To go to a village in thy country (we) are tying, (we) are tying these *Na* leaf canopies.

Our field translation of this invocation substantially agrees with Mr Parker's, though as might be expected our informants gave "rice" in place of "Ambrosia."

Invocation of Ambarapoti Kiriamma at the Kolamaduwa Ceremony.

XLI. *Gewara wil mānādi elawāla kēli yudda*
Bambara mahi pīta tudigena harayi māndu wenema sudda
Ambarāla pasāli sundun palandinawā ili sudda
Ambarapoti Allāla mina me nadawaja hetuwu ādda
Mandurinju hara nila tamba pala ahagayi
Bilindaga āsana ruwa yedami
Badu hoon mal mahan ahagayi
Bella wajaja gombara tuma
Saggu pushola e ran tuḍi gena
Nāsihāwa malalaja ohina

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
537

Kumala patul deka derana tabāgena
Waeḍiyayi Ambarāpoti Ammā.
Salā didī raela matupiṭa petiyek perelena andan
Walā yaeṭin pāeyu sandē deviyō waeḍawena andan
Ran toraneka ramba toraneka deviyō saetapena andan
Ūva tedeti mal sāmī maḥuwaṭa saerasuna andan.

While the sambar deer trusted to the pool, being driven away it was attacked in the jungle.
The Bambarā bee sitting on the flower will make quite another cry (i.e. objects) about bathing.
It is very cleanly to put on frequent sandal-wood after grinding it (to powder).
Except Ambarāpoti Ammā who is there (to undertake) this business?
The sapphire of the peacock's neck (shines) like a plate of copper.
The throne of Bilindi is made beautifully.
From his body (hang) margosa flowers like a garland,
Round his neck are scattered freckles (light patches),
He has ear-rings of gold joined to talipat leaf,
His nose is worthy of his forehead.
The child placing his two feet on the earth
Is greater than Ambarāpoti Ammā.
As a *petiyā* (fish) is rolled over on the top of the eddying wave,
Like the moon risen from under the cloud, the *deviyā* advances.
Like an arch of gold, an arch of ramba grass, the *deviyā* reclines,
Like the Lord of Vaeddas, who has renown throughout Uva, adorned for the (wedding) hall.

The first four lines of our field version of this invocation agree tolerably well with Mr Parker's translation except that nothing is said about bathing, the second line running "The bees seated on the flowers make humming [illegible]." The next eight lines were given to us as follows:

"The child should be like the colour of the peacock's neck.

"The body (of the child) should be like the flowers of the kohomba tree (margosa tree), like the flowers of the damba tree are the *gunera*[1] round the neck (of the child).

"The earrings made of talipot leaves look beautiful (when worn) in the face.

"Ambarāpoti Ammā came striding across the firmament."

Of the remaining four lines only the last is substantially different from Mr Parker's. It runs "See how the Malsāmi who has authority over Uva comes to the *maḥuwa*."

[1] *Gunera* are light flecks on the skin which are much admired.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER XIV

SONGS

533 In this chapter we give a number of Vedda songs for the transliteration and translation of which we are indebted to Mr Gunasekara.

It will be noted that a number of the songs are variants on a common theme; with the exception of No. IV (song asking for presents), the lullabies and the song sung while plucking *jak* fruit, all were sung for the enjoyment they caused or the amusement they produced—that is to say we could not discover that there were occasions on which any of these songs were sung specially and exclusively. Even the sad little song (No. VII) commemorating the suicide of two women[1], though it did not cause amusement, was by no means avoided and seemed to give a good deal of quiet satisfaction. The song sung by women to their husbands who returned empty handed from seeking honey, though doubtless sung on appropriate occasions, was also sung at other times and was considered rather a joke.

533 A number of the best known songs begin or end with a
539 variant of the untranslatable lines

Tan ṭaṇḍinānan ṭaṇḍināni
Tānan ṭaṇḍina ṭaṇḍinānī[2].

[1] The legend has been given on pp. 322 and 323.

[2] Mr Gunasekara by slightly altering these lines would obtain

Tay tay dinānī tay tay dinānī
Tānān tay dina tay dinānī

which he would translate

May each be victorious! May each be victorious!
May he defeat those who are inimical to him! May he be victorious!

[A 366]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Other songs begin with a variant of

Māmiṇi māmiṇi mādeyiyā

which may be translated

Oh great man! Oh great man! Oh great god!

or perhaps as Bailey writes

My departed one, my departed one, my god!

The following lullaby was sung at Banderaduwa by a woman called Hudumeniki to the air (No. 19) given on page 345.

I. *Rō-rō-rō*
Ammī mōkaṭada āṅḍannē
Ammī gōsiga ṭiṭāṭai
Ēkat nindama dīṭpawu dennā
Ammī mōkaṭada āṅḍannē
Ammī gōnala bokkaṭayi āṅḍannē
Ēkat nindama dewu dennā
Ammī mōkaṭada āṅḍannē
Ammī waṅḍurāgē ihaṭayi
Ēkat nindama dewu dennā
Ammī mōkaṭada āṅḍannē
Ammī rōsāgē ihaṭayi
Ēkat nindama dewu dennā
Rō-rō-rō
Ammī kalawelta peṭuni
Nindōṭayi āṅḍannē
Nidiganna pēṭuni
Nindōṭayi āṅḍannē
Rō-rō-rō
Ammā rō-rō-rō
Ammā mōkaṭa āṅḍannē
Ammā dīsī nāṇḍayi āṅḍannē
Ammī mōkaṭayi āṅḍannē
Ammī nidī nidundayi
Rō-rō-rō ammā.

Rō-rō-rō Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the fat of the monitor lizard? Give the whole of it (i.e. the fat). Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the *gōnala* yams you are crying? Give all of them (i.e. the yams). Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the head of the *wandura* monkey? Give the whole of it (i.e. the head). Child, why are you crying? Child, is it for the head of the *rilawā* monkey? Give the whole of it (i.e. the head).
Rō-rō-rō

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 Child, creeping child; are you crying for sleep? Sleeping child, are you
● 539 crying for sleep? *Rá-rá-rá* Darling, *Rá-rá-rá*

Darling, for what are you crying? Darling, is it for bathing you are crying? Child, what are you crying for? Child, is it for sleep? Darling, *Rá-rá-rá*.

The next lullaby was sung by Tandi of Sitala Wanniya; we do not know whether this is the lullaby the music of which is given on page 347 (No. 34 (2)) or on page 350 (No. 34 (1)).

ii. *Ammita puputa*
Ammi mahapada ahpunin
Ammi ayila bokhapayi
Ehat ainduma dendenna
Ammi mahapada ahpunin
Ammi hapuwala bokhapayi
Ehat ainduma dendenna
Ammi mahapada ahpunin
Ammi gotha billiyapayi
Ehat ainduma dendenna.

Lovely babe, what do you cry for, child? Child, it is for the ayila yam. I will give the whole of it. Child, what do you cry for? Child, it is for hapuwala yam. I will give the whole of it. Child, what do you cry for? Child, it is for the fat of the monitor lizard. I will give the whole of it.

These lullabies though longer than those collected by Nevill closely resemble the latter, although they do not appear to contain the jokes and intentional absurdities which Nevill considered to exist in those he recorded[1].

The next song though not a lullaby was said to have been sung by a mother to her young children who were frightened at the oncoming of a thunder storm. It was taken down at Nilgala.

iii. *Kumbuwa ammiwa*
Sat madura handiyata pitin
Silman alpawanell wadinnigi uwayil uwayi
Balapaw denna nam kala paw denna
Ayyiman ayyiman diri madura nagala
Balagi gina ran riga narabayi

[1] Taprobanian, Vol. ii, p. 102. We are by no means convinced that Nevill was right in seeing jokes and absurdities in these lullabies. He himself notes (*loc. cit.*) "that the people themselves do not altogether understand many words in them."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

538
539

Maya aya hewtri karanayi
Rajawalé galgamaya nemanna denna nam
Kada hédayi ingi rajé wanniha denna
Méha awanayi hatha nowayi ilippawa denna nam
Ran rajé atuwat yahiha hakkila atine
Raya rajé ajihanni nowayi nowayi
Uda ahéri wattyuna hin ahéri wattyuna
Enagala malagala gala hin warpana nétet nowayi
Rajawalé galgamaya nemanni denna.

Darling! Darling! There you see the wind and rain are coming down from outside the Seven Seas. See the two. See brother, thunder and lightning coming from the direction of the sea. Things are getting bad. My body is losing strength (through fear). Let us two go to the Rajawalo *ásve* (or cave place). Ho! ho! my two princes, it is not possible to go there, stay. Oh lovely princes! in the forest are *yaku* and gods. Are we not staying in the palace at night! The sky is getting dark, the earth is getting dark. Are not *ásve* fruits falling at Enagala and Malagala! Let us go to the Rajawalo cave.

The following "song asking for presents" was sung by a woman of Bandaraduwa to the air (No. 20) given on page 349. Although addressed to the *Hinda Nanna* (white cousin, i.e. white woman) it was not an extemporary composition but was said to have been known to the singer's parents.

IV. *Hinda nānā hatak hala, atit hala, rati bhala, higamāra wāgenat yanawa yanawa.*
Sudumā nānā ālgi bagi dilana, api dawāgatan yanā
Sudumā nānā dundran nākāta alagini rangtal wanātal gena enawa.
Api dawāgena yanā ālgi bagi dilawa dilawa.

White cousin (*nānā*), (I am) running short of betel leaves[1] and areca nut. White cousin, give (us) presents so that we may run away. White cousin, the young (or white) younger sister of *Marāna* is getting hungry. Give us, give us, presents that we may run away.

The next two songs, both collected at Nilgala, were particularly popular; the first reflects the very high estimate in which a Vedda holds his wife.

V. *Kaddu hawan yaya nāyayi*
Kaddu hawan yaya nāyayi
Hitan halagen yaya nāyayi
Hitan halagen yaya nāyayi

[1] In the original *hatak hala* and *atit hala* both mean betel leaves.

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

539
539

Waccin pinnen paṇa nōyeyi
Waccen pinṇen paṇa nōyeyi
Kuḍi peta nattān paṇa yannēyi
Kuḍi peta nattān paṇa yannēyi.

For (want) of gruel or food, the life will not depart (i.e. man will not die); owing to cold or wind, the life will not depart; owing to rain or dew, the life will not depart. If there be no wife, the life will depart.

VI. *Tānan taṇḍen tānānī*
Man sollda baḍuwak daha gattīm
Man sollda baḍuwak daha gattīm
Mohada mohada bola kiri nānī
Mohada mohada bola kiri nānī
Ēhema kiyena baḍuwak nowayi madaka gatti bola nānī
Aru ḍalli tilāwī tibānu
Dūmkuḍikkiya bāla dak gattīm.

Tānan taṇḍen tānānī.

I have seen a fine thing and taken it. What is it, what is it, oh good *nānu*? *Nānu*, the thing which I saw and picked up is not one that I will mention readily. You *nānu*, what I saw and picked up is the smoking pipe which was on that distant high ground (lit. back high-ground).

[276] The Sinhalese do not smoke pipes, and the Veddas do not smoke at all; on questioning our informants we were told that this song was only two or three generations old and referred to the finding of a pipe dropped by a white sportsman.

The next song recorded at Bandaraduwa alludes to the suicide of two Vedda women and has been referred to already on pages 322 and 323. Only the first part of the song, containing no direct reference to the final tragedy, was taken down.

VII. *Akkinam akkinam yanḍā wārīnan*
Api dennāgī wanntiā enḍāmo nāti
Bālanḍa yanḍowa wārī naṅgā
Naṅgā nan naṅgā api dennāgī wanntiā
Duwagena eunan bālanḍā wārī naṅgā nan naṅgā
Akki nam akki nam maṇa bāsuru bārī nam bārī nam
Naṅgā nam naṅgā nam wārī nam wārī nam
Api dennāgī wanntiā wellikanḍiyēn duwagen eunan
Bālanḍu wārēn.

Elder sister, elder sister, come to go. Our husbands have not returned; come younger sister, let us go to look for them. Younger sister, younger sister, the husbands of us two are coming running. Younger sister, younger

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sister, come to look. Elder sister, elder sister, I am afraid, I cannot, I cannot. Younger sister, younger sister, come, come. The husbands of us two are coming running from Wellikandiya. Come and see.

533
539

The next song, collected at Sitala Wanniya, records a fatal accident while honey-gathering; a woman speaks to her sister, so that "elder brother" in the third line should be "elder sister"; "younger brother" is a common periphrasis for husband. Tantirivelo is the name of a rock-face and the "golden jewelled cord" is the *liane* ladder by which the honey-seekers reach the comb (cf. Chapter X, invocation No. XXVI).

VIII. *Tantirivēlo baliyaṭo bāṭu*
Raṇ miṇi kendō gallan kiniki
Bādā dennaw mayē kiriṇ ayiyē
Apilā dennaye mallila dennaṭa
Adissi amarukamak ati mayē kiri akkē.

(At) Tantirivēlo the skilfully (or forcibly) lowered
Golden jewelled cord which is sunk from the rock
Gives an unlucky sign, my dear elder brother.
For the younger brothers of us two
There will be a sudden difficulty, my dear elder sister[1].

The following song, also from Sitala Wanniya, was sung by women to their husbands when the latter returned from honey-seeking without honey. The air to which it was sung is given on page 344 (No. 21).

IX. *Disi māwili rankenda elālā ālālā*
Kalu ratē nangilā dunkawuten pannālā
Ran kaḍuwēn kapālā ela mōran nāgāṭeyi
Mēnullin ihalē kodōyi kiyālā
Duwagena ōwō wennilā-gollō
Ela mōran nakgātō ela gini wediwēgina ennā.

(They) let down, let down the great *mawila* creeper jungle rope, (they) drive away the bees with smoke; (the comb) was cut with the golden sword for the young sisters of Morane. (Our) husbands came running and saying, "Above this corner there is none." The young sisters of Morane are getting hungry.

[1] Mr Parker, to whom we are indebted for the translation of this song, notes that "*gallan* stands for *galan*; *kiniki* appears to be derived from *kindunnā* to be sunk, and to be the equivalent of *kindiri*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533 The next song, transliterated and translated by Mr Parker, was collected at Sitala Wanniya where it was known only to the ● 539 older men of the community. It was sung only when getting *jak* fruit, and though these Veddas knew the ordinary Sinhalese word for this fruit they told me it would not be used. They explained that there was only one place in their territory where there were two or three *jak* trees (doubtless the remains of old gardens made by Buddhist monks or recluses), that they valued their fruit very highly, and that they would not commonly speak of them by name and certainly would not do so when about to gather the fruit. In this song *bo* tree and *moran* flower are both honorific terms. This suggests that the song has magic power, so that its most appropriate position in this volume would be in Chapter VIII.

X. *Mī yāmeṇ yāmeṭa mī āsaṭa wadunā*
Mī Bōpata ruwala yan henekuṇṭa bahē dinawanna
Mī moraṇ malī misak attiyen heri nan hekkiyen bindala
Masi polawaṭa hassalā deṇḍayi.

Here, from watch to watch, this (tree) touched the sky.
No one can cause this Bō-leaf sail to be overcome.
Having broken off with the hook this ripening flower only, if unable (to pluck it) by the hand,
Having lowered it to the earth, I will give it.

Moran appears to be *mōrana*.

Malī may be a poetical allusion to the fruit.

Masi polawaṭa for *maki polawaṭa*, a pleonastic form, "to the earth's earth," that is, to the ground. Such pleonasms are not uncommon in colloquial village Sinhalese, as for instance, *edā dawasa*, "that day's day," for "that day."

The next two songs were collected at Nilgala; our informants attached no meaning to the first line.

XI. *Mā miṇi mā miṇi mā deyiyā*
Kāhurubaddā hēyiyā
Kuduruṇ kuduruṇ hiyanā
Kokhā gāleṭa wai wālā
Mādi gāleṭa wai wālā
Mādi gāleṭa wai wālā
Tala piṭaṭa wai wālā
Kāṭan damana boru waturāyi

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Kaḍen paccela yak gamatā
Bimen yannaṭa bol pini barimayi
Mtwāpiṭen yamu denna
Ānī apī wanntlā
Kobbē walī nagīlā
Ēkat bīdagena wattlā
Kalina walī nagīlā
Ēkat bīdagena waṭīlā
Walkobbē wala dunna namāgena
Wewal icagī piṭaṭa damāgena
Bālat payiyat ina gannāgen
Pōrū paccāt ina gannāgena
Kunu gē taḍiyā karaṭa damāgena
Kaḍiyā ballat iccaru karagena
Endalu potu ban dena nayidī
Endalu potu, ban dena nayidī.

Mā mini mā mini mā deyiyā.

The dove of the Kakuru Mountain is singing *kuduruu, kuduruu.* There was rain at Kokkāgāla. There was rain at Mādēgāla. There was rain at Mādēgāla. There was rain on the high land. There is muddy water bringing down logs. (There has been) a *yaka* ceremony below the rock. (I) cannot go on the ground as there is dew. Let us ride on the back of the buffalo. Anē! our husbands having climbed up the *kobba* creeper, on its breaking having fallen; having climbed the *kalina* creeper, on its breaking, too, having fallen; bending the bow (made) of *wal-kobba*[1] creeper, putting the canes at the back of the head[2], taking the betel bag at the waist, taking the axe at the waist, putting the dirty monitor lizard on the shoulder, sending in front the dog Kaḍiyā, (You are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Potubanda Nayide, (you are) to come, they say (or he says, or we say) Potubanda Nayide.

XII. *Mā miṇi mā miṇi mā deyiyā*
Mā miṇi mā miṇi mā deyiyā
Ānī āpī wanntlā
Kokhā gālī yanni denna
Mādī gālī yanni denna
Kokhā gālī bari baburu
Mādī gālī bari baburu
Kākuru Kandī Kōbeyiyā
Kākuru Kandī Kōbeyiyā
Kuṭuruṇ kuṭuruṇ kiyanna

[1] *Allophylus cobbe.*
[2] Or "carrying them hanging round the neck."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
●539

Kuṭurup kuṭurup kiyanna
Tāla piṭaṭa wayi wālā
Kāṭan dimana hera waturayi
Kāṭan dimana hera waturayi
Kāṭan paccalayak gamata
Bimen yannaṭa bol pini harimayigni
Madayā piṭen yanni denna
Kaliya wala nagilā
Ēhat bādagena wattilā
Kobba wali nagilā
Ēhat bādagena wattilā
Wal-kobba wala dunna damāgena
Wīwal icagī piṭaṭa damāgena
Kaḍiyā ballat iccarabaragena
Endalu potubanna nayidē
Endalu potubanna nayidē
Mā miṭi mā miṭi mā deyiyā
Mā miṭi mā miṭi mā deyiyā.

Ah, our husbands! Let us go to Kokkagala. Let us go to Madagala. (I) cannot go to Kokkagala. I cannot go to Madagala. The dove of the Kakuru-kanda is uttering *kuturun, kuturun.* There has been rain in the high land. There has been muddy water bringing down logs. There has been a *yaka* ceremony (lit. *yaka* house) below the hill. (I) cannot go on the ground as there is dew. Let us ride on the buffalo. Having climbed up the *kādiya* creeper, on its breaking having fallen; having climbed up the *kobba* creeper, on its breaking too, having fallen; putting down the bow (made) of *wal-kobba* creeper, putting the canes at the back of the head[1]; sending in front the dog Kaḍiyā, (you are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Potubanda Nayidē. (You are) to come, they say (or he says or we say) Potubanda Nayidē. *Mā miṭi mā miṭi mā deyiyā, Mā miṭi mā miṭi mā deyiyā.*

All the remaining songs except the last were collected from the village Veddas of the Uva Bintenne; all are of one type and with a single exception (No. XVII) all are related to each other and to the two songs immediately preceding them which we obtained at Nilgala. No. XVII, the exception just referred to, is extremely Sinhalese in tone and thought. The *gomara* spots referred to are the light patches on the body, due to the attacks of a parasitic fungus, which are much admired by the peasant Sinhalese of Uva and the Eastern Province.

[164]

[1] Or "carrying them hanging round the neck."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

XIII. *Kaliya wale nagila*
Rafafa fallgema wagila
Tunafiya fallat hiddila
Tā ya halla gevun mat
Nandage fandarafa mangaccala
Tānanne hala ānanne
Mundi hahdapifa wetirila
Ōhafa widafaw kiri nānā
Iccala widafi icca eri
Tembafa lafpen numāpi
Ē madi widapi mari
Depifa mafen wilga
Peruma marāpin nānā
Pucci hālayi diya hanne
Eliya fān wi cunew nānā
Cappi cili bili hiyannan
Yannata nafiya nānā
Walhoggāyi cappigi gāli
Cappige bittara dehama dehayi
Pucci hālā diya hanne nānā
Tan tadina tan tadinānā
Mōmiya mamiyi nāmiya
Kottihafa hana mi hāli hālayi diya hanne.

Having climbed up the *kaliya* creeper,
Splitting it in two and having fallen,
Having broken (his?) hip and stick,
Having even brought thy girl,
Having gone to thy mother-in-law's mat (*i.e.* hut).
Tānanne hala ānanne.
The monitor lizard is sprawling on the log.
Shoot it dear cousin,
Shoot at the head. You will miss the head;
Incline (the arrow) towards the tail, by the ribs.
Shoot (it) in the middle; it will die.
Kill the buffalo, cousin,
Which has smeared (itself) at the pool with mud on both sides.
Having roasted and eaten (part of it) we drink water.
The light is coming, cousin,
The birds say *silibili.*
Must we not go, cousin?
In the bird's nest on the Wal-kon tree
There are two and two bird's eggs.
Having roasted and eaten (them) we drink water, cousin.
Tan tadina tan tadinānā.
To eat a part, having cut this and eaten (it), we drink water.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Dehema dehayi Sin. *deka dehayi*, two and two, or two by two. The last line appears to refer to the buffalo that was killed.

533
539

XIV. *Hittan tuddinā tun tuddipānā*
Hi hetiya wuki nagilā
Hitten bimaṭa weṭilā
Hi Kokkāgalaṭa man danin
Etten ipiṭa man nodanin
Etten ipiṭat man danin
Madi-galaṭa man nodanin
Etten ipiṭat man danin
Utkirigalaṭa man danin
Etten ipiṭa mā nodanin
Etten ipiṭat man danin
Hi mandigalaṭa man danin
Etten ipiṭat man nodanin
Waḍanā mtmā lanu hetāsāt
Waḍanā piṭin yannat herinan
Cewapen cewapaṭa yanu dennā
Tewapen tewapaṭa yannat herinan
Sitten sulaṅgin yanu dennā.

Hittan tuddinā tun tuddipānā.

Having climbed the *hetiyawala* creeper, and having fallen to the ground from it, I know the way to Kokkagala. I know the way beyond that also. I do not know the way to Madegala. I know the way beyond that also. I know the way to Utkirigala. I do not know the way beyond that. I know the way beyond that also. I know the way to that Madegala. I do not know the way beyond that also. Put the ropes on the hunting buffalo. If we cannot go on the back of the hunting buffalo let us go from shelter to shelter. If we cannot go from shelter to shelter, let us go (exposing ourselves) to cold and wind.

XV. *Tun puṭṭinānan puṭṭinānā*
Tāṇḍan paṇḍini paṇḍinānā
Diyaṭa hakḍan uḍa nerunā
Diyaṭa hakḍayi uḍa nerunā
Cāppi cili bili biyannā
Cāppi cili bili biyannā
Ran kuru mātpak pepennā
Ran kuru mātpak pepennā
Hi man hewada hiyālā
Hi man hewada hiyālā
Etaheṭa aḍa ara hiri nānā
Etaheṭa aḍa ara hiri nānā.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Tun paḏḷinānan paḏḷinānt
Tāṇḍan paṇḍini paṇḍinānt
Diyaṇu haṭḍan uḍu naruwat
Diyaṇu haṭḍayi uḍu naruwat
The birds are twittering[1]
The birds are twittering.
A golden bud face was visible
A golden bud face was visible.
I asked "Who is that?"
I asked "Who is that?"
Then (it was) that dear cousin of ours.
Then (it was) that dear cousin of ours.

XVI. *Tun paḏḷinānt paḏḷinānt*
Tāṇḍu paṇḍinu paḏḷinānt
Kaḍuru-kandi kokyi
Kaḍuru-kandi kokyi
Kajaren kajaren kiyanat
Kajaren kajaren kiyanat
Kawili paḷiṇa kodi kāṭu
Kawili paḷiṇa kodayi kāṭu
Æṭu paḷiṭwat kawillow
Æṭu paḷiṭwat kawillow.

Tun paḏḷinānt paḏḷinānt
Tāṇḍu paṇḍinu paḏḷinānt
A dove of the *Kaḍuru-kandi* (lit. camphor mountain) is crying *kajaren, kajaren.* No one has cakes. Eat some grain.

The last three songs are evidently variants of a common theme, or perhaps of a number of common themes, for they suggest that they consist of a number of fragments strung together with little regard for their meaning. They were certainly sung for the pleasure they afforded, and perhaps the incongruity of the subjects alluded to and the abrupt way in which they are introduced amuses the audience. Nevill collected variants of fragments of these songs in the Bintenne which he definitely regards as comic.

The following is the first of these fragments:

Kuburu gaya dawa nagilā
Ehat binili gana wattili

[1] Literally "the birds are uttering *ililili*," the last word being onomatopoetic. Mr Parker, to whom we are indebted for the translation of this song, is uncertain of the meaning of the third and fourth lines; perhaps they might be translated "There was a noise of water; we made obeisance."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

533
539

Dānu mādan ḷrilā
Mānini mānini mā mā māyi.

Having run and climbed up the *kukuru* tree
That breaking having fallen,
Having stuck in the mud up to the knee,
Mānini mānini mā mā māyi.

Nevill regards this as a "take off of the hymns sung by the celebrant when inspired in the worship of Kiri Amma, a Vedda form of Venus, Pattini, Parvati, or Amman," and he states that the "refrain is that actually used in her honour." Further "the *kukuru* tree is a prickly bush, up which no one could think of climbing, and the utter nonsense is a ridiculous parody on the hymn."

The following is given as comic by the same authority, who draws attention to "both *pata pata* and *danni panni*," being expressions coined from the sound of a heavy body falling whop, whop, or flop, flop, and pulling itself up slowly and with pain.

Kukuru hande nagilā
Pata pata gā gana wattilā
Danni panni gāla nagitala
Tān nan tadi tadi tā mā mā.

XVII. *Ayyō nānage dīti walalu gigiri dena maṇa datdayi kiri nānā*
Nānage hakdaṇa iruna gōmaru petiwan gōmaru icilā
Nānage hakdaṇa iruna gōmaru mayo handet iciyō
Nānaṇa hakdaṇa paṇimala ayiyō ṇat paṇi haṇā watenā
Naranaṇa wiyaṇu paduru ayiyō heṇin raṇā wattiya
Kadirawalli hakdi wiyani nangiyat wiyan damanni
Ætul wiyan damanni hala atul wiyan no danna nānā
Piṇi wiyan damanni eli wina panan wina ennew nānā
Caṇṇi cili kili kiyanni yannaṇa nidikimidiya nānā
Oyi heṇalā wacā arwidin nānage panduraṇa wirwalā.

Good wife! Oh what a noise the jingling bells of the bracelet on the two hands of yours (lit. of wife) are making! There are (lit. spread) *gomaru* spots (on my body) resembling the *gomaru* spots on (lit. spread on) my wife's waist. The *gomaru* spots which are (lit. spread) on (my) wife's waist (are) spread on my waist also. Oh! the thickened honey of the honey pachet made up (lit. tied up) for (my) wife is dripping. Oh! the coloured stripes of the mat woven for (my) wife are gone straight. A canopy is tied to Kadirawalle. The younger sister is also putting up canopies. She is

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

putting up inner canopies. Oh wife! do not put up inner canopies. She is putting up outer canopies. Wife, bring white canopies and leaf canopies. The birds are chirping[1]. Wife, rise up from sleep to go. The calves (or oxen) having come after playing in the river went to (my) mother-in-law's[2] hut. 533 539

The last song was collected at Unuwatura Bubula.

XVIII. (1) *Anḍā diyu duwana māwili gaṅgāwē*
Sorabora wilī wilpatuleu enawāda
Atat damā daṭaha ena nurāwē
Sālā piṭawala yak gammal
Sālā piṭawala wakī wakalā heru waturuyī

(2) *Bimin yanna herī nan*
Wadanā utmaṭa lanu heṭāpan
Tēn ṭediná
Aṅgaru naṭun naṭunā
Sellan heru ḍada gasāpan.

(1) Oh Māwili river! whose water is flowing, making a sound! Are you coming from the bottom of the lake Soraborawila? Oh lover! who comes in two directions, having put (your) hand also (round her neck). There has been *yaha* ceremony at Salapitawala. It having rained, there is muddy water at Salapitawala.

(2) If you cannot go walking (lit. on-the ground) put the ropes on the hunting buffalo.

Tēn ṭediná
They are dancing gesture dances[3].
Play a tune on the drum (used) for games.

This song very clearly shows the composite nature of some of the Vedda songs, especially those in use among the more sophisticated groups. The first two lines of the first verse and the last two lines of the second verse are obviously related to, if they are not derived from, the invocation sung at the *Kalamadema* ceremony (Chapter X, No. XXXIX), while the first two lines of the last verse refer to harnessing a buffalo as in the preceding songs.

[1] Lit. uttering *ciriri*.

[2] [*Nanda* presumably for *nanda* from *nandanna* a paternal aunt or maternal uncle's wife, hence mother-in-law, *cf.* pp. 64 and 65.]

[3] We are indebted to Mr Parker for the following note. "*Angaru naṭun naṭunā* may be 'dancing gesture-dances' or 'dancer of gesture-dances.' *Angaraya* is stated by Clough to be 'gesture,' the particular gesture of the Malabar dancing girl'."

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

wildest Veddahs are without an "instinct of worship." They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread. 776

Such appears to be the form which the superstitions of every savage tribe naturally assume,—the necessity for a belief in something more than human, imparting to the commonest objects a supernatural character. But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every near relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their "nêhya yakkoon," kindred spirits. They describe them as "ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting." In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, "bilindoo yakkoon," or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke.* 776 775 769

It is a pretty belief, and contrasts favourably with the superstitions of the Kandyans, who have spirits enough in their system, but almost all thoroughly malignant, and needing constant propitiation. But the Veddah spirit-world is singularly free from evil. I can find only one *absolutely* malignant spirit in it whom they really fear;† though, like all savages, they have an undefined awe of the nameless spirits whom they believe to haunt the darkness. The shades of their ancestors and of their children seem to be purely benevolent. The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following. An arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm. 769 776 782

"Mâ mîya, mâ mîy, mâ deyâ'
Topang kuyihetti mittigan yaakk'h!" [539]

* They also speak of them as "wittera yakkoon," "child-spirits." They seem to prefer their great-grandmother (maha kiri amma) to the rest of their defunct ancestors; but I cannot ascertain any cause for their preference for the old lady. I may, however, be wrong in describing it as a preference. It may be the reverse, for she is invoked chiefly in cases of sickness, when the patient is supposed to be suffering from the malignity of a spirit. [153]

† Avtramada Yakka, who especially injures women, lying wait for them in the forest.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

782 769 776 [539]

"My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?"*

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions when the intervention of the guardian spirits is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.†

[224] Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. "Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come, wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!" And they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.‡

776 782 They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. "Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!" was the only reply I received to repeated questions.§ They have

* I find in my notes another version of this invocation, which slightly alters the first words. It runs thus: "Ma mini, ma mini!—my gem, my gem!" but "mlya," which signifies "dead," is the most common. The word in the invocation translated "God" is evidently a corruption of the Sanskrit deva, a god or divinity. EDIT.]

† And they are invoked without any ceremony at all—by a mere mental ejaculation. I once saw a Veddah make a bad shot, and he threw down his bow with a gesture of impatience, saying—"That was because I did not call on my Billindoo Yakkoon." And before making his next shot, he muttered an invocation.

‡ A superstition similar somewhat to this is prevalent among the neighbouring Singhalese. If a man die who has lived a good life, his relatives give alms to the poor, calling on the dead by name to look down on them, and enable them to follow his good example. If he has lived an evil life, alms are also given; but these are propitiatory offerings for his sins, and to avert his evil influence from his survivors. For, in this case, he has become an evil spirit, apt to injure his own family and their cattle unless civilly treated. The degree of malignity depends on the degree of evil in the life led by deceased. If he dies with a hankering after worldly things, he haunts the house in which he lived in a variety of forms—perhaps most commonly that of a toad or a cobra, probably because these frequent houses. It is also, in some parts, a common belief that if a man die, and shortly after one of the family fall sick, and is not cured by the usual medicines and ceremonies, the sickness is attributed to the spirit of the dead, who must be propitiated by a mess of rice, left in the house for him. This, generally, is supposed to effect a cure.

§ It is curious that in one of their invocations, "mā Deyā", my God! [782] occurs, see before; and that of thunder they say, "a spirit, or a god has cried out".

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 Almost omnivorous, I have before remarked their scrupulous
171 abstinence from the flesh of cows and fowls, though they can assign no reason for it. Now, though good Buddhists as well as Hindús reject the flesh of cows, yet since the Veddahs have never associated with their Buddhist neighbours, they cannot have acquired this prejudice from them.

And though all over the south-east part of Ceylon, where even the superstitious awe of Skanda extends, the cock, the device on his banner, is to a certain degree respected; yet, since the Veddahs care no more for Skanda than they do for all the other gods in the Hindú Pantheon—the very names of whom, *as gods*, are unknown to them, they would not respect his sacred cock.* In

789 but Pasé-B'uddho—the only single allusion to Buddhism among them; but the very meaning of this and other charms is unknown to the Veddahs. They are repeated by rote; they do not pause to understand them, and could not if they would. It is enough for them, as for most Oriental people, that a particular formula is to serve a particular purpose.

Veddah Charm for Protection against a Wild Boar.

539

Ira deyené ôkma.	Boar (?) of the sun-god!
Sanda deyené ôkma.	Boar (?) of the moon-god!
Passé budené ôkma.	Boar (?) of the Passé Buddha!
Situ ôkma situ.	Stay, boar, stay!

Singhalese Charm for Tooth ache.

Ira deyené myā!	Worm of the sun-god!
Sanda deyené myā!	Worm of the moon-god!
Passé Budené myā!	Worm of the Passé Buddha!
Daté nositoo dat myā!	Stay not in the tooth, thou tooth-worm!

171 These are identical; yet the Veddahs and the Singhalese certainly do not associate so closely as to borrow one another's charms. Have they descended in each race since the time they were one? The term *okma* I can get no satisfactory explanation of. It is not Singhalese, certainly. I assume it means "wild boar", as this is the charm to arrest a boar in the path; but it is not the term used by the Veddahs for a boar in ordinary conversation. The allusion to the Pasé, or Pachó, Buddha, is curious as occurring in both; the one people being anything but Buddhist, while Buddhism is the religion of the other. As Gotama Buddha visited Ceylon long anterior to the final establishment of Buddhism in Ceylon, and descended in Bintenne, may not this solitary allusion to the religion have been handed down in this form among the Veddahs from a period even before the invasion by Wijalja? In the form of a charm which is repeated by rote, such an allusion would be most naturally retained. So far from having any Buddhist tendencies, they do not even show the slightest outward respect in the presence of a Buddhist priest. The other Veddah charms are, I believe, quite unlike those of the Singhalese, but on that point I am still making inquiries; aided, as I have been throughout, by Mr. De Loyza, the able and intelligent modhar of Benlotte.

* The far-famed Hindu temple of Katragam, which attracts thousands of pilgrims annually from India, and is regarded with awe by the Singhalese, is dedicated to Skanda, the Indian Mars. The temple is built on a spot which, according to tradition (though it is not mentioned in the Skanda Puranas), is the site of Skanda's camp in his wars with the Asuras.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A 302 man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 755 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarm- 252 ing blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the G picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company 101 of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike 105 those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a 361 medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

000 A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the V Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That [132] evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

being strangled. I know a man who, on hearing this cry, rushed out of this house one night, lantern in hand, imagining murder was afoot! A creature with a voice like that should not complain if stories are told of it. According to some, the bird is the incarnation of a Buddhist priest who goes about seeking his stolen book wailing, "*Mai potha ko?*" (Where is my book?). Others say the *ulama* cries whenever it sees a corpse prepared for burial held up before it by an exultant demon; then uttering a succession of screams it falls senseless from its perch. The most gruesome story to its credit is the following; even the old women who relate these tales show particular reticence with regard to this one:— Once there lived a man and his wife and they had a little child. One day when the woman went out to fetch firewood, the man killed his child, cut up some of its flesh and cooked and ate it, leaving a portion on the fire for his wife. When she returned she saw the meat and asked her husband where he had got it.

825 825 539

"Never mind that," said the man. "You eat."

The woman was enjoying her meal when suddenly she noticed a child's finger on her plate.

"Where is our child?" she asked apprehensively.

"That is what you are eating", said her inhuman husband.

Thereupon the woman, thrusting the handle of a coconut-shell spoon into her head, fled into the jungle shrieking "*Mai lamaya ko? Mai lamaya ko?*" (Where is my child? Where is my child?) and became the crested *ulama*. Now this story, folk-lore though it be, confirms the assumption that the devil bird has some sort of a tuft on its head.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kohomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *kansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *neeagalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-kadurugedde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *kirinthea*. 757 752 832 276 824

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *kansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat. 276

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams. 832 539

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*," he shouts. "*Kiribala, karia, karia, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*." A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them. 342 [178] [574]

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

front of it is a much chipped *opulu* tree from which the Veddas every now and then renew their chew. Throughout the day the surrounding woods echo to the voices of food-gatherers or the blows of axes, as combs are cut out of hollow trees. At fiful intervals the *kolong koka* (stork-billed king-fisher), lord of the rocky stream, raises a clamorous cry, or the wood-pecker startlingly proclaims to the world that it sees the great she-demon (*maha yakkini*). As evening comes, the *kotaka* (gekko) that shares the cave, drawls in quaint imitation of his name, "ko-tak-ko." The night is ushered in by the solemn notes of the night jar* and bell-like sounds of frogs. The crescent moon shines through the trees, peopling the forest with mysterious shadows. Strange noises are heard around, a breaking branch perhaps, a dropping stone, or an animal's foot-falls. Then the little one creeps to its mother whispering, "Mother, the *ketha*"; and she, fondling, replies, "Yes, it is the *ketha*, child; be still." Now fires are stirred, and the Veddas, couched on leaves, and doubled up under their meagre rags, lie as close to them as they dare. For the caves are cold at night even on the hottest day. And every now and then throughout the dark, one or other of them groans with the chill, gets up, pokes the fire, and snuggles nearer to it. Is it a wonder that ash is the morning mark of the Vedda and *Alu galge* a favourite name of his cave? By six, the morning mists have melted and the cave begins to warm.

*At dusk, and all through the night, Horsfield's night jar gathers into its rich liquid notes the silence and mystery of the forest. There is no jungle, however desolate, in which this ever welcome music is not heard. It is at once the curfew of the jungle, the embodiment of all the stealthy, nocturnal life in it, and the destiny and doom of it.

Putku-hath-peruma (seven-sons-axe) is the Sinhalese name of the bird in perfect imitation of its cry; and the following story explains it.—A woman once sent her seven sons into the jungle to fell trees. One of the trees falling in their direction, the brothers attempted to shoulder it off and were all killed. The mother, having cooked the evening meal, waited at home for her sons. But as they did not return she went out to look for them, and found them all dead beside the fallen tree. Taking up an axe she killed herself and became this bird; and now from dusk till dawn she cries *putku-hath-peruma* through the lonesome woods

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

GENEALOGIES.

THE genealogies on the next two pages show the relationship existing between the various individuals of the three Vedda communities, which still retain enough of the old Vedda mode of life to make a study of their organization valuable. At the first glance it is obvious that these genealogies do not go back beyond the memory of middle-aged men of the present day. We are convinced that this is due, not to any general distrust of our inquiries, but simply to certain peculiarities of the Vedda habit of thought which is directly dependent on their mode of life. The first of these is the extraordinary lack of memory shown by every Vedda for the names of individuals of more than one generation older than himself. This may perhaps be due to the fact that the number of individuals whom any one knows well is really small, being necessarily limited to the community to which he himself belongs. The genealogies show how small are these communities and, since every Vedda should marry a first cousin, marriage does little or nothing to enlarge the number of his connections. Further, each of the people with whom he comes in contact is related to him in a definite manner and is called and spoken of by a definite kinship term, so that personal names come to play a very small part in the daily life of the Veddas. It is this, doubtless, that has led to the frequent persistence of the baby names Tuta and Tuti, "little one" in its male and female forms, as the only names by which many individuals are known, and this together with the number of children called by

601 [153] [582] 601 55

[p. 59] [text continues on p. 62]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

such favourite names as Kaira, Poromala and Handuna leads to confusion, not only in the minds of strangers, but also we believe in the minds of the Veddas themselves.

Sinhalese who come in contact with the Veddas find the same difficulty, and the individuals of certain communities, e.g. Danigala, have each a Sinhalese name by which they are known to the peasant Sinhalese, and which in many instances they themselves recognise, so that some Veddas actually know each other by these Sinhalese names, and give them when asked their own names or those of their companions. This is the explanation of the majority of Sinhalese names occurring in the genealogies. Again, the fact that among the Veddas there is no system of hereditary chieftainship, or any other custom such as the vendetta, forcing a man to know and remember his grandfathers, cannot but have assisted to bring about the forgetfulness of previous generations, which with the rarest exceptions makes everyone entirely ignorant of his grandparents. In the case of the Danigala and Henebedda Veddas there was an additional difficulty to be met in conducting our investigations. The men of these communities who for the most part belonged to the Morane and Unapane clans, traditionally the proudest and most important of the Vedda *warugs*, had to a certain extent intermarried with Sinhalese and also with the Veddas of Namadewa clan, a *warugs* which in this part of the country is regarded as of inferior status. They are most anxious to conceal instances of both these classes of marriage and lied freely concerning them and this is the reason for certain lacunae in their genealogies, which in the case of the Danigala community could not have been given at all had not Mr Bibile's position as Ratemahatmaya, i.e. hereditary overlord or "laird" of this part of the country, enabled him to make inquiries from the surrounding peasantry, and thus check, and in many instances correct, the information we obtained from the Veddas themselves.

A Vedda community consists of from one to five families who share the rights of hunting over a tract of land, of gathering honey upon it, fishing its streams, and using the rock shelters. But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

rigidly observed that we were told that a man might not assist his sister to rise from the ground if she had fallen down and injured herself. Further, it seemed that he should not see much even of the girl whom he was about to marry until she was handed over to him, though according to our Unuwatura Bubula informants it was not really bad for a man to touch any of his *naena* and he was allowed to do this in an emergency. At Sitala Wanniya it was said that adult *hura* and *naena* should not speak to each other even when it had been arranged that they should marry, and at Omuni we were told that if in the old days a man was seen speaking to an unmarried girl, her outraged relatives would seek to kill him. Children may of course come in contact with their parents to any extent and at any age. 602 [684]

Second marriages are, and always have been frequent, a man often marrying a sister of his deceased wife and a woman marrying one of her dead husband's brothers. We believe that such unions were regarded as both a privilege and a duty, though according to Handuna of Sitala Wanniya a man married his dead wife's sister principally because if he married any one else his children would not be looked after so well. If a widow does not marry one of her dead husband's brothers she may return to her parents, though it seemed that if these were no longer living she would generally stay with her late husband's group, whose duty it would then be to look after her and her children. 587

With regard to name avoidance, a man does not speak the name of his mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and they also refrain from speaking his name, relationship terms being used instead. Nor does a man commonly speak of his son-in-law or father-in-law, or his brother's wife or sister's husband, except by the appropriate relationship terms; beyond this we would only point out that, as already mentioned, neither man nor woman commonly speaks of his or her spouse by name, and there is a general tendency to avoid the use of names and where possible indicate an individual by a relationship term. In no case did we notice any hesitation in giving the name of any adult which we sought to obtain in the course of our inquiries. The objection to saying a young child's name and the reason for this is referred to on p. 103. 551 [606 607]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

844 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at
843 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *madu*, which fruits are
262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard
853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would
262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wandura*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The
844 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round
[184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's
262] flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be dangerously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *katandirale* (devil dancer)
[165] would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who
834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa
551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

or five years old. Before this they were called Tuta (male) and Tuti (female), i.e. "little one," and these expressions may persist and replace their proper names which in many instances seem to be forgotten, so that some children appeared to have no name at all. Small babies may be called Goraka or Gorakki, because they are reddish in colour, and so resemble the *gorakka* fruit (*Garcinia cambogia*). Apparently these names are not applied for more than the first few months after birth. It was said that the reason the names of young children were avoided was that to mention their names might attract the attention of evilly disposed *yaku* who might make the child ill or even kill it. We did not ascertain what were the names of the *yaku* who it was feared might injure the children, but it must be assumed that these spirits belonged to the third stratum of the Vedda religion defined on p. 149, and are either foreign spirits who have been adopted without losing their dangerous attributes, or the spirits of remote female ancestors (*kiriamma*) who sometimes steal children.

At Bandaraduwa, where there was much foreign influence, we had an example of the belief in the inadvisability of bringing children too closely in contact with the *yaku*. This is recorded on p. 216.

At Omuni we were told that in the old days there was no fixed time for the naming of a child. The father and mother give the child its name, usually choosing that of an ancestor, for there is no harm in speaking or using the name of a dead relative when the name is given to a child; thus our informant, the headman of Omuni, calls his second child by the name of his own dead father, though in his lifetime he would have addressed his father by his kinship term. Our informant gave his father's name to his second child, not to his first, because his father was alive when his first son was born. A woman's name is generally given to a granddaughter born after her death. Children are also commonly named after their maternal and paternal aunts and uncles.

The following lists of the names of males and females were given me by Mr Bibile and Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi; they were all said to be good Vedda names, and many of

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

551

them were avowedly the names of dead Veddas, but with the exception of those printed in italics, they are none of them common Vedda names, as tested by their occurrence at the present day.

Names of males: *Poromala*, Sulliya, Karakolaya, *Nila*, Kāuwa, Boda, Mola, Pubbara, Kona, Dinga, *Kaluwa*, Hakkendaya, Hapuwa, Bammuna, Peruma, Gobira, *Badena*, *Kaira*, Kudahanniya, Naga.

Names of females: Bemmini, Tikki, Nagi, Suwadi, Mittu, Viyani, Tandi, *Hendi*, Pinchi, Kalu, *Selli*, Burati, Milalani, Kalumal nangi, Nilmal nangi, Kanni, Kalati, Poiomali, Aembali[1], Nambadi[1], Uri[1], Kendi, Gobire, *Badani*, Kiri.

In addition to the above the following occur in our notes.

Males: Randu Wanniya, Sita Wanniya, Poromasaka, Handuna, Kanda, Wannaku, Vela, Rata (?), Tiki (?), Hereta (?).

Females: Kandi, Bevini.

Nicknames are common among men, but we did not learn of any instance in which a woman was given one. Nicknames generally refer to physical peculiarities of the individuals to whom they are applied. Poromala, the half of whose face had been torn away by a bear, is usually called *Walaha*, i.e. bear. An old man of Namadewa clan was called Ukusa, because his hair appears ruffled like the feathers of an owl (*kusa*), and Randunu Wanniya, the shaman of the Henebedda community, was nicknamed Uchia from the verb *uchenawa*, to raise up, because after falling down in the shamanistic dances in which he is protagonist he must be raised up by his fellows.

Other nicknames of the immediate ancestors of living Veddas we met were: Mahakata, "big mouth"; Ogapalua, "loud talker," literally, one who yells; Nakakuna, "stinking nose," applied to a man with ozæna; Nemma, "bent"; Kankuna, "sore eyes"; and Kapunkarea, "man who cuts down trees." Although nicknames did not altogether replace their owners' real names, men were often called by them, and the frequency with which certain names such as Poromala and Handuna occur, often made them a real convenience.

[1] These only mean woman of the Aembala, Namadewa and Uru clans respectively.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

differ from the Singhalese, and those which, though Singhalese, are, in the sense here used, peculiar to the Veddahs. It has been suggested to me that some of the former are derived directly from the Sanskrit, but as I am incompetent to judge of the accuracy of these suggestions, I do not venture to give the conjectural derivations which I have received. 197

I have, myself, noted down, and caused to be noted down from dictation, several Veddah charms, which are not, I am informed, known to the Singhalese, though in some there is a certain resemblance to charms in use by the latter. Whether corrupted during the many ages in which they have been unintelligently repeated, or whether they are in a form of Singhalese now obsolete, or both, they are not easily translated. They are charms used in illness, and for protection against elephants, leopards, bears, and wild boars. 789 [755]

The Veddahs are at present chiefly known by names similar to those in use among the neighbouring Singhalese, and it is curious to observe how oddly they are jumbled together. In one family are to be found names which would only be appropriate to Kandyans of the highest caste, and names which could only be borne by the lowest. Some of their names, too, belong to Hindoos, and not to Singhalese. Some are not proper names at all; while, most strange of all, others, though utterly unknown in Ceylon, either to Tamils or Singhalese, are in common use in Bengal, and refer directly to Hindoo deities, or personages mentioned in the Purânas. 551 171

The names of the preceding generation appear to have differed in a very marked manner from the Singhalese names by which the Veddahs now are for the most part known; and those in the list appended to this paper are chiefly the names of the fathers and mothers of the present Veddahs. Most of these I was able, by the kindness of Colonel Vincent Eyre, C.B., R.A., to submit to the inspection of Professor Lees, of Bengal, and they are pronounced by him to have a decided Sanskrit affinity. [197]

It is a singular and significant fact, that not only are many of their names unknown in Ceylon, but their meaning is utterly unintelligible to the Veddahs themselves, among whom they were family designations which have descended to them from father to son for ages.

It is strange that so many have written of the Veddahs, and have been contented with information at once scanty and inaccurate. Davy believed that they had no names.* Tennent affirms that they have no charms—no "instinct of worship"—and doubts 114

* Davy, *Account of the Veddahs*, p. 115 of his work.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

fact, neither scruple is now a religious one with them. Their 262
aversion to beef and fowls is an hereditary prejudice, now become 171
a custom amongst them.

The names borne by many of them are the designations of 551
Hindú gods and goddesses. It seems clear then, that these 171
Hindú customs and prejudices—these Hindú names, which we find still lingering amongst a people which does not profess that faith, and for twenty centuries have been far removed from those who do, indicate either that the Veddahs once professed it, or lived in the closest intercourse with those who did.* [174]

The complicated and artificial ceremonial of that religion has naturally died away during the long ages of isolation in which the Veddahs have lived; the vestiges of its former existence among them have been preserved only in some of its strongest prejudices, and in the names derived from the Hindú mythology which have descended as customary family designations to the Veddahs of the present day.†

I should hardly say that the cock is "respected" in the neighbourhood of 171
Katagam; but fowls are rarely eaten by the people there, who, if they eat them, must undergo a course of purification. A fowl curry involves the necessity of an ablution of the head with limes and saffron. Peafowls, too, are rejected as an article of food in that part of the island, for a peacock is represented as the vehicle of the gods: of all this, however, and of the existence of Skanda or of Katragam, the Veddahs are profoundly ignorant. The names of Skanda are common appellations among Veddah men, and that of Valli, Skanda's consort, a common name for Veddah women.

* Let it be remembered that the Veddahs, of whom I am writing, have never had any communication with the Tamil-speaking Veddahs who inhabit the seacoast of the Batticaloa district, who are in direct contiguity with Hindús. [The inference drawn is not warranted by the fact referred to. The Hindús occasionally have names taken from those of foreign languages. Thus the Regent of Nepal, a pure and high-caste Hindú, bore a name consisting of two Persian words. EDIT.]

† It was not for years after I had collected this information regarding the superstitions of the Veddahs, that I read the Laws of MANU. It is impossible not to be struck with the similarity, if not identity, of their rude worship and its precepts; *e.g.*

"72. But whoever cherishes not the five orders of beings—those who demand hospitality—those whom he ought to maintain—*his departed forefathers* and himself—that man lives not, even though he breathes."

The Brahman is ordered to make an oblation every day to the following divinities, viz.:—

"First to Agni, *god of fire*, and to the *lunar god*;" .... to the "*goddess of the day*"; .... the *goddess of the earth and sky*"; to the "*winds*" and "*water gods*"; the "*gods of large trees*"; to the spirits "*that walk in light*", and those "*who walk in darkness.*" The reverence of deceased ancestors is then insisted on. "The Pitris, or great progenitors, are free from all wrath—intent on purity—even exempt from sensual passions—endued with exalted qualities."

"The divine Manes are always pleased with an oblation *in empty glades*,

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
192 Here	Mobba	Méhi	
197 There	Obba	E'hi	
Far off	Nekat rata	Dura	
Be quick!	To bang	Wigahata	"To", the pronoun thou; in the Bhotia dialect "bangiyap" is, be quick!
Before	Itchkiá	Isarsha	
Behind	Patchkiá	Pasé	
Exclamation of approbation	Está!		
Exclamation of disapprobation	Iss!		

SPECIMENS OF VEDDAH NAMES.

MEN.

551 171 Lékendra. "Sovereign of the World", from Léka (Sanscrit), "the world", and Indra; unknown among Singhalese or Tamils of Ceylon, but in use in Bengal.

Kanda. The Singhalese call Skanda, the Indian Mars, to whom the famed temple at Katragam is dedicated, "Kanda Kumaryia"; but the word is unknown as a name.

Weyla. One of the names of Skanda.

Suppa is a corruption of Subhramanya, one of the names of Skanda. Both these are Tamil names in use; and I think I have heard Weyla as a Kandyan name, but it is very uncommon.

Skanda is a favourite of the Veddahs (of India), though unknown to the Veddahs here; and "Valli", one of his consorts (a Veddah female name in use among the Veddahs in Ceylon), was said to have been born of a deer in a forest in Arcot, and found by a Veddah chief Kumāra (Kumāro was Kuweni's uncle, and Kumā is a Veddah name still in use), and brought up by him.

Kanda, it is true, means, in Singhalese, simply a mountain; but it is more probable that, as a Veddah name, it is a corruption of Skanda, a name descended to them, though they are ignorant of its signification.

Nila. A name in common use in Bengal; also used by Tamils (Hindús); but entirely unknown as a name among the Singhalese. Nila, a personage mentioned in the Puranas.

Benda. Binda, in common use in Bengal, but unknown in Ceylon, either among Singhalese or Tamils. There is a common appellation, a title rather than a name, Banda, in Ceylon; but Banda does not occur among the Veddahs. Binduwa also is a low-cast name among the Singhalese.

Déwa Denna. Unknown as a name in Ceylon. Equivalent to the Hindú "Deva Dattah", given by the deity—which is its signification in Singhalese.

Miliklana. Unknown by Singhalese or Tamils in Ceylon.

Koonchi. From "kuncha" (Sanscrit), to go crookedly—a cripple. In use, with the affix Tamby, among the Tamils, but not in use among the Singhalese.

Kangeria. "Kangana" (Sans.), one of the names of Kandarpa, God of Love. Neither used by Singhalese nor Tamil as a name.

Kowa. No such name among Singhalese or Tamils.

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Godira. "Generous, excellent" (Sans.). Not known as a name among either Singhalese or Tamils.

Kuma. "Kurma", the second incarnation of Vishnu. Not a name in Singhalese or Tamil.

Bodawa. A common name in Bengal and Hindústan. Not known among the Singhalese.

Nanga. "Nagna" (Sans.), naked. Not a name in use either by Tamil or Singhalese.

Toota. ? "Tuta" (Hindu), broken, or "tushta" (Sans.), satisfied ? No such name in use among Tamils or Singhalese.

Kombowa. Not known as a name among Singhalese or Tamils.

Konára. Not a Singhalese or Tamil name; though it forms part of the family titles of some Singhalese families, as Kónaramudiansa lágé.

Kaira. Neither a Singhalese nor a Tamil name.

Bandesa. Neither a Singhalese nor a Tamil name.

Koba. Neither a Singhalese nor a Tamil name.

Pussmittya. "Pusha", the sun (Sans.); "mitra", friend (Sans.); "puss" (Singh.), an empty nut; "mittya" (ditto), a bundle. "Pussmitta", a Yakkho name mentioned in the Mahawanso. No such name is known among either Singhalese or Tamils.

Bissa. "Vishwa" (Sans.), the world; "bissa" (Singh.), an oval basket for holding grain. The name occurs among the Veddahs thus: "Koorthan" (a kind of grain) "bissa". No such name is in use among Singhalese or Tamils.

Paya. A fool or maniac, in Tamil; and "pé" is a spirit, goblin, or *spirit of the dead*, in Singhalese. Not used as a name among the Singhalese.

Kotali. "Kotalé" (Singh.), a vessel with a spout for drinking from. Not a Singhalese nor Tamil name.

Goolia. Not a Singhalese nor Tamil name. "Gooli" (Singh.), anything round.

Heen kenda. Not a Singhalese nor Tamil name. "Heen kenda" is the Singhalese for a kind of tree.

Kanata. Neither a Singhalese not a Tamil name. "Kanata", in Singhalese, is applied to ground which has been cleared, and has partially become covered with brushwood.

WOMEN'S NAMES.

Nili. A heroine in a Tamil drama. A name in use in Bengal, but unknown as a name in Ceylon.

Walli. "Valli", consort of Skanda—see "Kanda" among men's names. "Valli" (Sanscrit), a winding creeper—a term of endearment. Also an honorific affix to names of goddesses and princesses. Not used as a name in Ceylon.

Rane. Corruption of "Rajni", queen; common name in Bengal. This name is used among low-cast women in the Kandyan country.

Nangi. Not used as a name in Ceylon (vide ante, "Nanga"). It means, in Singhalese, younger sister.

Wyrie. A title of Parvati. A name among Hindús; also Kandyan.

Kumie. See "Kuma". Not a Singhalese name, nor Tamil; but "Kuma" is a Kandyan *female* name, though a Veddah *male* name.

Alendi. "Lounder" (Sans.), a maiden. A name, I believe, in use among the Singhalese of the maritime provinces.

Abi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

Goberi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

Tohti. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

Tangi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

551 171 Nagi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.
Tandi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.
Kombi. Not a woman's name in Tamil or Singhalese; though "Koombi", with the affix "Hamy", is a man's name in the maritime provinces.
Saloo. Neither Singhalese nor Tamil.
Redda. Neither Singhalese nor Tamil.
Pokoóti. No such name among the Singhalese or Tamils. "Pookooti", in Singhalese, dwarf-like.

DOGS' NAMES.

552 171 Dimbili. ? From "dimba" (Sans.), an egg.
Chārāna.
Kerita. ? From "kelita" (Sans.), playful; or perhaps a diminutive of the Veddah term for a bear, "kerri" or "keria".
Kaddia. ? From "kad" (Sans.), to injure. "Kadia" is a venomous ant in Singhalese.
Kāna. ? From "kanahila" (Singh.), a jackal.
Sangelia. "A chain" in Tamil.
Gora.
Debera. "Dabera" is, in Singhalese, quarrelsome.
Bahera. Name of a yakka.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
[283 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded
224] to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But
515 for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

5: Spinsl D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Unapana *waruge*, like all the other *waruges*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *waruge* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *waruge* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *waruge* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *waruges* after similar occurrences under *nabudu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gamana*). 614 173 [551]

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season. 177 178

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *kanava* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukhan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukhan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukhan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more." [437]

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas. 161 186 731

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. 'What would you do,' I asked a Veddah once, 'if your bow were stolen?' 'No one could steal it,' he replied, 'the dog would not let him.' 'But if anyone killed your dog?' His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 435

"And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic[1]. He never attempted to deny what he had done. 'It is true,' he said at the coroner's inquest, 'I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted for my support[2].'" 231 674

The following is a list of the names of dogs and bitches obtained from the Henebedda Veddas: 552

Dogs. Kapura, Kadiya (*kadi*, black ant), Muranduwa (obstinate), Hudena (white), Pandina (spotty), Dimbula, Boriya, Taniya, Tambula, Senba, Katakaluwa (black mouth), Bahira, Pulana, Kambiliya, Komiya (a Sinhalese corruption of "come here," the name of a dog belonging to the Korale of Nilgala).

Bitches. Pandi (spotty), Katakalu (black mouth), Handani (white), Dassi (clever), Dimbile, Makedi (like iron), Bosari, Hudu Valli, Mukulu.

The following list represents the usual property of an elderly Vedda, that is, of one of the influential men of the group, and actually records the property of Poromala (Walaha) the "senior" of the Henebedda Veddas; one axe, bow and arrows, three pots, a deerskin, a "flint and steel" and supply of tinder, a gourd for carrying water, a betel pouch containing betel cutters and some form of vessel or small box, perhaps of metal (e.g. an old brass covered cartridge case), for holding lime. Most Veddas also possess a certain amount of cloth besides that actually in use on their person, and Handuna was no exception to this rule. 422

Kaira of Henebedda had only two pots, but otherwise the list of his property is identical with that already given. Handuna

[1] "The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance."

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.*, pp. 286—287.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

551 171 Nagi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.
Tandi. Neither a Tamil nor a Singhalese name.
Kombi. Not a woman's name in Tamil or Singhalese; though "Koombi", with the affix "Hamy", is a man's name in the maritime provinces.
Salpo. Neither Singhalese nor Tamil.
Redda. Neither Singhalese nor Tamil.
Pokoóti. No such name among the Singhalese or Tamils. "Pookooti", in Singhalese, dwarf-like.

DOGS' NAMES.

552 171 Dimbili. ? From "dimba" (Sans.), an egg.
Chăräna.
Kerita. ? From "kelita" (Sans.), playful; or perhaps a diminutive of the Veddah term for a bear, "kerri" or "keria".
Kaddia. ? From "kad" (Sans.), to injure. "Kadia" is a venomous ant in Singhalese.
Kāna. ? From "kæṇahila" (Singh.), a jackal.
Sangelia. "A chain" in Tamil.
Gora.
Debera. "Dabera" is, in Singhalese, quarrelsome.
Bahera. Name of a yakka.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

844 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at
843 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *madu*, which fruits are
262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard
853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would
262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wanduru*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The
844 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round
[184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's
262] flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be danger-
ously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *katandirale* (devil dancer)
[165] would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who
834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa
551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

or five years old. Before this they were called Tuta (male) and Tuti (female), i.e. "little one," and these expressions may persist and replace their proper names which in many instances seem to be forgotten, so that some children appeared to have no name at all. Small babies may be called Goraka or Gorakki, because they are reddish in colour, and so resemble the *gorakka* fruit (*Garcinia cambogia*). Apparently these names are not applied for more than the first few months after birth. It was said that the reason the names of young children were avoided was that to mention their names might attract the attention of evilly disposed *yaku* who might make the child ill or even kill it. We did not ascertain what were the names of the *yaku* who it was feared might injure the children, but it must be assumed that these spirits belonged to the third stratum of the Vedda religion defined on p. 149, and are either foreign spirits who have been adopted without losing their dangerous attributes, or the spirits of remote female ancestors (*kiriamma*) who sometimes steal children.

At Bandaraduwa, where there was much foreign influence, we had an example of the belief in the inadvisability of bringing children too closely in contact with the *yaku*. This is recorded on p. 216.

At Omuni we were told that in the old days there was no fixed time for the naming of a child. The father and mother give the child its name, usually choosing that of an ancestor, for there is no harm in speaking or using the name of a dead relative when the name is given to a child; thus our informant, the headman of Omuni, calls his second child by the name of his own dead father, though in his lifetime he would have addressed his father by his kinship term. Our informant gave his father's name to his second child, not to his first, because his father was alive when his first son was born. A woman's name is generally given to a granddaughter born after her death. Children are also commonly named after their maternal and paternal aunts and uncles.

The following lists of the names of males and females were given me by Mr Bibile and Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi; they were all said to be good Vedda names, and many of

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 562 The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. 802 Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437 The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantako*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. 582 Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). 584 583 She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. 614 554 There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *warugé* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

such favourite names as Kaira, Poromala and Handuna leads to confusion, not only in the minds of strangers, but also we believe in the minds of the Veddas themselves.

Sinhalese who come in contact with the Veddas find the same difficulty, and the individuals of certain communities, e.g. Danigala, have each a Sinhalese name by which they are known to the peasant Sinhalese, and which in many instances they themselves recognise, so that some Veddas actually know each other by these Sinhalese names, and give them when asked their own names or those of their companions. This is the explanation of the majority of Sinhalese names occurring in the genealogies. Again, the fact that among the Veddas there is no system of hereditary chieftainship, or any other custom such as the vendetta, forcing a man to know and remember his grandfathers, cannot but have assisted to bring about the forgetfulness of previous generations, which with the rarest exceptions makes everyone entirely ignorant of his grandparents. In the case of the Danigala and Henebedda Veddas there was an additional difficulty to be met in conducting our investigations. The men of these communities who for the most part belonged to the Morane and Unapane clans, traditionally the proudest and most important of the Vedda *waruge*, had to a certain extent intermarried with Sinhalese and also with the Veddas of Namadewa clan, a *waruge* which in this part of the country is regarded as of inferior status. They are most anxious to conceal instances of both these classes of marriage and lied freely concerning them and this is the reason for certain lacunae in their genealogies, which in the case of the Danigala community could not have been given at all had not Mr Bibile's position as Ratemahatmaya, i.e. hereditary overlord or "laird" of this part of the country, enabled him to make inquiries from the surrounding peasantry, and thus check, and in many instances correct, the information we obtained from the Veddas themselves.

A Vedda community consists of from one to five families who share the rights of hunting over a tract of land, of gathering honey upon it, fishing its streams, and using the rock shelters. But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 *waruge*, the remaining four between Morane and Aembala (2) or
582 Rugam (2) *waruge*.
611 **Dambani.** These extremely sophisticated Veddas probably belong to Namadewa *waruge* and descent is probably matrilineal.

Malgode (Horaborawewa). Our informants knew of
614 Namadewa, Dehigama and Kapatu *waruge* and no others, but when Morane *waruge* was mentioned to them one man stated that he had heard of a *waruge* of that name.

Girandura. Here too exogamy prevailed though children
[582 took their father's *waruge*, and we could discover no exception to
611] these rules. The marriages we could trace took place between Dehigama and Namadewa *waruge*, and between Dehigama and Uru *waruge*, we consequently assume that these are the *waruge* represented in this community.

THE COMPARATIVE STATUS OF THE CLANS.

614 The members of the Morane and Unapane clans generally considered themselves superior to the Namadewa, Uru and
●554 Aembala *waruge*. This feeling was so strong at Henebedda that much difficulty was at first experienced in collecting genealogies. Representatives of the Morane, Unapane and Namadewa clans were for the time living together at Bendiyagalge caves, and the difference in status between the Morane and Unapane on the one hand, and Namadewa on the other, was felt so strongly that the members of the last-mentioned *waruge* invariably denied their clan, while the Morane and Unapane
[582 folk said the Namadewa were their servants. It seemed clear that in the old days Morane and Unapane folk never married into one of the servile clans, but two or three such marriages had taken place within recent years, and in every case these marriages were at first denied. The most striking proof of this feeling was evinced when we had come to know all the members of the community and pretence had been largely given up; Sita Wanniya and Poromala our usual guides, both Morane men, led us one day to the Namadewa chena. The Namadewa men immediately began an angry protest. "These people," they said, meaning Poromala and Sita Wanniya, "call us Namadewa; it

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

is not so, we are as good as they," and again on leaving they declared that even if they were not Morane folk they were certainly as good, for had not the eldest born of Kaira the patriarch of Danigala, a Morane man, married a woman from their family? This last statement was proved to be true by the genealogy. As neither we nor our guides said anything to provoke these remarks the intensity of the feeling cannot be doubted. At Bandaraduwa there were only Morane and Unapane men, but they said that Uru *waruge* were their servants, and that some people of this clan lived near Uniche; Wannaku seen later was doubtless one of these. At the chena settlement at Rerenkadi one woman said the Uru *waruge* were "dirty" people. This was one of the first Vedda communities we visited, and the significance of the remark was not realised at the time. At Dambani the people professed to have forgotten their *waruge*; we therefore surmised that they might belong to one of the inferior clans, and later at Horaborawewa a Vedda boy said his mother was a Namadewa woman from Dambani. Additional evidence in support of this view was furnished by the statements of the Alutnuwara Arachi recorded on p. 52.

The services that the inferior clans were said to render to other clans were as follows: when big game was shot and fish caught the Namadewa men must carry it, and they must make the creeper ladders for gathering rock honey. How much of this work was really done by Namadewa people is extremely difficult to say, it is scarcely credible that when living apart from the servile clans the Morane and Unapane men would send for them to carry a kill, but when Poromala of Henebedda (Morane) had killed a deer and cut it up on the *talawa* near our camp, it was noticed that Kalua, a Namadewa boy who had not been hunting, came down from the cave and carried back the greater part of the meat.

THE TERRITORIAL GROUPING OF THE CLANS.

Although at the present day it cannot be said that a territorial grouping of the clans certainly exists, or ever existed, there is considerable evidence that this once prevailed. We

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Things new to them which we showed

them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and
152 most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by
[522] a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character, but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous, and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman, but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela, half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well as the other men. Kaira, *baena* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *baena* to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives, keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately, it did not seem that any food was private property. One other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely, that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own division, but always put them all together in a particular

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 wilder till after a final leap between the posts Nila fell supine
796 with outstretched arms, and was immediately supported by one
535 of the onlookers. The *yaka* of the high post now possessed Nila who, after a few minutes' immobility, began to shiver and gasp, then springing forward he danced to the posts with shuffling feet and head bent forward, and examined each one in turn. This he did by dropping his head on them so that his face was partly buried in the bast, his supporter always close behind him (Plate XLV, fig. 2). We were told that Nila was now possessed by all three *yaku*, who appear to have entered him as he bent over the posts. The exact moment of the entry and exit of the *yaka* into the person of the shaman was often very ill-defined, although in this instance, and indeed in most cases when more than one *yaka* was present at a dance, it was clear when the first *yaka* arrived, it seemed that the other *yaka* entered the shaman without giving any immediate sign of their presence.

The *yaku* speaking through Nila signified that they were pleased with the posts built for their reception. Then Nila picked up the *wila* and shouting, apparently with approval, held it up by each end and whirled the handle round making the bast strands fly out, then he approached Mari and waved it over
[578] her head and rested it there, so that her head was buried in the bast for several seconds while Nila predicted a male child (Plate XLVI, fig. 1)[1]. Nila then danced to Handuna and waved the *wila* over him. No particular reason was given for
[554] this, Handuna being no relation to the woman, but he was the most important old man in the community.

After covering Handuna with the *wila*, Nila danced wildly, always with the rapt expression of a man possessed by a *yaku*, showing his pleasure by holding the *wila* aloft and whirling it round and round. Then Nila put down the *wila* and took the *aiamula* and dancing with it in his hand he approached Mari stretching it out towards her, but he only stayed a few seconds and passed on to Handuna and falling on the latter's chest spoke and again foretold the birth of a male child to Mari.

[1] The sex of the child is determined by the position assumed by the strips of bast as they fall over the woman's head. If most fall over the woman's face the child will be a girl, if over the occiput a boy.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 562

The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802

The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437

The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantako*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. 582

Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). 584 583

She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. 614 554

There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours'
177 influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut
[562 783] because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura
144 Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded,
141 since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

184 The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to
361 describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *hile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanliness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

837 whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was very careful in my inquiries on this subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Sinhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it[1]."

The only case of suicide of which we heard took place in 762 connection with a breach of the common rule of conjugal fidelity. 837 Tissahami, the husband of Kumi, younger sister of the headman of the Bandaraduwa Veddas, carried on an intrigue with his *naena*, an unmarried girl named Kirimenike. When his wife who was not one of his *naena* discovered the intrigue, she scolded her husband most unmercifully, "Why go to another woman while I live?—better to have gone to your mother than her." Although his intrigue with Kirimenike was of old standing, Tissahami was so upset with the disgrace of publicity that he killed himself in the compound outside his own hut early one morning. He had a gun, and holding the muzzle to the suprasternal notch, he pulled the trigger with his toe. The dead man's [626] relatives were very angry with Kumi for driving him to desperation but they did not threaten her, nor in any way molest her. Kumi and Kirimenike belonged to the same *waruge* (Morane) but were unrelated. Kirimenike subsequently married a Vedda, and went to live at Syringawala where she remained until she died.

562 (In every respect the women seem to be treated as the equals of the men,) they eat the same food; indeed, when we gave 609 presents of food the men seemed usually to give the women and children their share first; the same applies to areca nut and other chewing stuffs. The women are jealously guarded by the men, who do not allow traders or other strangers to see them, and those at Sitala Wanniya were too shy to visit our camp, though they welcomed us to their cave, and the dances performed for our benefit took place in the dense jungle so that the women might be present and partake of the food offered to the *yaku*. We had offered to clear a space by our camp where the light would have been better for photography; however, the

[1] J. Bailey, "Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon," 1863, *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* Vol. II, p. 291.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

men explained that though the ceremonies themselves might be performed anywhere the women would not come to our camp, so the dances must take place at the usual dancing ground in the jungle. The day after hearing the phonograph at our camp, the men came to us to request that we should take it to the cave as they had told their wives about it, and they all wanted to hear it too. From these examples the position of Vedda women will be understood. 562 609

Writing in 1887 Nevill notices a similar state. "As a rule, among the purer Veddas, the younger women are rigorously excluded or rather protected from contact with strangers. They occupy, however, an honourable and free position in the society of their relations. I only once saw the good-looking girls of the pure Vedda family. My guide was then ahead of our party with me, and abruptly, without explanation further than the word 'my house,' dived into the forest, beckoning me to follow. We had only gone a few hundred yards from the path, when we reached a glade with a little shed. Here a party of girls and women and children were collected, and at sight of us the younger women began to slip away into the woods, but at a word from my guide stopped. They then advanced and one by one stepped up to me with graceful courtesy, each making a Sinhalese bow with both hands when quite close to me, and then stepped aside, with or without a few words of simple welcome. There was no haste or reluctance, nor any approach to curiosity shown. I stopped talking with some of the elder women for a short time, and then went on. Three or four of the women had most exquisite figures, like statues of Psyche, and a clear brown skin. They were bare to the waist, and from the knees down. I never saw Vaedda women at all comparable to these, and then only did I realise the stories I had heard from Sinhalese, of the former great beauty of the Vaedda women. On our return, the clan met us by official appointment; but these girls, and one equally statuesque young mother, were conspicuously absent, and I saw it was understood I should regard my interview as a confidential honour, intentionally arranged to make me feel I was personally trusted and distinguished. [576] 142 562 609

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

562 609 "It is probable good-looking women have often been kept back by others who had not equal confidence in me[1]."

855 Veddas are affectionate and indulgent parents, never refusing a small child anything it wants and giving it always of the best. We have frequently seen men save for their children food which had been given to them and which they considered specially good, such as bananas or coconuts. The babies are generally happy, but should they cry their wishes are immediately gratified by either parent. We saw a naked boy of about two and a half years strut proudly up and down outside Pihilegodagalge with his father's axe hung on his shoulder, he was extremely happy and all went well until he threatened one of the dogs with the axe, then his mother was obliged to interfere and the child tried to hit her with it; the father seeing this got up and tried to coax the child into giving up the axe, but the boy was now excited and would not give it up, at last he flung it at his father and hit his leg. The man was obviously annoyed and threw the axe from him into the jungle, but he did not attempt to scold or punish the child who was now howling with rage, indeed, after a little while some food was given him to pacify him.

Another time a woman who had been cutting yams with a knife put this down, when her baby snatched it up, and although she was obliged to watch lest he hurt himself, she allowed him to play with the knife. Yet when a child is old enough to wear a little rag in the way of clothing, possibly from 858 six to eight years old, he is expected to behave himself properly and strange to say he does so. One day it was raining heavily, and we were all sitting in the rock shelter at Pihilegodagalge; at the further end of the cave we noticed a lad of seven or nine years old having a heated argument with his mother, suddenly he turned round and went out into the rain, when he returned he had controlled his temper; later we remarked on this and were told that the lad was considered old enough to behave as a man; a boy of this age would not hit his mother as a little 855 child might do and yet be excused. It may here be mentioned 291 that children of both sexes go naked until about six or seven years old, though perhaps the general age for the assumption of

[1] *Tisprohanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 192.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the onlookers, who were all willing assistants, he filled the palms of his hands with milk and bounded forward, and raising his hands with every step he scattered the milk, and in this manner the *yaka* within him showed his pleasure. Next he took the *kirikoraha* from the tripod with both hands (Plate XXXIV, fig. 1), spun it on the ground, and immediately it left his hands he fell back. The spinning was prophetic, for in that direction towards which the bowl dipped as it came to rest, there game would be found; and on this occasion it dipped to the north. When the shaman revived a few seconds later, Kande Yaka had left him, and he was possessed by Bilindi Yaka again. With shouts, gasping and trembling, he came to most of the onlookers and promised good hunting in the usual manner, then he took the *kirikoraha* and spun it, but when it left his hands the spirit departed from the shaman and he fell back.

The dance was now over, and all were eager to partake of the coconut milk which had been offered to the *yaku*, for none of it might be wasted. All the men took a little, and also fed the children with it, but the women were not allowed to partake of it. However, as the mere contact of the milk had virtue the shaman rubbed some on their heads. In other less sophisticated communities women were not looked upon as unclean, and they shared in this and other food offered to the *yaku*. As has already been stated there is little doubt that the idea of women being unclean has been borrowed from the Sinhalese, among whom it is very strongly held. A little of the contents of the *kirikoraha* might also be rubbed on the heads of the dogs which were supposed to be more likely to hunt successfully after this.

The Kirikoraha at Sitala Wanniya. Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were all invoked at the *kirikoraha* held at Sitala Wanniya. Indigollae was held to be the principal attendant of Kande Yaka, and though the invocation sung to him refers to "seven pots of blood" our informants were unable to give us any meaning for this[1].

Handuna, the shaman of the Sitala Wanniya community, did

[1] This matter is briefly discussed in Chapter X after the invocation (No. XXXII) to Indigollae Yaka.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 302 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarm- 755 ing blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a 252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the G picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company 101 of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the 105 jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a 361 medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

000 A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the V Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That [132] evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

133 height. Clear rock-strewn streams abound, their banks
brightened by the deep green leaves and the bright red flowers
137 of the *ratmal* (*Ixora coccinea*). Scattered masses of rock often
of great size form convenient shelters for the Veddas, and assist
the rapid drainage of the country, which does not become water-
logged even during torrential rains. This beautiful country is
rich in game. To the east, where many Veddas have drifted,
the jungle is thicker, the land lies lower, and is generally less
healthy. The Nuwaragala Hills to the north of the Nilgala
ranges are perhaps the wildest part of the island and are more
densely clothed in jungle, but there are plenty of streams, while
the slope of the country permits of ready drainage.

The coastal zone north of Batticaloa inhabited by the coast
Veddas is flat and sandy, and the vegetation though dense
is often less tall and less abundant than in other parts of the
country. Salt water marshes are common, and the country
is cut into by numerous lagoons and creeks, often bounded
by a fringe of mangroves which stretches some distance up
the mouths of the rivers. Although this area may now, and
131 for yet a few years, be rightly called the Vedda country it must
161 not be thought that any considerable number of its inhabitants
are Veddas, or that they exercise any territorial or political
563 influence; on the contrary, they constitute an insignificant
fraction of the Tamil and Sinhalese inhabitants before whom
they are rapidly disappearing, partly by intermarriage and
absorption, partly owing to misery and a high death rate
brought about by sheer inability to cope with the new state
of affairs that the increased settlement of this, the wildest part
of the island, has brought about.

Formerly the Vedda country is known to have embraced
131 the whole of the Uva, and much of the Central and North
175 Central Provinces, while there is no reason to suppose that their
territory did not extend beyond these limits. Indeed there is
no reasonable doubt that the Veddas are identical with the
"Yakkas" of the Mahavansa and other native chronicles.

The seventh chapter of the Mahawansa relates the arrival in
175 Ceylon, B.C. 543, of Vijaya who married Kuweni an aboriginal
princess (*Yakkini*) and by her assistance destroyed a great

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER II

PRESENT CONDITION OF THE VEDDAS

WE propose to treat the Veddas under three headings :— 101

(i) Veddas.
(ii) Village Veddas.
(iii) Coast Veddas.

Although it may not be easy in every case to say into which group a given person falls, and although the proposed classification rests on no natural or known physical basis, it seems that at the present day the Veddas fall into these three groups characterised by different sociological features. The term "Rock" or "Jungle" Vedda will be avoided; it has been applied by some authors to the wilder specimens of that class which we propose to call simply Veddas.

The coast Veddas are briefly described in Chapter XII.; they live in scattered villages on the east coast and are chiefly to be found north of Batticaloa. They have much Tamil blood [563] in their veins, and though often taller than pure Veddas, some still retain an appearance which suggests their Vedda origin. This is far more marked in the males than in the females, and it appeared to us that any of the latter might have been local Tamils, whereas some of the men clearly differed from the surrounding population.

Before giving an account of the present condition of the different Vedda communities, we propose to give the substance of a number of conversations with a remarkable old Kandyan who in his boyhood, youth and manhood was closely associated with the Veddas of the Eastern Province, and whose memory certainly goes back for 80 or 90 years. In order to make his 115

[p. 29]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

shorter ceremony *ruwela*, this being an older name than *kolamaduwa*[1]. 535 751

It appeared that the invocations at present in use among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas were those used in the old man's youth, for although he had not, as he stated (truthfully we believe), been closely associated with the Veddas for many years he recognised a number of Vedda invocations which were sung to him, as identical with those sung in his youth, and named the occasions on which each was used. *Maligi* was recognised as sung when honey was taken; the invocation at the beginning of the *kirikoraha* ceremony (cf. p. 285) was promptly named, and the occasions of its use pointed out, but the charm used when driving monkeys was not recognised. A song sung for amusement by the Veddas beginning *Mamini mamini ma deyo* was immediately recognised, as were two of the invocations of the Kolamaduwa ceremony, but considering how Sinhalese in substance this ceremony is this is perhaps not of much importance. 782

At the present day the number of Veddas living their natural forest life is necessarily few, for their territory has been gradually encroached upon by the Sinhalese who are inveterate poachers. The Veddas, who were never numerous within recent historic times, are now rapidly dying out, while many have settled among the Sinhalese and so lost their identity. We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgala but among the Nuwaragala Hills. At Nilgala itself there are no Veddas at the present day, though the local peasant Sinhalese doubtless have much Vedda blood in their veins. The Henebedda and Danigala Veddas are the descendants of those recorded by Bailey in 1863, and the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are the descendants of those known and described by the old Kandyan who visited us at Bandaraduwa. 161

Hennebedda. At Hennebedda we met a number of families living together in the Bendiyagalge caves. They had come to this their largest cave, from several settlements all within a few hours' journey. The genealogies show that at least 166 563

[1] These ceremonies are described in Chapter IX.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

166 in one instance there had been intermarriage with Sinhalese,
563 and we suspected this in other cases, though the majority appear to be reasonably pure-blooded.

361 These people make chenas[1] on which they live temporarily
231 in bark-covered huts; Plate X, figure 1, represents the chena settlement of the local group of the Namadewa *waruge*, some of the members of which are shown in Plate X, figure 2. They gather honey and hunt, several of them possess guns, and some
[222 of them rear cattle for the Sinhalese villagers. Indeed, for
224] Veddas their lot is singularly happy, since they live in the heart of the park country where game is still abundant. Bailey first induced some Veddas in the Nilgala district to make chenas about the middle of the last century, before which all the Veddas in this district were probably living their natural hunting, honey-gathering life.

361 It is not often that a community that has taken to the semi-
511 civilised life of chena cultivation is seen, in which its members are so healthy and well fed, for Veddas dislike settling down and do not generally do so until they find they can no longer subsist on the game in the country, when they either drift into Sinhalese settlements, or make extremely rough chenas for themselves, the produce of which is seldom sufficient to feed the community. Besides which, as is the case with the Sinhalese peasants themselves, the crop is often pledged to Moormen pedlars before it is reaped. The poor Veddas then subsist
[164] as best they can on yams, honey and berries, and usually fall a prey to fever. Several Veddas in this wretched condition were seen between Namal Oya and Bandaraduwa, while those at Godatalawa were scarcely better off.

In the Nilgala district the conditions are different. Chena making and cattle rearing had been introduced while game was still abundant, families are still able to leave the chena settlement and hunt and gather honey, living during such times in rock shelters within their own hunting boundary. However, the

[1] Bailey defines a chena as "a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again: it is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years," *Trans. Ethnol. Soc. N.S.* Vol. II, 1863, p. 282.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Tennent says truly, that they have "no system of caste among themselves; but, singular to say, this degraded race is still regarded by the Singhalese as of most honourable extraction, and is recognized by them as belonging to one of the highest castes;"* and he relates a legend, in which he says this belief originates; a legend, however, at which, he tells us, the Veddahs themselves smile, and of which they profess their ignorance. 648 [564]

As I shall afterwards show, I do not think this legend, which is confessedly not a Veddah tradition, has anything to do with the consideration with which, so far as their caste goes, the Singhalese regard them. Were there no better reason, the fact that the legend is by no means universal among the Singhalese residing in their vicinity, would probably be sufficient reason to reject it.

But Tennent has not been correctly informed with regard to their own belief regarding their own origin. For strange as it appears, they claim to be of royal descent. Beyond this vague assertion they profess to know nothing. They do not attempt to trace their descent from any particular king. They know nothing of their history. This is their *one* tradition; and though the neighbouring Singhalese, on whom they affect to look down, smile at their claim to such an illustrious origin, they do "regard them as of most honourable extraction," and in reply to any inquiry respecting it, only repeat the Veddah version of their royal lineage. It is said, too, that in the time of the native government the Veddahs always spoke of the king as "hoora," or "cousin."† 173

The Veddahs have no particular name by which they distinguish themselves, which would aid us in speculating on their origin. They simply call themselves "Weddah," and are so called, while they speak of the ordinary natives of the country as "Singhalese." The term "Habara," or "wild, barbarous," is applied to Veddahs, in books, and also "Vannacharakiya," which means "a hunter." 101

As Knox has told us, they speak the Singhalese language; but they do so with an accent and intonation so strange, that it sounds like some foreign tongue. It seems, as it were, "broken Singhalese," such as a man would speak to whom the language was an acquired one, so much does their pronunciation differ from that of their Kandyan neighbours. Although the identity between the Veddah dialect and Singhalese is evident, when they are compared with each other, it would require a very quick and accurate ear, indeed, to detect the similarity between them when both are spoken. 191 197

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, c. iii.

† It is reported, too, that some Veddahs do not claim royal descent, but that only a portion of them do. The Bicetean and Nilgala Veddahs certainly, say they, are "Raja-wansiya," of royal lineage.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
911 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some
[283 six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyende*
824] (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards
762 the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:
173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1908
AX5 Vedda AX5

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
•574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had actually been to the village. They had been sent for often to see others at Wewatte and Alutnuwara bungalows, and for even greater folk had been taken to Kandy. And so they had learnt to shake hands and had picked up exaggerated ideas of their own importance and the value of their information, and expected a present for every remark they vouchsafed. It was a horrible change from the courteous behaviour of the Sitala Wanniya cave Veddas.

As the Dambani folk were so very unfriendly we began to hope the carriers would not come at all that night, there was nowhere for them to sleep, and we thought the Veddas might resent their presence. They told us repeatedly that "Sinhalese men would not dare to come to their village," in spite of the fact that there were two petty Sinhalese traders in the village at the time, who did not even trouble to go away before dark, but seemed naturally to expect a night's lodging, which was granted them without any fuss, and there appeared to be no difficulty about language with them. About six o'clock our servants and the carriers arrived, and curiously enough instead of resenting the intrusion the Veddas seemed very impressed by their number, and presumably our importance, in having so many dependents, for they became much more friendly.

The next morning early, we set the phonograph going with a Vedda song: immediately the whole village crowded round us, intensely interested. They recognised the song and said it was very good. The Vidane then sang a song into the machine and was quite excited to hear it repeated, but again began his demand for presents although besides a rupee we had now given white cloth to him and the other men from whom we had got vocabularies. Having obtained records we realised that it was impossible to do any good work among such spoilt people and decided to go to Belligala. We offered some beads to the headman's wife, but she said the string was not long enough; this annoyed us and we asked her if she would prefer not to have any, and on her repeating they were not enough we put them away.

The Dambani men said they did not know to which *warugs*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

word arrived from the elder of the district. Then one of the archers accompanied him to the boundary which took between two and three hours' walking. Here he had once more to wait until word arrived from the elders of this district, whereupon the first guide handed him over to a second and then returned. In this way the second guide brought him to a third, and the process continued until he had had more than twelve guides, being over seven days on the way before he reached the province of Batticaloa and the flat district which extended to the coast, and is inhabited by Tamils. He and his ten or twelve companions never suffered any want on the way, as the Veddahs supplied them with food, consisting of good dried venison which was preserved in honey, ground nuts (probably yams) and fruit. But none of the Veddahs spoke a word with him or his companions because it was so prescribed by their customs[1]."

423 604 [574]

Nevill's account of the life led by both the wilder and the more sophisticated "forest" Veddas has been quoted on pp. 81 and 82, in the chapter on Family Life. Nevill's experience was chiefly gained among the Veddas of the Bintenne, but if rather less emphasis be laid on the hut built "close to a place where water can be got," and it be realised that even during the hot dry season rock shelters are the common homes of the wilder Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road, all that he says on this subject can be implicitly accepted.

Commenting upon Nevill's account, the Sarasins point out that since trespassing on land belonging to another group leads to fierce quarrels, the condition described by Nevill must be taken to imply that the territory of each group includes the whole or a part of one considerable hill or rock *massif*. Our experience enables us to confirm this suggestion, and it will be shown later that not only are hills the property of particular groups, but that subject to the rights of the group there is also personal property in hills. Text figure 4 is a sketch map of the territory of the Henebedda Veddas, and roughly shows the position of their caves, which are named Bendiyagalge, Pattiavelagalge, Hitibeminigalge, Punchikiriammagalge, Uhapitagalge, Maladeniyagalge and Kirawanbalagalge. The last is almost

423 423 361 [103]

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 479.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kohomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *kansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *neeagalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-kadurugedde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *kirinthea*. 757 752 832 276 824

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *kansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat. 276

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams. 832 539

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho,*" he shouts. "*Kiribala, karia, karia, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho.*" A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them. 342 [178] [574]

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clear what opportunities existed for obtaining it. Deer and pig would be killed and eaten, and snakes were said to be killed without a scruple though one informant denied that he would kill a cobra. 262

Time did not allow of any systematic study of the religion of the Verdas, but it was clear that this had been much affected by Tamil influence while yet retaining some of the more obvious outward features of the Vedda cult of the dead. Unfortunately we had no opportunity of ascertaining definitely whether the Verdas have also retained the essence of the Vedda cult, i.e. the belief in the loving-kindness and the guiding influence of the spirits of their dead, though since the leader of the dance seen at Vakarai showed the classical signs of "possession," there seems to be every reason to hold this belief at least provisionally. The dance we saw rehearsed at Vakarai was said to be performed for sickness and in thanksgiving when a good harvest had been gathered. The dance took place at night, the men dancing in relays till daylight, the women squatting on the ground, but taking no part. No food is taken during the dance, but some is placed upon the "altar" *kudaram* (lit. cage or small shed, *T*) which is eaten by all in the morning. 771 177 575 796

The temple seen at Pellanchenai, of which a rough plan is given in fig. 14, was a building some 12 feet long by about 10 broad; it faced east and the roof was carried forward for a few feet beyond the front wall in which was a door. A stout pole (marked *P*), thought to be some 30 feet long and consisting of a young tree with the bark removed, stood in front of the temple about 30 feet from the entrance. To the north of the pole and about 8 feet from it was a hole in the ground *F*, really a small well containing water, while to the south of the pole and at a distance of about 12 feet from it there was a young tree before which a small platform *T* (*kudaram*) was built, on which a rough stone rested. Some distance beyond the pole and somewhat to the south of it stood a tree *H*, apparently quite dead, with a fringe of dried leaves and small twigs round its trunk, before which were the remains of a *kudaram*; to the south-west of the pole and roughly in the position of *Y* in the plan, a limb of a tree was planted in the soil. The branches 346

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 439 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 141 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 mm.[a] (60¼ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 mm. (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 609 576 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

166 115 651 **Galmede.** A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

[a] [Lacunum; see p. xx. — Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
431 the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 they belonged, which suggested to us that perhaps they belonged to Uru *waruge* or one of the other clans which are considered of inferior status. Although the Arachi of Belligala did not know their *waruge* and believed that they had really forgotten them themselves, our opinion was confirmed by information obtained later from the Arachi of Alutnuwara who said that they were of the Uru and Namadewa *waruge*, while a Vedda of Horabora-wewa told us that his mother came from Dambani and she was a Namadewa woman.

576 609 As the Arachi of Belligala assured us the Bulugahaladena Veddas lived in a condition precisely similar to those of Dambani, we did not visit their village but arranged for two of them to visit us at Belligala; they greeted us in the same way as the Dambani folk, with loud and guttural voices, accentuating all the "chs," and shook hands. They brought some honey and yams. They said they could not bring *bambara* honey (for it was too early in the year) so they had brought honey from the stingless bee. After a little while they gradually dropped their [194] guttural tones, especially when they were speaking to the villagers and not to us, their voices, naturally deep, assumed a sing-song tone not unlike that of Nila of Sitala Wanniya. We consider that the gruffness of these Veddas is almost entirely affectation. They have been expected to be sullen and morose and never to laugh. For thirty years the Arachi of Belligala has acted as "show-man" to the Veddas of his district, and he always speaks to them in their "language" in similar or even fiercer tones, and he has shown them so many white men that he has quite lost count of their number. He has thus helped to keep up the fiction of "wildness," for these Veddas are not wild since they are not shy but come up, shake hands, ask for presents, and offer to dance.

178 We believe that they keep up few, if any, of the old Vedda customs; they cultivate chenas and keep cattle, their bows and arrows are probably more for show than use, for the Arachi told us that some of them possess guns while others go to the Sinhalese and borrow them. Deschamps says that Veddas never 157 laugh nor have they ever been seen to smile. Of course this is not true of the Veddas of Nilgala, nor do we think it is true of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

601 Terms of respect were commonly used in addressing the aged, thus although *siya* or *mutta* really mean father or grandfather, 576 these words might be used as terms of respect in addressing any old man, and in the same way the terms *kiriamma* (grandmother) or *atta* might be used to any old woman, and we were told that *siya* was constantly used by members of the group in addressing the "senior" or patriarch. An individual of either sex would call his or her father-in-law's father *siya* or *kiriappa*, and a mother-in-law's mother is addressed as *kiriamma*.

Clan Organization.

614 It has already been mentioned that the Veddas at the present 178 day are divided into clans (*waruge*); almost every man who calls himself a Vedda can give the name of his *waruge* and this applies even to many village and coast Veddas in whom there is a minimum of true Vedda blood. The clan organization of the Veddas was first pointed out by Nevill, who says: "The Veddas north of the Mahawaeli Ganga have lost their original divisions... and reduced to a few isolated families....The Vaeddas known as coast Vaeddas have abandoned most of their ancestral customs and I cannot even ascertain from them their original name. Vaeddas of the forest districts do not preserve any tradition of relationship with these Vaeddas of the coast[1]." Nevill then gives 614 the following nine names as those of the Vedda clans, to which he adds the Veddas of Tambalagama Pattu, Kattakulam Pattu and Anurajapura as true Veddas though their *waruge* names seem lost.

1. Morana waruge.
2. Unapana waruge.
3. Bandara or Rugam waruge.
4. Namada, Namadana or Nabadana waruge.
5. Ura-wadiya waruge.
6. Uruwa waruge.
7. Kowil waname.
8. Aembala or Ambala waruge.
9. Tala waruge.

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 176.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

men explained that though the ceremonies themselves might be performed anywhere the women would not come to our camp, so the dances must take place at the usual dancing ground in the jungle. The day after hearing the phonograph at our camp, the men came to us to request that we should take it to the cave as they had told their wives about it, and they all wanted to hear it too. From these examples the position of Vedda women will be understood. 562 609

Writing in 1887 Nevill notices a similar state. "As a rule, among the purer Veddas, the younger women are rigorously excluded or rather protected from contact with strangers. They occupy, however, an honourable and free position in the society of their relations. I only once saw the good-looking girls of the pure Vedda family. My guide was then ahead of our party with me, and abruptly, without explanation further than the word 'my house,' dived into the forest, beckoning me to follow. We had only gone a few hundred yards from the path, when we reached a glade with a little shed. Here a party of girls and women and children were collected, and at sight of us the younger women began to slip away into the woods, but at a word from my guide stopped. They then advanced and one by one stepped up to me with graceful courtesy, each making a Sinhalese bow with both hands when quite close to me, and then stepped aside, with or without a few words of simple welcome. There was no haste or reluctance, nor any approach to curiosity shown. I stopped talking with some of the elder women for a short time, and then went on. Three or four of the women had most exquisite figures, like statues of Psyche, and a clear brown skin. They were bare to the waist, and from the knees down. I never saw Vaedda women at all comparable to these, and then only did I realise the stories I had heard from Sinhalese, of the former great beauty of the Vaedda women. On our return, the clan met us by official appointment; but these girls, and one equally statuesque young mother, were conspicuously absent, and I saw it was understood I should regard my interview as a confidential honour, intentionally arranged to make me feel I was personally trusted and distinguished. [576] 142 562 609

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

full of people. To our left was a shrine set up against the jungle wall in that quarter. In a space left clear in front of the shrine stood what can best be described as a sort of "maypole," and between the "maypole" and the spectators was a small area enclosed by lengths of coloured cloth stretched between upright sticks. Within this area could be seen a small temporary booth, with human figures moving about a fire, over which, the Chief Headman informed me, rice was being cooked to be offered to the goddess. 123 796

When we reached the clearing the ceremony had not yet begun. I was conducted to a seat of honour in the front row of the spectators, and sat there for some minutes looking round with interest on the scene, which was lighted here and there by the flare of torches, and listening to the monotonous throb of the tom-tom, which was apparently being played somewhere close by in the jungle. Suddenly the tom-tom took on a more staccato note. Excitement rose among the spectators; and presently, from a gap in the jungle wall on my right and rather behind me as I sat facing the shrine, there defiled into the clearing a procession which slowly threaded its way through the ranks of the spectators to the clear space in front of the shrine. In this procession there were carried two wooden ceremonial swords,[6] which were to be prominent in the dances which followed. In front of the shrine the procession stopped, and a ritual of some sort, the exact nature of which it was impossible to gather in the semi-darkness, was gone through. [373]

At the conclusion of the ritual at the shrine a red flag, bearing embroidered upon it the sun and moon and two human figures, and another device the details of which I was unable to distinguish, but which was possibly the figure of a ship, the emblem of Kapalpe, was hoisted upon the "maypole." This was, perhaps, the formal beginning of the ceremony, for after the hoisting of the flag flowers were brought in baskets, as a mark of respect, to the Chief Headman and myself. Under the Chief Headman's [576]

[6] These swords resembled the ceremonial swords (*ran haduwa*) seen by the Seligmanns *only* in the ceremony of the invocation of Rahu Yaku at Sitala Wanniya, (fifty miles from the place at which the ceremony here described was performed), and illustrated on p. 256 of *The Veddas*.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 136 to something; but it was long before I saw the bird, a veritable leaf
825 among the leaves and more motionless than they.

The hilly jungles of central Ceylon echo, during certain seasons of the year, to this bird's incessant cry, the popular onomatopoeic renderings of which are, in English, "Captain Philpotts" and "Bring the tappal" and in Sinhalese "*Botuakappan*." Most people have heard, but very few seen, the shy author of these dolorous notes. There is a gruesome
539 story associated with the bird:—A Sinhalese king once asked his dhoby, in order to test his marital fidelity, whether he would cut his wife's neck and bring him her head! "Oh! king," said the man falling at the monarch's feet, "even if you behead me I cannot do such a thing." The following day the king called up the dhoby's wife and made a similar request of her. She replied that she would do it. Going home she helped her husband with his bath, rubbed boiled limes on his head, and cooked him a good meal. Like a good wife she asked him to lay his head on her lap where he soon fell asleep. Then, with a knife she had in readiness, she cut his throat; and severing his neck, put the head into a pot, covered it with a cloth and carried it to the king. On the way she met a man who, singing, asked her, "What do you carry in the pot on your head?"

"I am taking *mee amba** to the king," answered the woman.

"Why cover it so carefully?" sang he.

"If I take them uncovered, wayfarers will ask me for them," she replied. "It is on a fine journey I go."

When she brought her gift to the king, he was incensed at her cruelty, and ordered her head to be struck off instantly. Ever after, has she gone about in the form of this bird, crying *botua-kappan* (cut the throat), as her one refrain.

While making our way through a tree-studded glade, we surprised two men carrying sacks of dried meat on their shoulders; through rents in the bags peeped unsavoury scraps of sambur, monkey and pig. Their first impulse on seeing us was to escape; for to shoot sambur legitimately, gun and game licences are necessary; and what money have they for these, who have barely the wherewithal to purchase the ammunition for their ramshackle muzzle-loaders.

V When we camped, Kombua regaled us with Vedda songs of questionable
533 taste chanted rapidly in a high nasal monotone, lengthened indefinitely by endless repetition, and accompanied in the last staves with a clapping
V of hands. To the suggestion that he should show his skill in archery he
411 responded with alacrity; jumping up, he seized his weapons as if confident of skill. A fragment of paper, six inches square, placed fifteen paces away, was the mark. At the word he loosed his arrow. A clean miss! He walked up to the target and dashed it down in dudgeon, and nothing would induce him to shoot again. Archery is a lost art to the Veddas, though they still have considerable skill in fashioning bows and arrows. Jungles that echo to guns are no places for bowmen.

V Kombua's farewell was as bizarre as his greeting of us. Tossing head
576 and hands in the direction we were taking, and tapping us on the chest, he wished us good going in tones more peremptory than complaisant.

V Quite a number of our carriers were half-Veddas. There was one whose
515 constant occupation was to run his fingers comb-fashion through his upstanding hair scraping out vermin. His expression was of that thoughtful seriousness which is the surest mark of profound vacuity.

*A species of mango.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

familiarity savouring even of impudence and disrespect. But that is because they know no better. I have had a Vedda address me as "*iko*," a word now used only towards a very inferior person. A Vedda once took my gun and cartridge-bag to shoot us something for dinner. He returned empty-handed and disgruntled. I inquired what ailed him. 181 [576]

"What sort of cartridges are these?" he said, throwing down the bag contemptuously. "You fire at a wanderoo, and he sits and grins at you. You fire again, and he grins the more. You want six or seven big shot for animals, not *kurrukhan* grains."

I asked him how he knew the size of the shot in my cartridges. He answered that he had looked inside. It was not until the next day that I realised the thoroughness of his investigation. Every single cartridge in the bag, some fifty or more, had its wad at a rakish tilt! When I upbraided him for the liberty, he disarmed my wrath by laughing uproariously.

On one occasion we had pitched our tent under a big tree which caught fire through the carelessness of our cook who had pursued his occupation by its foot. As I lay in bed ignorant of a blazing branch overhead, I was warned repeatedly by the carriers of the danger of my position; but to these anxieties my tiredness made me deaf. "After to-night," said a Vedda, "no devil will be able to return to Colombo!" The words were electrical in effect—and in good time too, for the branch fell just as the tent was dismantled.

The quaintness of the Vedda language is always a delight. Not knowing the art of dissembling, they say just what they think. They are capable of exquisite and spontaneous similes and metaphors. Vulgarity is natural to them, and their talk is interlarded with phrases that would make a navvy blush.

I have said that a Vedda laughed uproariously. Now, it has been stated repeatedly, by persons professing to know all about Veddas, that these people are incapable of laughter. The statements have even gone to grotesque lengths as the sub-joined extract testifies.* When a 181 152

*THEY NEVER LAUGH

MOST SOLEMN TRIBES IN THE WORLD.

Laughter, and the faculty of being merry and bright, are gifts of the gods to a world in which there is not too much sunshine at any time.

But this gift, according to the scientists who know all about these subjects, has been denied to the Veddas, the aboriginal inhabitants of Ceylon. It is the only people in the world who never laugh, and in consequence they are thin and flabby folk, and a fat man among the Veddas would be an extraordinary sight for sad eyes. A traveller who has studied the early races in Ceylon gives some interesting particulars about this curious tribe.

For nearly 2000 years, according to the best chronicles, these people, now almost extinct, have preserved the same characteristics, and no one, so far as history reveals, has ever seen a smile on the face of one of them or heard a laugh while in their section of Ceylon.

Why these people do not smile is a mystery. They alone of all the people on the earth know nothing of the sensation of laughter.

A scientist, who recently journeyed to Ceylon for the purpose of investigating this question, persuaded some of them to permit him to tickle them in the ribs and in the middle of their feet with straws, and never caught even the flicker of a smile on their faces, nor did he ever succeed in making one of them squirm and laugh aloud during the operation.

(*Continued on next page*)

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously. 131

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne. 101 [301] [157]

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were apparently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very jealous of their women. [36] [626] 152]

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly wretch craved for medicine. 576 [411]

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukhan* and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and contented community. 342 [241]

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were obviously there for our benefit! 101 361

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne. This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows; but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting. 161 177

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from 224

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 342 114 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, to find, alas ! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty !

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aratchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters ; but they flew too strongly for that ; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal ; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 224 482 142 609 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase ; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and *bambara* honey ; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh !

000 It was hail and farewell ! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall ; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Meenemaruwa accompanied us a little way, singing Vedda songs with the voice of a priest chanting *bana*. I told him he had the throat of a drongo, which pleased him immensely. He explained, that as a boy he had been taken in hand by Buddhist priests who "straightened" his throat.

"Why are you called Murderer?" I asked.

"There was a man in our village," he said "whose wife abused everybody. I remonstrated with her, and her husband resented my interference, and bore ill-feeling towards me." (Rumour said that his relations with the woman were not quite as detached as he made out). "One day I was walking through an *illuk* field with a gun I had borrowed from a Moor, when I saw this man and two others coming towards me. The path was narrow; but who were they that I should make way for them or anyone else? This was twenty years ago, I was but a boy then. As we met, my enemy caught me by the neck and shoved me aside, and the two others struck me. I saw the devil then, and, placing my gun to the man's chest, fired; he dropped. A spark flew into my eye and, prevented my shooting the others as they ran. When I saw what I had done I went away and hid in the jungle. The first night I spent on a trestle where I used to watch for sambur; four drank at the water that night, but I had not the heart to shoot one. For a year I wandered in the forests, a hunted man, only creeping out occasionally at night to beg a little food or powder. Eventually, tiring of the life and hearing that the man I had shot had partially recovered, I sent word that I would give myself up. The *aratchi* who came to arrest me was afraid to approach me. I placed my gun aside and gave him my hands; as he clapped the manacles on there were tears in his eyes. I spent five years in various jails in the Island, seeing many places and learning much wisdom. That was many years ago; cha, I am getting older now." He left us happy with his morning's work and his well-earned reward.

The Chetty of Galmede escorted me to Maha Oya the next day where my friend, now quite refreshed, awaited me. Some hours after our arrival, I was recounting to the Chief Headman of the place, our two weeks experiences all the long and devious way from Siyambala Anduwa, when my mention of the Chetty's name suddenly electrified him.

"He came with you here, did you say?" he asked, starting up. "Then he is here now. *Aratchi*, go quick and get him. That's the man I have been wanting these two years. He's the greatest scoundrel in the Province; there are any number of writs against him; but he lives on the borders of two Provinces, and when I send my men to take him, he merely crosses over to the other side, defies them to capture him if they dare and sends back insolent messages to me. The man you call Meenemaruwa is another of his sort. If only I can get them."

That night we were dining with the Chief when a man sent a message asking if he might see him. It was the Chetty; now hand-cuffed, alas! He said something to the Chief in a whisper, and smiled that enigmatic smile of his. Was it a saint's or a scoundrel's? This time there was no doubt, for he had offered to betray his *ganja* growing accomplices among the poor half-Veddas of Galmede, as the price of his liberty.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 562

The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802

The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437

The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantaho*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. 582 584 583

Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *warage*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. 614 554

There were people of Uru *warage* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *waruge* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

GENEALOGIES.

THE genealogies on the next two pages show the relationship existing between the various individuals of the three Vedda communities, which still retain enough of the old Vedda mode of life to make a study of their organization valuable. At the first glance it is obvious that these genealogies do not go back beyond the memory of middle-aged men of the present day. We are convinced that this is due, not to any general distrust of our inquiries, but simply to certain peculiarities of the Vedda habit of thought which is directly dependent on their mode of life. The first of these is the extraordinary lack of memory shown by every Vedda for the names of individuals of more than one generation older than himself. This may perhaps be due to the fact that the number of individuals whom any one knows well is really small, being necessarily limited to the community to which he himself belongs. The genealogies show how small are these communities and, since every Vedda should marry a first cousin, marriage does little or nothing to enlarge the number of his connections. Further, each of the people with whom he comes in contact is related to him in a definite manner and is called and spoken of by a definite kinship term, so that personal names come to play a very small part in the daily life of the Veddas. It is this, doubtless, that has led to the frequent persistence of the baby names Tuta and Tuti, "little one" in its male and female forms, as the only names by which many individuals are known, and this together with the number of children called by

601 [153] [582] 601 551

[p. 59] [text continues on p. 62]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

601 relationship is a late form of the kind known as classificatory. Further, since the Vedda system closely resembles the Sinhalese the one may have been borrowed from the other.

Mutta, father, grandfather.
Atta, mother, grandmother.
Puta or *tuta*, son, sister's son (fem. loq.), brother's son (m. loq.).
Duwa or *tuti*, daughter, sister's daughter (fem. loq.), brother's daughter (m. loq.).
Munubura, grandson.
Minibori, granddaughter.
Aiya, elder brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.
Maleya, younger brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.
Akka, elder sister, daughter, paternal uncle's daughter.
Naga, younger sister, maternal aunt's daughter, paternal uncle's daughter.
Mama, maternal uncle, paternal aunt's husband.
Nendamma, paternal aunt, maternal uncle's wife.
Lokuappu, paternal uncle (older), maternal aunt's husband.
Kuduappu, paternal uncle (younger), maternal aunt's husband.
Lokuamma, maternal aunt (older), paternal uncle's wife.
Kuduamma, maternal aunt (younger), paternal uncle's wife.
Hura, paternal aunt's son, maternal uncle's son.
Naena, paternal aunt's daughter, maternal uncle's daughter.
Baena, sister's son (m. loq.), brother's son (fem. loq.).
Yeli, brother's daughter (fem. loq.), sister's son (m. loq.).

It will be noticed that none of these terms, except *hura* and *naena* when used between individuals of the same sex, are reciprocal.

582 601 The working basis of the Vedda kinship system is the marriage of the children of brother and sister, but not of two brothers or sisters. Thus, when a woman's son marries his mother's brother's daughter the man's maternal uncle (*mama*) becomes his father-in-law and his maternal uncle's children (his *hura* and *naena*), except the girl he has married, become his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. None of these relatives, however, change their kinship term on this account, *hura* and *naena* being only applied to individuals with whom intermarriage is actually possible, or would be possible if the sex of the speaker permitted it. On marriage the girl's paternal aunt (*nendamma*) becomes her mother-in-law, but as before marriage this woman's children remain her *hura* and *naena*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The words *lage eto*, *lato* or sometimes *leto*, the two last being abbreviations of *lage eto*, were often added to relationship terms; as examples of this we may record *mnitta lage eto*, *atta lato*, *maleya leto*. We were told that the term in its various forms had the sense "of" or "from my own people," and it would only be used of near relatives, thus Poromala of Henebedda added some form of this word to the terms by which he called almost all his relations. This was not the case at Sitala Wanniya where Handuna (being then in our camp) said that he might use the term *maleya lage eto* when speaking of his brother who was up in the cave. 601

A man usually spoke of his wife as his "woman," *gani*. Addressing her he would probably say *thopi*, "thou." At Henebedda the term *meli* was used. We have no record as to how a Vedda woman of the Sitala Wanniya group addressed her husband; at Henebedda we were told that a childless woman addressed and spoke of her husband as *wani lage eto* but that after children were born he should be addressed (as among the peasant Sinhalese) as "father of so and so" using the name of the youngest child.

At Unuwatura Bubula it was said that not all *naena* and *kura* should marry, the correct marriage being for a man to marry the daughter of his mother's younger brother. We were not able to satisfy ourselves that this rule is especially observed at the present day. Of fifteen marriages between cousins—none of which are marriages of village Veddas—nine are marriages in which the man married his mother's brother's daughter, five are unions between a man and his father's sister's daughter, and one man married a woman who was equally his mother's brother's daughter and his father's sister's daughter, according to whether the relationship was traced on the mother's or father's side. 582

The number of cousin marriages of which we have details is too small to allow the definite statement that marriages between a man and his mother's brother's daughter were especially frequent, though as far as they go they support this idea, which becomes all the more probable when the specially close relationship existing between a man and his mother's brother (cf. p. 67) is considered.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 601 Since the children of two brothers or two sisters cannot marry each other, they are not *hura* and *naena* but call each other "brothers" and "sisters," using the terms for elder or younger brother or sister according to their age[1].

621 224 606 (Every Vedda so readily helps all the other members of his community and shares any game he may kill or honey he may take in so liberal a manner that at first it was difficult to determine who were the individuals who had a special claim on others of the group. Certainly at first sight it seemed as if all game were equally divided among the members of the group, but after a little time we perceived that while an unmarried man looked especially after his mother, a married man's father-in-law had at least an equal claim on his son-in-law and in practice often received more attention, since a man generally spent most of his time with his wife's family) That the relationship between 606 father-in-law and son-in-law is very close was shown in a number of ways, thus, when discussing children and their bringing up with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, we asked him whether Veddas [842] preferred to have a son or a daughter, the answer was prompt and decided, "a daughter, for thus a man obtains a son-in-law"; and on another occasion when discussing relationship he stated very decidedly, *amma mama ekei*, mother and mother's brother (i.e. father-in-law) are alike, and pointed out that as a man treats

[1] It may be worth while to say something concerning the alleged intermarriage of brother and sister among the Veddas, since Bailey and Hartshorne believed that such marriages occurred, and the Sarasins considered further investigation advisable. Our conclusions agree so thoroughly with Nevill's that we feel that we need do no more than quote what he has written on this subject. "Much nonsense has been written by persons who ought to have known better, about marriage of Vaeddas with their sisters. Such incest never was allowed, and never could be, while the Vaedda customs lingered. Incest is regarded as worse than murder. So positive is this feeling, that the Tamils have based a legend upon the instant murder of his sister, by a Vaedda to whom she had made undue advances. The mistake arose from crass ignorance of Vaedda usages. The title of cousin with whom marriages ought to be contracted, that is, mother's brother's daughter, or father's sister's daughter, is *naga* or *nangi*. This in Sinhalese is applied to a younger sister. Hence if you ask a Vaedda, 'Do you marry your sisters?' the Sinhalese interpreter is apt to say, 'do you marry your naga?' The reply is (I have often tested it), 'yes—we always did formerly, but now it is not always observed.' You say then, 'What? marry your own sister naga?' and the reply is an angry and insulted denial, the very question appearing a gross insult: and if put by a Sinhalese, the Vaedda would probably not even reply to him, but turn away with a gesture of contempt." *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614
773

waruge from the "Veddas" of Rotawewa—a rice-growing village in Sinhala Pattuwa of Tamankaduwa, the inhabitants of which say they are descendants from Veddas—although all accounts show that they are indistinguishable from their Sinhalese neighbours. "When Kuveni was abandoned by Vijaya she returned with her two children, a boy and girl, to her own people, who killed her. Her children fled to the jungle and lived on the fruits of the '*mora*' tree. One of their children came to Minneriya and founded the Minneriya (now Rotawewa) Veddas of the Morane Waruge." We have not visited these people but it may be assumed that they are at least as sophisticated as the "Veddas" of Yakure.

Unapane. Unapane *waruge* is an offshoot from Morane. A chief's daughter was given to another chief's son. When going to the bridegroom's cave the girl got thirsty on the way and the only water available was a minute trickle down the face of a rock. The man allowed this to soak into a piece of cloth which he squeezed into a bamboo from which the girl drank. This is the origin of the name from *una* "bamboo" and *pane* "water," and the descendants of this couple were called Unapane.

Uru. A Morane girl became pregnant and refused to give the name of her lover. She was beaten and driven away from the group and brought forth her child in a hole dug by a wild boar, *uru*, hence the name Uru *waruge*.

Aembala. Aembala *waruge* has sprung from Unapane. An Unapane girl's husband died while she was pregnant, and all her other relations were dead. When her child was born she left it under a tree while she went to dig yams. On her return she found that red ants (*aembaleo*) had blinded her child, whence the child was called Aembeli, and her descendants formed Aembala clan.

Namadewa. An Aembala woman brought forth a female child under a *namada* tree; this girl was therefore named Namadi and from her descendants arose the Namadewa clan.

582
611

Exogamy prevails among the Veddas of Bintenne and Tamankaduwa and clan descent is matrilineal. These conditions also prevail at Godatalawa and therefore must be assumed to have existed at Galmede whence the Godatalawa family had

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

come, but strangely this and the nearly related Sitala Wanniya Veddas were the only communities to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road in which exogamy prevailed. The Henebedda and Kovil Vanamai Veddas all married freely within the clan. It is, however, probable that this is a recent though not quite modern innovation, since at Henebedda it was said that it was particularly fitting that Morane and Unapane should intermarry. 582 611

Nevill recognised the existence of exogamy, and presumably it was of the Bintenne Veddas that he made the following very definite statement, which applies equally well to the condition of things existing at the present day, even among such sophisticated folk as those of Omuni, where genealogies were taken in order to make quite certain of this matter. "The rule for marriage was stringent. The daughter represents her mother's family, the son also represents his mother's family. In no case did a person marry one of the same family, even though the relationship was lost in remote antiquity. Such a marriage is incest. The penalty for incest is death. Thus the daughter must marry either her father's sister's son, or her mother's brother's son, neither of whom would be of the same clan name. Failing these she may marry any of their name, and should no such bridegroom be available, marriage into a third family becomes necessary[1]." 582

If the distribution of these Vedda communities in which exogamy prevails be studied on the map it will be seen that with the exception of the Sitala Wanniya and Godatalawa (Galmede) groups all the Veddas to the west of the Badulla-Batticaloa road are exogamous, whereas those to the east of the road contract marriage within the clan. [184]

As a matter of convenience we now give a list complementary to that on pp. 71 to 74 showing what *waruge* were represented in each of the communities we visited. Danigala: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the last not acknowledged). Henebedda: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the latter properly forming the Kolombedda community and settlement). Kovil Vanamai (Bandaraduwa): Morane, Unapane, Uru (the latter forming the settlement at Uniche). In all these settlements marriage occurs within the clan. 614 582

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 **Sitala Wanniya.** The Sitala Wanniya people said that Morane and Unapane were the only *waruge* of which they had any first-hand knowledge. They had, however, heard that formerly three other *waruge* called Uru, Kabela and Aembala existed, and that the folk of these *waruge* were of lower status than the people of Morane and Unapane.

Godatalawa (Galmede). These people all belonged to Morane and Unapane *waruge*.

Unuwatura Bubula. The *waruge* of this settlement were Morane, Unapane and Bandara *waruge*. Exogamy was strictly adhered to, and the children took their mother's *waruge*. As far [582 611] as we could determine, all the poverty-stricken Veddas settled on chenas in the neighbourhood of Kallodi and Maha Oya on the Badulla-Batticaloa road belonged either to Morane, Unapane, Bandara (Rugam) or Uru *waruge*, the Morane and Unapane Veddas of the large chena settlement at Rerenkadi holding the last to be of inferior status.

Lindegala. Three men, the last remains of the Lindegala Veddas, visited us at Kallodi. The oldest of these, the possessor of the *aude* with inlaid silver work referred to on p. 171, was a rather tall stoutly built man who looked like a Sinhalese. He, however, remembered his *waruge* Morane and stated that his wife belonged to Bandara *waruge* and one of his companions who [611] belonged to this *waruge* had a wife belonging to Morane *waruge*. It was stated that children took their mother's *waruge*.

Elakotaliya. The *waruge* of this settlement are Namadewa, 614 Uru and Rugam; exogamy was insisted on, and in all the nine 582 marriages of which we have notes the contracting parties were of different *waruge*. In seven cases Uru and Namadewa *waruge* intermarried, in one instance Namadewa and Rugam *waruge*, while in the last instance the *waruge* of the woman was uncertain. Although it was clearly stated that the children should [611] take their father's *waruge*, it was certain that in some cases they took their mother's *waruge*.

It was said that a man should marry his father's sister's daughter and not his mother's brother's daughter but we could not establish this.

Kalukalaeba. Morane, Namadewa, Uru and Rugam *waruge*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

are represented in this settlement. Although in conversation no importance was attached to exogamy this must be taken to exist since all of the ten marriages recorded are exogamous. These include six marriages of Morane with Namadewa *waruge*, two of Morane and Uru *waruge* and one each of Morane and Rugam *waruge* and of Rugam and Namadewa *waruge*. Children take their mother's *waruge*. 614 582

Yakure. The *waruge* existing here are Namadewa, Aembala, Bendia, Rugam and Tala. Uru *waruge* was known by name but not otherwise, Dehigama was recognised as belonging to the Uva Bintenne and Morane *waruge* as existing in the neighbourhood of Omuni. Exogamy was the rule and occurred in every marriage (8) of which we have records. *Waruge* descent should be in the female line but in some instances children took their father's *waruge*. Seeking to elucidate this matter it was said that whereas girls took their mother's *waruge* boys took their father's, but this rule certainly did not hold in all cases[1]. Cousin marriage was said to be the old custom, but it was admitted that at the present day this custom was more often neglected than observed. 614 582 611

Ulpota. This is said to be the most important of four small settlements of village Veddas in the neighbourhood of Dimbulagala (Gunner's Quoin). These settlements are Ulpota, Kohombolewa, Alagonagoda and Gonandamene all of which, according to Mutua our informant, consist of a small number (Kohombolewa eight, Gonandamene three) of huts. Mutua, who said that he was headman of the Tamankaduwa Veddas, gave the *waruge* of these settlements as Rugam, Aembala and Morane; the last being to his mind less numerous and less important than the others. The conditions as regards *waruge* descent and exogamy are the same as at Yakure. Of fifteen marriages recorded eleven are between individuals of Rugam and Aembala

[1] We may here refer to a statement made while we were investigating this matter at Yakure. "Properly speaking there are no *waruge* among the Veddas, who are only classified into *waruge* for the purpose of marriage." We could not determine what was in our informant's mind, and although we were subsequently told the same by the Ulpota Veddas we could not obtain any light on the subject from either community.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 *waruge*, the remaining four between Morane and Aembala (2) or
582 Rugam (2) *waruge*.
611 **Dambani.** These extremely sophisticated Veddas probably belong to Namadewa *waruge* and descent is probably matrilineal.

Malgode (Horaborawewa). Our informants knew of
614 Namadewa, Dehigama and Kapatu *waruge* and no others, but when Morane *waruge* was mentioned to them one man stated that he had heard of a *waruge* of that name.

Girandura. Here too exogamy prevailed though children
[582 took their father's *waruge*, and we could discover no exception to
611] these rules. The marriages we could trace took place between Dehigama and Namadewa *waruge*, and between Dehigama and Uru *waruge*, we consequently assume that these are the *waruge* represented in this community.

THE COMPARATIVE STATUS OF THE CLANS.

614 The members of the Morane and Unapane clans generally considered themselves superior to the Namadewa, Uru and
554 Aembala *waruge*. This feeling was so strong at Henebedda that much difficulty was at first experienced in collecting genealogies. Representatives of the Morane, Unapane and Namadewa clans were for the time living together at Bendiyagalge caves, and the difference in status between the Morane and Unapane on the one hand, and Namadewa on the other, was felt so strongly that the members of the last-mentioned *waruge* invariably denied their clan, while the Morane and Unapane folk said the Namadewa were their servants. It seemed clear
[582 that in the old days Morane and Unapane folk never married into one of the servile clans, but two or three such marriages had taken place within recent years, and in every case these marriages were at first denied. The most striking proof of this feeling was evinced when we had come to know all the members of the community and pretence had been largely given up; Sita Wanniya and Poromala our usual guides, both Morane men, led us one day to the Namadewa chena. The Namadewa men immediately began an angry protest. "These people," they said, meaning Poromala and Sita Wanniya, "call us Namadewa; it

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

which the food for the community was cooked, but we do not think they would touch it or assist in any way in the cooking. At Omuni a menstruous woman is isolated under a rough shelter where she is waited upon by a younger unmarried sister or cousin who, it was stated, should not herself have attained puberty. During her seclusion she may eat any food cooked at the ordinary fire, but a special platter is kept for her use. The girls who look after her suffer no restrictions. This happens every time a girl or woman menstruates. 841

Marriage takes place at an early age; it was said that girls sometimes married before puberty, and as we heard of this at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, and Omuni, we see no reason to doubt the truth of the statement[1]. At Omuni it was pointed out that a certain amount of breast development was necessary before marriage, so that it is probable that connection does not antedate puberty by more than a short time. 582 [856]

With regard to the frequency of such child marriages, we can only say that we never saw any very young girls with babies. Perhaps at the present day prenuptial connection is more common than marriage between the very young, though it is obviously difficult to decide when prenuptial love-making between individuals destined for each other gives place to marriage, among people whose marriages are accompanied with but slight ceremony. It must be remembered that the marriage gift of landed or personal property to a son-in-law, which was formerly customary, is obsolescent at the present day, and this not only makes it more difficult to determine whether marriage has taken place, but probably actually tends to make the exact time of the assumption of the married state less clearly defined. 836 [585] [583]

On account of these considerations we are unable to express any definite opinion as to the frequency of prenuptial connection, the few instances we heard of were between individuals occupying the relationship of *hura* and *naena*, who would in any case marry each other. Thus Kaira of Henebedda and his wife grew up in the same group, and as they had played together as

[1] We are indebted to Mr Frederick Lewis for the information that this is a common practice among Tamils.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

836 children so they came together as they grew up. The community came to know of what had occurred, the couple were considered married, and now go about together. We were told that no resentment was felt or expressed by the girl's parents or the community, and there was no formal giving over of land or property to Kaira by his father-in-law, because, as was pointed out, the fathers of Kaira and Hudi both belonged to the same group and together moved about over the same land.

We think it may be said that among most Veddas at the present day, especially such as have come in contact with the Sinhalese, there is no violent feeling against prenuptial connection of the sort here described, but we believe that formerly public opinion was definitely and strongly against the practice, though on this point we do not attempt to dogmatise. There was no doubt as to the attitude of public opinion towards connection between people who were not allotted to each other. This was, and still is, strongly disapproved, and there is no doubt that in the old days the guilty parties risked their lives. 835 It was, however, clear that intrigues of this sort did sometimes 684 occur, and we heard of two instances of what are regarded as incestuous unions which occurred among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas some fifty or sixty years ago. In both cases the girls cohabited with their mothers' sisters' sons, and in both instances the guilty parties were promptly killed by the outraged group. The men were set upon in the jungle, their own fathers it was said taking a prominent part in the assault, while the girls were killed in the huts in which they were living[1].

582 As already mentioned the correct marriage among the Veddas, as among the Sinhalese, is for a man to marry his

[1] The matter has been well stated by Nevill who writing more than twenty years ago says: "The Vaeddas marry young, and are strict monogamists. Consequently the husband and wife are watchfully jealous, each of the other, and love-intrigues are few and far between. Nothing short of murder would content the injured party. This strict morality extends to unmarried girls, who are protected by their guardians with the keenest sense of honour" (*Taprobanian*, Vol. I, p. 178). We do not, however, agree even partially with his statement as to the considerable liberty allowed to widows, we believe that among the wilder Veddas their morality was as strict as that of the maidens and it must be remembered that it was, and is, unusual for any but old women to remain widows for any length of time.

[837]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

father's sister's daughter. The children of two sisters or of two brothers could not marry, and such a connection would be considered incestuous. The man goes to his future father-in-law with a present of honey, yams, grain or dried deer's flesh tied to his unstrung bow which he uses as a carrying stick. Whether he generally repeats this visit or receives his bride immediately was not clear, and probably the custom varies in this particular. Handuna of Godatalawa told us that he did not take his bride away until he had twice taken a present of food to his mother's brother (father-in-law). The bride gives her spouse a waist string of her own making which he never removes until it is worn out, when he replaces it with another made by his wife. In these particulars the marriage ceremony was essentially similar fifty years ago when it was described by Bailey. "The bachelor Veddah who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgement to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest 'delicacies of the season,' for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguano, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and bind it round him[1]."

When a girl married, her father usually made over to his son-in-law a tract of land, generally a hill known to be inhabited by colonies of the *bambara* or rock bee (*Apis indica*), or gave him a piece of personal property such as a bow or one or two arrows. The instances in which land was given are described in the section on land transference, so that here it is only necessary to mention instances in which personal property was given. Handuna received a bow and one arrow from his father-in-law who when presenting them accompanied his gift with the remark "With this bow you must get food for my daughter." Sometimes a dog is given, and Knox was certainly right when he

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 293.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

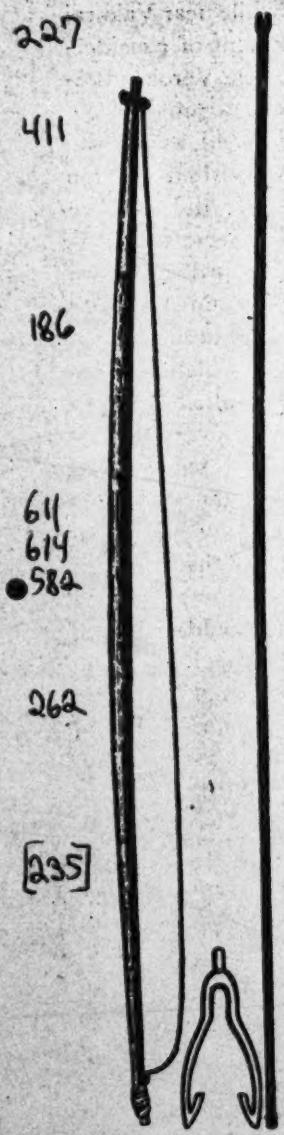


Fig. 13. Verda bow and harpoon × $\frac{1}{12}$. Iron harpoon head × $\frac{1}{3}$.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *waruge* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *waruge*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *waruge* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 330.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

v 237 very careful in my inquiries on the subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Singhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it. Tennent's remarks on this subject are wholly inapplicable to the wild Veddahs of Bintenne or Nilgala, though they may apply to those Veddahs of whom he writes.*

v [582] They never marry out of their race, and, with the very smallest cause, the men are exceedingly jealous of their most unattractive wives. They are very careful to keep them apart from their v 592 companions. Their huts contain but one family each, and when they live in caves, each dwelling-place is carefully screened off. There are as many as seventeen separate huts and caves among the seventy-two Veddahs of Nilgala; hardly more than four individuals to each habitation.

v s 595 Polyandry is unknown among them. The practice is alluded to with genuine disgust. I asked a Veddah once, what the consequence would be if one of their women were to live with two husbands, and the unaffected vehemence with which he raised his axe, and said, "a blow would settle it," shewed conclusively to my mind, the natural repugnance with which they regard this national custom of their Kandyan neighbours. Their abstinence from a practice, which, till 1859, was recognized by the laws of the land, is remarkable. So sensitive are they on these subjects, that I know an instance of a Veddah—and he was by no means one of the wildest—drawing his knife, and being with difficulty restrained from using it, at a remark made in jest which he considered a reflection on the honour of their women.†

s 586 It is notorious that the Kandyans have no scruples with regard to divorce. Among them, husbands desert their wives, and wives their husbands, for any or no reason. Sickness is perhaps the most common cause. The heartless desertion of a sick wife is, I think, the worst trait in the Kandyan character, and the cool and unconcerned manner in which they themselves allude to it, shows that it is as common as it is cruel.‡

---

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 444, 2nd edit.

† Tennent says, "The community is too poor to afford polygamy," but I am convinced that is not the cause of its non-existence. We find it in smaller communities than these.

‡ In a civil suit in the District Court some years ago, a witness said in reply to a question from me—"How can I tell how many wives he had? A woman is married to-day, and leaves her husband to-morrow. If the wife gets sick, the husband deserts her; if the husband, the wife deserts him." A young girl of sixteen or so once coolly confessed before me to having had five husbands, three of whom were living, and two present in court, of whom one had just attempted suicide for her sake! I met with an instance of a man who had been married fifteen times; and I have heard of a woman who had had thirteen husbands.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 585 291 bind it round him. Many a more civilised wife would rejoice if she could forge new fetters for her husband as binding as these. The utility of the string is simply to keep in its place the scanty rag which constitutes the Veddah costume.* Married or single he must wear one; but when he is married he substitutes for his batchelor's string one of the lady's twisting, and besides its use, it is emblematic of the marriage tie; for as he never parts with it, so he clings to his wife through life.†

V 5 582 835 I have spoken of the monogamy and conjugal fidelity of the Veddahs as favourably contrasting with the opposite practices among the Kandyans. But there was an ancient custom amongst them which has scarcely yet become extinct, a custom most revolting to every civilized mind. It is that which sanctions the marriage of a man with his younger sister. To marry an elder sister or aunt would, in their estimation, be incestuous, a connection in every respect as revolting to them as it would be to us—as much out of the question and inadmissible as the marriage with the younger sister was proper and natural. It was, in fact, *the* proper marriage, as much so as the marriage between the father's sister's son and the mother's brother's daughter is the most proper that a Kandyan can contract.‡

V 582 835 How far this practice has become obsolete it is hard to say. Amongst the Veddahs of Bintenne it has certainly ceased, and they now regard it with disgust.§ Still it has not very long died out, for many amongst them have seen the children of such marriages, and even cited some by name to me. But I question if it has yet disappeared from amongst the wilder Veddahs of Nilgala. For some time I believed that it was invariably practised there, and

---

* It is, in fact, what the Singhalese call the Diya lanoowa, the "water-string," *i. e.*, the string which supports the rag of cloth which natives wear when bathing, and which is "full dress" among the Veddahs.

† The following anecdote is an apt illustration of the value set by a Kandyan on the marriage tie. One of the civil officers of the fort was travelling through his district, explaining the provisions of the new Kandyan marriage ordinance, when a native said to him—"I don't like that ordinance at all." "Why?" he asked. "Why, you tell us we are not to send away our wives, if we like. Now, suppose I bought a piece of rice land, *and afterwards found my wife did not know how to weed!*"

‡ "Every Bedouin has a right to marry his father's brother's daughter before she is given to a stranger; and hence "cousin" (bint' amm), in polite phrase, signifies "wife." Burton's *El Medina Mecca*, vol. iii. A Kandyan would regard such a marriage incestuous, for such first cousins are considered sisters. The term applied to such a female cousin as is V 5 [601] mentioned in the text as the proper bride for a Kandyan is "nœna," which in Veddah dialect is the word for "wife." The corresponding word "noora" is the Veddah term for "husband."

§ Mr. Birch informs me that the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district "indignantly deny marrying their sisters."

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

it is only because, after repeated and careful inquiry, I cannot establish the fact of such a marriage now actually existing, that I am inclined to consider that it is becoming obsolete. But I should be almost justified as describing it as an existing custom, for many of the young men are the offspring of such connections. The practice is spoken of by them in the present tense, and alluded to as a matter of course, without the smallest repugnance.* 582 835

Amongst the Bintenne Veddahs, then, it may be said to have been, for perhaps two generations or so, extinct. Amongst those of Nilgala it is, at most, only becoming so. And it has, undoubtedly, been the custom among both from time immemorial. Utterly revolting as it is to us, we must remember that with them it was a custom sanctioned by the practice of ages. It is not the consequence of a "poor community," nor the growth of mere barbarism. If it were, the elder sister would be equally sought after; if it were, polygamy in all its forms would be found among them. There would, in fact, be no restraint.†

I have before described the short stature of the Veddahs—their weak and vacant expression, their striking resemblance to each other, characteristics much more marked upon the Veddahs of Nilgala than those of Bintenne. The practice I have just noticed is quite sufficient to account for these. 142 143

It might naturally be supposed that such marriages would produce, besides a stunted growth, insanity, idiocy, and epilepsy. But I find few traces of these maladies. Madness rarely occurs, idiocy still less frequently; though dogged stupidity is not at all uncommon amongst them.‡ But in other respects the injurious effects of this custom would seem to be plainly discernible. The 143 158 000

* I am not surprised that Tennent should be ignorant of this custom. It is a most difficult task to obtain intelligible answers to the commonest questions from these ignorant creatures; and unless a clue to some subject is accidentally found, the inquirer would learn little. There are practices as revolting, though not so peculiar, among some of the Indian tribes.

† It is curious that the only trace I can find of anything approaching to a belief in retributive justice is a tradition of a man, whose name even has been preserved, and whose family still exists, who, they say, was eaten by worms for having exceeded the authorized limit, and formed connections with his elder sisters and aunts. By whom this punishment was inflicted they do not pretend to say; but the painful death they regard as the direct consequence of his incest.

‡ Madness is by no means common among them. They believe if one man curse another, the man who is cursed becomes mad. This is evidently the same superstition as is common among the Singhalese, and known as the "Kata waha," "the evil mouth," or "poison of the mouth," equivalent to the prevalent faith in the "Ess waha," "the evil eye," or "poison of the eye." Burton, in his *El Medinah Mecca*, says, "the national type has been preserved by systematic intermarriages. No evil results are anticipated from the union of first cousins; and the experience of ages and of a nation may be trusted." 754

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

δ: Spinel Ⅱ-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
301
[582]
516

Wedda children. (Page 65)

Kaim and his wife. (Page 65)

[facing p.65]

8: Spinal D-8 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese 131
alone village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of
which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through 361
a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous
that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it 101
was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find 161
the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment
in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthu- [587]
banda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by
previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida
and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; 855
he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all
night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little
strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags
well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous [164
spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill 516]
away, he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda 361
hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and
dust, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. [184
It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira 342]
brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed
thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year 101
old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more 161
ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband
barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, [582]
growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be
that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings.
Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother
of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here
the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust- [164]
besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed
to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she
sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and
then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might
have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add
Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle
of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little
sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters,
Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the
intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of
appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their
one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together [545
in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are 586]
devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true;
and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to
each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which
all respect.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some
[283 six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
824 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 562

The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802

The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437

The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantako*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. 582 584 583

Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. 614 554

There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

which the food for the community was cooked, but we do not think they would touch it or assist in any way in the cooking. At Omuni a menstruous woman is isolated under a rough shelter where she is waited upon by a younger unmarried sister or cousin who, it was stated, should not herself have attained puberty. During her seclusion she may eat any food cooked at the ordinary fire, but a special platter is kept for her use. The girls who look after her suffer no restrictions. This happens every time a girl or woman menstruates. 841

Marriage takes place at an early age; it was said that girls sometimes married before puberty, and as we heard of this at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, and Omuni, we see no reason to doubt the truth of the statement[1]. At Omuni it was pointed out that a certain amount of breast development was necessary before marriage, so that it is probable that connection does not antedate puberty by more than a short time. 582 [856]

With regard to the frequency of such child marriages, we can only say that we never saw any very young girls with babies. Perhaps at the present day prenuptial connection is more common than marriage between the very young, though it is obviously difficult to decide when prenuptial love-making between individuals destined for each other gives place to marriage, among people whose marriages are accompanied with but slight ceremony. It must be remembered that the marriage gift of landed or personal property to a son-in-law, which was formerly customary, is obsolescent at the present day, and this not only makes it more difficult to determine whether marriage has taken place, but probably actually tends to make the exact time of the assumption of the married state less clearly defined. 836 [585] [583]

On account of these considerations we are unable to express any definite opinion as to the frequency of prenuptial connection, the few instances we heard of were between individuals occupying the relationship of *hura* and *naena*, who would in any case marry each other. Thus Kaira of Henebedda and his wife grew up in the same group, and as they had played together as

[1] We are indebted to Mr Frederick Lewis for the information that this is a common practice among Tamils.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

father's sister's daughter. The children of two sisters or of two brothers could not marry, and such a connection would be considered incestuous. The man goes to his future father-in-law with a present of honey, yams, grain or dried deer's flesh tied to his unstrung bow which he uses as a carrying stick. Whether he generally repeats this visit or receives his bride immediately was not clear, and probably the custom varies in this particular. Handuna of Godatalawa told us that he did not take his bride away until he had twice taken a present of food to his mother's brother (father-in-law). The bride gives her spouse a waist string of her own making which he never removes until it is worn out, when he replaces it with another made by his wife. In these particulars the marriage ceremony was essentially similar fifty years ago when it was described by Bailey. "The bachelor Veddah who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgement to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest 'delicacies of the season,' for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguano, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and bind it round him[1]."

When a girl married, her father usually made over to his son-in-law a tract of land, generally a hill known to be inhabited by colonies of the *bambara* or rock bee (*Apis indica*), or gave him a piece of personal property such as a bow or one or two arrows. The instances in which land was given are described in the section on land transference, so that here it is only necessary to mention instances in which personal property was given. Handuna received a bow and one arrow from his father-in-law who when presenting them accompanied his gift with the remark "With this bow you must get food for my daughter." Sometimes a dog is given, and Knox was certainly right when he

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 293.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

583 said "For portions with their Daughters in marriage they give
431 hunting Dogs." Among the village Veddas of Bintenne we heard that an axe or catty was sometimes given, though the Arachi of Belligala, who has been much in contact with the Dambani Veddas, stated that these sometimes presented land to their sons-in-law.

In one settlement of village Veddas, Bulugahaladena, we were told that the bridegroom takes a first present to the bride's father and leaves his bow and arrow in his hut until his second visit with further presents some four days later. At the same place the waist string is sometimes charmed to ensure constancy. Among many of the village Veddas the custom of the gift of the waist string is dying out, and the bridegroom gives the bride a cloth as is the custom among the Sinhalese.

Another custom now dying out appears to be the gift from the bridegroom to the bride of a lock of hair, presented at the same time as the food to the girl's father.

We discovered at Bendiyagalge that it is a common practice
302 for women to wear false hair. Here we were told that it was merely worn in order to make the knot look important, but only by married women. It is improbable that the habit should have arisen among a people so careless of personal appearance as are the Veddas had it no other significance than adornment, for it must be remembered that these folk never brush or oil their hair, or even wash it; indeed, some consider the last operation extremely dangerous, so that the ornamental value of a very small wisp of hair may reasonably be doubted. Extra locks of hair are worn by Sinhalese women, and we have seen some hanging in the verandah of a mud hut in a small jungle village, but among them it is a very different matter. They are usually, and very rightly, proud of their masses of long glossy hair, which they comb and oil carefully. A naturally large knot is considered a beauty, especially when stabbed with a jewelled pin, and girls as well as married women will wear an extra lock to produce this effect, but that the custom should have been introduced from the Sinhalese with no other object than that of personal adornment, about which the Veddas seem to care so little[1], seems as improbable as does the

[1] The Vedda attitude towards ornament generally is treated on p. 205.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nevill has pointed out that besides the territory of the group which is common land, every Vedda has "within this...a subdivision of his own which compares with the manor." In this he is no doubt right, though it was only at Sitala Wanniya that we were able to trace even approximately the hunting grounds belonging to individuals, which are theirs for the whole of their life, and descend to their heirs unless voluntarily alienated with the full consent of the group. So well is private ownership in a portion of land belonging to the group recognised in this community, that a man would not hunt even on his brother's land without the latter's permission; and if game started and wounded on his own land were killed on another man's domain, the man on whose territory the animal died would be given a portion of the flesh, apparently that side of the animal which touched the ground as the animal lay dead. Among other Veddas it was said half, or more generally a quarter, of the animal belonged to the man on whose land it died.

At Sitala Wanniya we not only found particular hills regarded as the property of individuals, but besides the big cave Pihilegodagalge, which was the property of the whole group of five families, there were smaller caves which were the property of the heads of individual families to which no others would have been welcomed, even had they thought of intruding. An exception was, however, made in the case of a man's *baena* (son-in-law), who we were told would naturally come and go as he pleased.

As has been shown in the chapter on Family Life, presents are often given at marriage, and these may take the form of personal property or hills or pools. In this section we shall deal with such transfers of real property, which in normal circumstances were made only to children and sons-in-law, and even then were not made over without the assent of every adult male member of the group. As this difficult subject does not lend itself to a general description, we shall limit ourselves to giving actual instances of land transfer with which we became acquainted.

When Vela of Sitala Wanniya married a woman of Bingoda his father-in-law gave him a piece of land in Marniye *pangua*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

425 with a hill on it containing a cave called Marniyegalge and a
431 number of *bambara* colonies. He was also given a number of
583 pools in a river in Damenagama[1].

Handuna of Godatalawa on his marriage was given a hill with a cave in it called Balatgalagalge. This was handed over to him by his father-in-law and the gift carried with it the sole right to take rock honey on the hill, which was known to be the home of six swarms of *bambara*. Kaira Hudubandar son-in-law of Handuna of Godatalawa received on his first marriage a big pool in the Tota Oya river.

When Kumi the sister of the Vidane of Bandaraduwa married Tissahami, the bride's parents made over to her the hill Rajahele near Walimbagala, upon which there were about ten *bambara* colonies. Kumi also received Nalle Kotanwala, a stretch or pool—we could not determine which—in the Kalugal Oya. They also gave her husband the hill called Kuda Rasahele upon which six combs of the rock bee were known.

When Badapisi married, her father gave her husband Sinawa a hill called Bala Attahele on which there were known to be eight *bambara* colonies and a pool called Adanewala in the Kalugal Oya.

Tissahami the Vidane of Bandaraduwa received on his marriage the hill Maha Yakini Hela, upon which there were over twenty known *bambara* colonies[2].

With regard to these gifts of land we must record that although a man divides his landed property equally between his children in preparation for his death, property given at marriage to a son-in-law is counted as the daughter's share when the time comes for a man to make his final disposition.

423 When the land belonging to a Vedda group was not defined by natural features, such as a stream or hill, a mark representing a man with a drawn bow was cut upon the trunks of trees along the boundary line. It is doubtful whether these marks are

[1] We believe this was a small stream, and the right to fish in it was not highly valued, partly perhaps because not many fish were caught, but also because Veddas do not often eat fish when they can get other flesh.

[2] The numbers of colonies of rock bees mentioned in these accounts are probably inaccurate, except perhaps in the case of the Bandaraduwa hills, for most Veddas became confused when attempting to count above five or six.

[602]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some
[283 six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
824] (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to
515 name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 562

The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802

The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437

The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantako*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 582 584 583 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of 614 554 [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

father's sister's daughter. The children of two sisters or of two brothers could not marry, and such a connection would be considered incestuous. The man goes to his future father-in-law with a present of honey, yams, grain or dried deer's flesh tied to his unstrung bow which he uses as a carrying stick. Whether he generally repeats this visit or receives his bride immediately was not clear, and probably the custom varies in this particular. Handuna of Godatalawa told us that he did not take his bride away until he had twice taken a present of food to his mother's brother (father-in-law). The bride gives her spouse a waist string of her own making which he never removes until it is worn out, when he replaces it with another made by his wife. In these particulars the marriage ceremony was essentially similar fifty years ago when it was described by Bailey. "The bachelor Veddah who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgement to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest 'delicacies of the season,' for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguano, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and bind it round him[1]."

When a girl married, her father usually made over to his son-in-law a tract of land, generally a hill known to be inhabited by colonies of the *bambara* or rock bee (*Apis indica*), or gave him a piece of personal property such as a bow or one or two arrows. The instances in which land was given are described in the section on land transference, so that here it is only necessary to mention instances in which personal property was given. Handuna received a bow and one arrow from his father-in-law who when presenting them accompanied his gift with the remark "With this bow you must get food for my daughter." Sometimes a dog is given, and Knox was certainly right when he

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 293.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

But the Veddahs have not yet arrived at such a pitch of civilization. Divorce is unknown among them. They are kind and constant to their wives, and few of their Kandyan neighbours could say as I have heard a Veddah say, "Death alone separates husband and wife." The idea of such constancy was quite too much for one of the bystanders, an intelligent Kandyan chief, on one occasion when I was talking on these subjects to some Veddahs. "Oh, sir," he exclaimed, apologetically, "they are just like Wanderoos."* He was perfectly scandalized at the utter barbarism of living with only one wife, and never parting till separated by death.† V 586

Tennent says they have no marriage rites; this is true; but I am surprised that no one should have told him of what very nearly approaches a marriage ceremony, and one which is curious in itself, and so far as I know, unlike any custom among other barbarous tribes. The bachelor Veddah, who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgment to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest "delicacies of the season", for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguano, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a thin cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and V 585 [584] V 291 585

---

* The Wanderoo is a large monkey common throughout the island, one of the three species of Presbytes, probably the P. Ursinus.

† I have spoken of polygamy and indiscriminate divorce among the Kandyans in the present tense. I should have used the past, for in 1859 they were abolished by law. It fell to the lot of the late Sir Henry Ward, whose name will be gratefully cherished in Ceylon as long as Ceylon exists, and whose loss is daily becoming more felt and deplored, that this remarkable change in the habits of an Oriental people should have taken place during his rule—a change, originating with the Kandyans themselves, which has given them marriage laws as pure as our own, an extraordinary proof of increasing civilization. In May 1858, a large deputation of influential chiefs waited on Sir Henry Ward, at the Pavilion, in Kandy, to seek the aid of Government to remove what they felt to be a stigma on their race and character, by abolishing polygamy and making the marriage tie a binding obligation. This was followed by a petition, signed by 8,000 chiefs and headmen on behalf of the Kandyan people, repeating their earnest prayer. The result was the enactment of an ordinance "To amend the laws of marriage in the Kandyan country," which will do more to raise the social character of the Kandyans than any other measure can do. They have reason to be proud of having spontaneously wrought this great change, and they fully appreciate Her Majesty's interest in its success, which she graciously desired should be specially made known to them. S 586 595 177

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

which the food for the community was cooked, but we do not 841
think they would touch it or assist in any way in the cooking. At Omuni a menstruous woman is isolated under a rough shelter where she is waited upon by a younger unmarried sister or cousin who, it was stated, should not herself have attained puberty. During her seclusion she may eat any food cooked at the ordinary fire, but a special platter is kept for her use. The girls who look after her suffer no restrictions. This happens every time a girl or woman menstruates.

Marriage takes place at an early age; it was said that girls 582
sometimes married before puberty, and as we heard of this at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, and Omuni, we see no reason to doubt the truth of the statement[1]. At Omuni it was pointed [856]
out that a certain amount of breast development was necessary before marriage, so that it is probable that connection does not antedate puberty by more than a short time.

With regard to the frequency of such child marriages, we 836
can only say that we never saw any very young girls with babies. Perhaps at the present day prenuptial connection is more common than marriage between the very young, though it is obviously difficult to decide when prenuptial love-making [585]
between individuals destined for each other gives place to marriage, among people whose marriages are accompanied with but slight ceremony. It must be remembered that the marriage gift of landed or personal property to a son-in-law, which was [583]
formerly customary, is obsolescent at the present day, and this not only makes it more difficult to determine whether marriage has taken place, but probably actually tends to make the exact time of the assumption of the married state less clearly defined.

On account of these considerations we are unable to express any definite opinion as to the frequency of prenuptial connection, the few instances we heard of were between individuals occupying the relationship of *kura* and *naena*, who would in any case marry each other. Thus Kaira of Henebedda and his wife grew up in the same group, and as they had played together as

[1] We are indebted to Mr Frederick Lewis for the information that this is a common practice among Tamils.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

father's sister's daughter. The children of two sisters or of two brothers could not marry, and such a connection would be considered incestuous. The man goes to his future father-in-law with a present of honey, yams, grain or dried deer's flesh tied to his unstrung bow which he uses as a carrying stick. Whether he generally repeats this visit or receives his bride immediately was not clear, and probably the custom varies in this particular. Handuna of Godatalawa told us that he did not take his bride away until he had twice taken a present of food to his mother's brother (father-in-law). The bride gives her spouse a waist string of her own making which he never removes until it is worn out, when he replaces it with another made by his wife. In these particulars the marriage ceremony was essentially similar fifty years ago when it was described by Bailey. "The bachelor Veddah who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgement to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest 'delicacies of the season,' for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguano, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and bind it round him[1]."

When a girl married, her father usually made over to his son-in-law a tract of land, generally a hill known to be inhabited by colonies of the *bambara* or rock bee (*Apis indica*), or gave him a piece of personal property such as a bow or one or two arrows. The instances in which land was given are described in the section on land transference, so that here it is only necessary to mention instances in which personal property was given. Handuna received a bow and one arrow from his father-in-law who when presenting them accompanied his gift with the remark "With this bow you must get food for my daughter." Sometimes a dog is given, and Knox was certainly right when he

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 293.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XXI

302
431
585

Locks of hair presented to brides at marriage

[Facing p. 98]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

hypothesis that it should have arisen among them solely for that object. 302

We believe that a lock of hair, either from his own head or from his sister's, was a customary present from the bridegroom to the bride, and therefore to be considered part of the wedding ceremony. The evidence obtained at Bendiyagalge, though not directly bearing out this point of view, supports the hypothesis when considered in conjunction with the information given us at Sitala Wanniya. The wife of old Poromala at Bendiyagalge wore a piece of hair which Poromala had given her. He had not cut it off his own head but had saved the hair which had come out when combing his hair with his hands, and Handi his wife considered this tail of hair as a valuable possession and said she would leave it to her eldest married daughter when she died. She told us that a woman would burn her lock of hair if she had no daughters. She also said that women would only wear hair from their husbands' heads and laughed at the idea of a man wearing an extra piece of hair, although the men usually wear their hair in the same way as the women. 302 431 585

At Sitala Wanniya each married man was questioned separately.

Handuna, the oldest man and our best informant, said that in former days a lock of hair was always given by the bridegroom to the bride, and if he did not offer it, the young girl might ask for it and insist upon having it. In that case the prospective bridegroom would have to cut it off his own head, if his sister happened to be away at the time or if he had no sister, for it was her duty to give one to her brother if she knew that he wanted it for a wedding gift. A man would always be loath to cut his hair, and there are special regulations against this for shamans, so if the girl is willing to accept him without his present, and he is unable to obtain it from his sister or *nasna*, the gift will be allowed to lapse. This happened when both Handuna and Vela married. No man would give hair to anyone except his wife. Kaira gave his wife a lock of hair when he was married, and he obtained it in the following way. He said that when discussing the matter of his future marriage at home, and feeling sore at having no hair to give his bride, his younger 302 431 585 593

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

302 431 585 593 sister said, "Don't be sorry, I will give you a lock of my hair." She cut a lock from her own head, which he kept until his marriage when he gave it to his wife while she was still at her father's cave. Then he took her to his own cave where she made him a waist string on the second or third day after marriage. To his sister who was then unmarried he gave an axe out of gratitude. Nila cut a lock from his head to give his wife, as his sister was away at the time he was married, otherwise she would have given him one. Pema did not give his wife any hair as her mother had given her some.

302 431 585 184 Among the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula the custom of giving hair as a wedding gift was not known, yet the shaman's wife had a lock which her mother had given her. She assured us that only married women might wear it.

586 Anything like a formal divorce is unknown, but we heard of one instance occurring three generations ago, in which a woman who had gone to live with her husband left him and returned to her parents. The daughter of a Bingoda man, whose nickname Kupunkarea is still remembered, was given to a boy nicknamed Kankuna "Sore Eyes." As he was lazy and took no trouble to support his wife, so that she was frequently obliged to go to her parents for food, they kept her with them. Kankuna was very angry, but he did not threaten violence or attempt to bring back his wife by force. Later she was given to a Vedda of Bandaraduwa and after his death she went to live with a Sinhalese. It was said that she was an unusually pretty girl.

595 It is quite certain that polyandry never existed among uncontaminated Veddas, but at Henebedda we met with one case that must, we think, be called by this name. Before relating this we may, however, call attention to the fact that polyandry is a tolerably common practice among the Sinhalese peasants of the Vedirata, as it is among the less educated classes in other parts of the island[1].

[1] Cf. *Papers on the Custom of Polyandry as practised in Ceylon*, Government Record Office, Colombo, in which Mr R. W. Ievers, speaking of the Kegalla district, says:—"Having been for six years in charge of a Kandyan district (Kegalla), and having to deal with land cases involving rights of inheritance, and having, as Registrar of Kandyan Marriages, to hear divorce cases, I have found that the custom of polyandry was almost universal; and that in the case of a marriage registered under

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

But the Veddahs have not yet arrived at such a pitch of civilization. Divorce is unknown among them. They are kind and constant to their wives, and few of their Kandyan neighbours could say as I have heard a Veddah say, "Death alone separates husband and wife." The idea of such constancy was quite too much for one of the bystanders, an intelligent Kandyan chief, on one occasion when I was talking on these subjects to some Veddahs. "Oh, sir," he exclaimed, apologetically, "they are just like Wanderoos."* He was perfectly scandalized at the utter barbarism of living with only one wife, and never parting till separated by death.† V 586

Tennent says they have no marriage rites; this is true; but I am surprised that no one should have told him of what very nearly approaches a marriage ceremony, and one which is curious in itself, and so far as I know, unlike any custom among other barbarous tribes. The bachelor Veddah, who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgment to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest "delicacies of the season", for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguana, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a thin cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and V 585 V [584] V 291 585

---

* The Wanderoo is a large monkey common throughout the island, one of the three species of Presbytes, probably the P. Ursinus.

† I have spoken of polygamy and indiscriminate divorce among the Kandyans in the present tense. I should have used the past, for in 1859 they were abolished by law. It fell to the lot of the late Sir Henry Ward, whose name will be gratefully cherished in Ceylon as long as Ceylon exists, and whose loss is daily becoming more felt and deplored, that this remarkable change in the habits of an Oriental people should have taken place during his rule—a change, originating with the Kandyans themselves, which has given them marriage laws as pure as our own, an extraordinary proof of increasing civilization. In May 1858, a large deputation of influential chiefs waited on Sir Henry Ward, at the Pavilion, in Kandy, to seek the aid of Government to remove what they felt to be a stigma on their race and character, by abolishing polygamy and making the marriage tie a binding obligation. This was followed by a petition, signed by 8,000 chiefs and headmen on behalf of the Kandyan people, repeating their earnest prayer. The result was the enactment of an ordinance "To amend the laws of marriage in the Kandyan country," which will do more to raise the social character of the Kandyans than any other measure can do. They have reason to be proud of having spontaneously wrought this great change, and they fully appreciate Her Majesty's interest in its success, which she graciously desired should be specially made known to them. S 586 595 177

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 585 291

bind it round him. Many a more civilised wife would rejoice if she could forge new fetters for her husband as binding as these. The utility of the string is simply to keep in its place the scanty rag which constitutes the Veddah costume.* Married or single he must wear one; but when he is married he substitutes for his batchelor's string one of the lady's twisting, and besides its use, it is emblematic of the marriage tie; for as he never parts with it, so he clings to his wife through life.†

V 582 835

I have spoken of the monogamy and conjugal fidelity of the Veddahs as favourably contrasting with the opposite practices among the Kandyans. But there was an ancient custom amongst them which has scarcely yet become extinct, a custom most revolting to every civilized mind. It is that which sanctions the marriage of a man with his younger sister. To marry an elder sister or aunt would, in their estimation, be incestuous, a connection in every respect as revolting to them as it would be to us—as much out of the question and inadmissible as the marriage with the younger sister was proper and natural. It was, in fact, *the* proper marriage, as much so as the marriage between the father's sister's son and the mother's brother's daughter is the most proper that a Kandyan can contract.‡

V 582 835

How far this practice has become obsolete it is hard to say. Amongst the Veddahs of Bintenne it has certainly ceased, and they now regard it with disgust.§ Still it has not very long died out, for many amongst them have seen the children of such marriages, and even cited some by name to me. But I question if it has yet disappeared from amongst the wilder Veddahs of Nilgala. For some time I believed that it was invariably practised there, and

---

* It is, in fact, what the Singhalese call the Diya lanoowa, the "water-string," *i. e.*, the string which supports the rag of cloth which natives wear when bathing, and which is "full dress" among the Veddahs.

† The following anecdote is an apt illustration of the value set by a Kandyan on the marriage tie. One of the civil officers of the fort was travelling through his district, explaining the provisions of the new Kandyan marriage ordinance, when a native said to him—"I don't like that ordinance at all." "Why?" he asked. "Why, you tell us we are not to send away our wives, if we like. Now, suppose I bought a piece of rice land, *and afterwards found my wife did not know how to weed!*"

‡ "Every Bedouin has a right to marry his father's brother's daughter before she is given to a stranger; and hence "cousin" (bint' amm), in polite phrase, signifies "wife." Burton's *El Medina Mecca*, vol. iii. A Kandyan would regard such a marriage incestuous, for such first cousins are considered sisters. The term applied to such a female cousin as is mentioned in the text as the proper bride for a Kandyan is "noona," which in Veddah dialect is the word for "wife." The corresponding word "noora" is the Veddah term for "husband."

V 5 [601]

§ Mr. Birch informs me that the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district "indignantly deny marrying their sisters."

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
[283 824] (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

302 431 585 593 sister said, "Don't be sorry, I will give you a lock of my hair." She cut a lock from her own head, which he kept until his marriage when he gave it to his wife while she was still at her father's cave. Then he took her to his own cave where she made him a waist string on the second or third day after marriage. To his sister who was then unmarried he gave an axe out of gratitude. Nila cut a lock from his head to give his wife, as his sister was away at the time he was married, otherwise she would have given him one. Pema did not give his wife any hair as her mother had given her some.

302 431 585 184 Among the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula the custom of giving hair as a wedding gift was not known, yet the shaman's wife had a lock which her mother had given her. She assured us that only married women might wear it.

586 Anything like a formal divorce is unknown, but we heard of one instance occurring three generations ago, in which a woman who had gone to live with her husband left him and returned to her parents. The daughter of a Bingoda man, whose nickname Kupunkarea is still remembered, was given to a boy nicknamed Kankuna "Sore Eyes." As he was lazy and took no trouble to support his wife, so that she was frequently obliged to go to her parents for food, they kept her with them. Kankuna was very angry, but he did not threaten violence or attempt to bring back his wife by force. Later she was given to a Vedda of Bandaraduwa and after his death she went to live with a Sinhalese. It was said that she was an unusually pretty girl.

595 It is quite certain that polyandry never existed among uncontaminated Veddas, but at Henebedda we met with one case that must, we think, be called by this name. Before relating this we may, however, call attention to the fact that polyandry is a tolerably common practice among the Sinhalese peasants of the Vedirata, as it is among the less educated classes in other parts of the island[1].

[1] Cf. *Papers on the Custom of Polyandry as practised in Ceylon*, Government Record Office, Colombo, in which Mr R. W. Ievers, speaking of the Kegalla district, says:—"Having been for six years in charge of a Kandyan district (Kegalla), and having to deal with land cases involving rights of inheritance, and having, as Registrar of Kandyan Marriages, to hear divorce cases, I have found that the custom of polyandry was almost universal; and that in the case of a marriage registered under

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

But the Veddahs have not yet arrived at such a pitch of civilisation. Divorce is unknown among them. They are kind and constant to their wives, and few of their Kandyan neighbours could say as I have heard a Veddah say, "Death alone separates husband and wife." The idea of such constancy was quite too much for one of the bystanders, an intelligent Kandyan chief, on one occasion when I was talking on these subjects to some Veddahs. "Oh, sir," he exclaimed, apologetically, "they are just like Wanderoos."* He was perfectly scandalized at the utter barbarism of living with only one wife, and never parting till separated by death.† 586

Tennent says they have no marriage rites; this is true; but I am surprised that no one should have told him of what very nearly approaches a marriage ceremony, and one which is curious in itself, and so far as I know, unlike any custom among other barbarous tribes. The bachelor Veddah, who meditates matrimony, himself selects the lady of his choice, wisely preferring his own judgment to that of others; and providing himself with the greatest "delicacies of the season", for example, a pot of honey and a dried iguana, proceeds to her father's hut and states the object of his visit. There being no objection to the proposed alliance, the father calls his daughter, who comes forth with a thin cord of her own twisting in her hand. She ties this round the bridegroom's waist, and they are man and wife. The man always wears this string. Nothing would induce him to part with it. When it wears out it is the wife's duty to twist a new one and 585 [584] 291 585

* The Wanderoo is a large monkey common throughout the island, one of the three species of Presbytes, probably the P. Ursinus.

† I have spoken of polygamy and indiscriminate divorce among the Kandyans in the present tense. I should have used the past, for in 1859 they were abolished by law. It fell to the lot of the late Sir Henry Ward, whose name will be gratefully cherished in Ceylon as long as Ceylon exists, and whose loss is daily becoming more felt and deplored, that this remarkable change in the habits of an Oriental people should have taken place during his rule—a change, originating with the Kandyans themselves, which has given them marriage laws as pure as our own, an extraordinary proof of increasing civilization. In May 1858, a large deputation of influential chiefs waited on Sir Henry Ward, at the Pavilion, in Kandy, to seek the aid of Government to remove what they felt to be a stigma on their race and character, by abolishing polygamy and making the marriage tie a binding obligation. This was followed by a petition, signed by 8,000 chiefs and headmen on behalf of the Kandyan people, repeating their earnest prayer. The result was the enactment of an ordinance "To amend the laws of marriage in the Kandyan country," which will do more to raise the social character of the Kandyans than any other measure can do. They have reason to be proud of having spontaneously wrought this great change, and they fully appreciate Her Majesty's interest in its success, which she graciously desired should be specially made known to them. S 586 595 177

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect.

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
[283 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded
824] to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But
565 for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 662

The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802

The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437

The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantako*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). 582 584 583

She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. 614 554

There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

members of single families or small groups of two families living and hunting together. 621

Each family consists of parents and unmarried children to whom are generally added married daughters and their husbands. It is rare to find a married son with his father and mother, and a widow often marries the brother of her dead husband. We may now give some examples of the communities we actually met, premising that where a community such as that of Godatalawa consists of a single family only, this is probably due to depopulation and "hard times." 596 587

By consulting the genealogies on pp. 60 and 61 it will be seen that the Godatalawa family consisted of an old white haired man, Handuna, the "senior" of the group, his wife Dilisini, their daughter Kumi, a girl scarcely past puberty, and another daughter, Mutumenike, whom we did not see. Besides these there were Kaira (Hudubandar) and Kaira (Vinake), both sons of the old man's sister Hudi, and therefore actual or potential sons-in-law, and the two young children of the dead Ukumenike, a daughter of Handuna by his first wife Dingerimenike. 596

The Sitala Wanniya community when we first met them consisted of two families, those of Handuna the "senior" of the group, and his half brother Vela. Handuna had with him his wife Tandi and his two boys, his married daughter Kandi, and her husband Kaira with his sister Selli and the two young children born to Kaira and Kandi. Vela had only his wife Bevini (sister of Tandi) and his two young children. After a few days they were joined by another family consisting of Nila and his wife Wiri, with their daughter and her husband Paema, an unmarried girl and a small boy. The relationship between Handuna and Nila was that their grandmothers were sisters and their mother and father cousins who reciprocally called each other *akka* (elder sister) and *maleya* (younger brother). 621 596

KINSHIP.

The system of kinship was studied by means of the genealogies, and the following list of relationship terms compiled from the genealogies shows that the Vedda system of 601

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

rigidly observed that we were told that a man might not assist his sister to rise from the ground if she had fallen down and injured herself. Further, it seemed that he should not see much even of the girl whom he was about to marry until she was handed over to him, though according to our Unuwatura Bubula informants it was not really bad for a man to touch any of his *naena* and he was allowed to do this in an emergency. At Sitala Wanniya it was said that adult *hura* and *naena* should not speak to each other even when it had been arranged that they should marry, and at Omuni we were told that if in the old days a man was seen speaking to an unmarried girl, her outraged relatives would seek to kill him. Children may of course come in contact with their parents to any extent and at any age. 602 [684]

Second marriages are, and always have been frequent, a man often marrying a sister of his deceased wife and a woman marrying one of her dead husband's brothers. We believe that such unions were regarded as both a privilege and a duty, though according to Handuna of Sitala Wanniya a man married his dead wife's sister principally because if he married any one else his children would not be looked after so well. If a widow does not marry one of her dead husband's brothers she may return to her parents, though it seemed that if these were no longer living she would generally stay with her late husband's group, whose duty it would then be to look after her and her children. 587

With regard to name avoidance, a man does not speak the name of his mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and they also refrain from speaking his name, relationship terms being used instead. Nor does a man commonly speak of his son-in-law or father-in-law, or his brother's wife or sister's husband, except by the appropriate relationship terms; beyond this we would only point out that, as already mentioned, neither man nor woman commonly speaks of his or her spouse by name, and there is a general tendency to avoid the use of names and where possible indicate an individual by a relationship term. In no case did we notice any hesitation in giving the name of any adult which we sought to obtain in the course of our inquiries. The objection to saying a young child's name and the reason for this is referred to on p. 103. 551 [606 607]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese chena village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some
[283 six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
284] (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards
762 the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920). 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Lastly, there is the *hangotuwa* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakha-hatte* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom. 222 415 776

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuape**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight. 222 [372]

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *hulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation* to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone. [587] 607 [782]

With smoking *hulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *hulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *hulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives. [412]

---

*"The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

†*Yothinawa* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Haibo, haibo, haibo.
Ma ninthagang kotuahes maritches,
Ahd upang nacumthangis maihi helaney,
Maihi ural opuhora thonawa hithon,
Hamatheyan tauthoron opuaragana karunahagona.
Tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The individuals concerned in the polyandrous marriage at Henebedda are Handuna (8), the Vidane Appuhami (4), and Kandi (10)[1]. It will be seen from the genealogy that Handuna and Appuhami are the sons of a brother and sister, both have intercourse with Kandi, though the latter is nominally the wife of Handuna who is the older man. Kandi is an unusually pretty woman and considerably younger than either. We were told that Appuhami at one time lived with Badeni (11), his father's sister's grandchild, but was compelled to give her up on account of the jealousy displayed by Kandi. 595

We have already pointed out that a man spends much of his time with his father-in-law, i.e. with his wife's people, hunting and wandering with them and having perfectly free access to his father-in-law's hunting ground and fishing pools; at Sitala Wanniya we were told that after a few days spent in a shelter on the territory in the man's community to which the bridegroom carried his bride on first receiving her, the young couple should return to the bride's group. Even at the present day this is the case to a great extent, though among settled communities as at Bandaraduwa there is a tendency for the women to come to the man's community and stay there with him[2]. 591

Pregnancy is diagnosed after two menstrual periods have been missed. The change in the breasts is not noticed. Birth takes place in the cave (unless labour should come on suddenly and occur in the jungle); no screen is put up, and any woman will assist the parturient woman; the cord is cut with an arrow—the common tool used for all cutting purposes—and the afterbirth is thrown away. The umbilicus is treated with cloth and ashes, and the portion of the umbilical cord which drops from the navel is not preserved. We never heard of a case of twins. [843] 844 [845]

During labour the patient leans back with one shoulder or

the Ordinance the name of the elder brother was given as that of the bridegroom, but everyone was aware that the girl would regard the other brothers as being equally her husbands."

[1] The numbers in parentheses refer to the genealogy on p. 60.

[2] Both *kana* and *diga* marriages occur among the peasant Sinhalese but, according to Mr Bible, *diga* marriage is the common practice.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

5: Spimel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
911 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanave* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some
[283 six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *siyambe*
824 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *warige*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliye*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *warige*; and each has its own story:
173 The Morana *warige* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER IV

FAMILY LIFE

THE family life of the wilder Veddas centres round the rock-shelters which are truly their homes, and even among those Veddas who practise chena cultivation, but have not formed permanent settlements, these rock-shelters play an important part, the movements of the community or family group from shelter to shelter being regulated according to season and available food supply. Our experience leads us to believe that the wilder Veddas so greatly prefer rock-shelters to huts that they seldom build the latter, preferring rather to face the inconvenience of travelling some distance daily in search of food, and even to camp for the night under some temporary shelter. Except in this particular Nevill's description of the movements of a Vedda family still holds good if it be remembered that he applies the term "Village Vaedda" to any Vedda who makes even the roughest chena. "The Forest Vaedda forms a home two or three times a year, as the season demands. Thus in the dry hot months when brooks and ponds dry up, the game collects in the low forests around the half dried river beds. (He then takes his wife and children, aged parents or crippled relatives, and settles them in a hut close to a place where water can be got.)From this he makes his hunting forays, and returns to it with his game) The rain sets in however, and the iguanas, deer, pigs, etc. are scattered over the country; the elk then seek rocky hills, and are followed by the Vaedda. The little household goods, the children, and family party, again are moved up to the high ground, avoiding the malaria that now hangs as a shroud over the forest-clad lowlands. Here, if possible, a cave is chosen for the home, and improved by a slight roof in front, if

342
221
[592]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Things new to them which we showed

them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and
152 most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by
[522] a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character, but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous, and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman, but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela, half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well as the other men. Kaira, *baena* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *baena* to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives, keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
427 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately, it did not seem that any food was private property. One other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely, that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own division, but always put them all together in a particular

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251

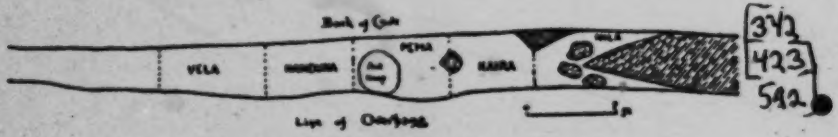


Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge. 342 423 592

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [695] 837

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

v 237 very careful in my inquiries on the subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Singhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it. Tennent's remarks on this subject are wholly inapplicable to the wild Veddahs of Bintenne or Nilgala, though they may apply to those Veddahs of whom he writes.*

v [582] They never marry out of their race, and, with the very smallest cause, the men are exceedingly jealous of their most unattractive wives. They are very careful to keep them apart from their v 592 companions. Their huts contain but one family each, and when they live in caves, each dwelling-place is carefully screened off. There are as many as seventeen separate huts and caves among the seventy-two Veddahs of Nilgala; hardly more than four individuals to each habitation.

v 595 Polyandry is unknown among them. The practice is alluded to with genuine disgust. I asked a Veddah once, what the consequence would be if one of their women were to live with two husbands, and the unaffected vehemence with which he raised his axe, and said, "a blow would settle it," shewed conclusively to my mind, the natural repugnance with which they regard this national custom of their Kandyan neighbours. Their abstinence from a practice, which, till 1859, was recognized by the laws of the land, is remarkable. So sensitive are they on these subjects, that I know an instance of a Veddah—and he was by no means one of the wildest—drawing his knife, and being with difficulty restrained from using it, at a remark made in jest which he considered a reflection on the honour of their women.†

s 586 It is notorious that the Kandyans have no scruples with regard to divorce. Among them, husbands desert their wives, and wives their husbands, for any or no reason. Sickness is perhaps the most common cause. The heartless desertion of a sick wife is, I think, the worst trait in the Kandyan character, and the cool and unconcerned manner in which they themselves allude to it, shows that it is as common as it is cruel.‡

---

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 444, 2nd edit.

† Tennent says, "The community is too poor to afford polygamy," but I am convinced that is not the cause of its non-existence. We find it in smaller communities than these.

‡ In a civil suit in the District Court some years ago, a witness said in reply to a question from me—"How can I tell how many wives he had? A woman is married to-day, and leaves her husband to-morrow. If the wife gets sick, the husband deserts her; if the husband, the wife deserts him." A young girl of sixteen or so once coolly confessed before me to having had five husbands, three of whom were living, and two present in court, of whom one had just attempted suicide for her sake! I met with an instance of a man who had been married fifteen times; and I have heard of a woman who had had thirteen husbands.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

his mother so should he treat his *mama*. A man's father and his father's brothers are less important than his *mama* who receive the largest share of all game killed by their actual or potential sons-in-law. 606

The love and comradeship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law was often very marked, and sometimes the voice of Handuna of Sitala Wanniya took on a special tone of tenderness when speaking of his *baena*; indeed, the importance of the relationship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law is shown in many ways. Thus not only do they very generally hunt and move about together, but whereas when a girl marries she is often given pots and gourds by her mother, a man receives wedding gifts, which—as is shown in the chapter on land transfer—often consist of tracts of land, not from his father but from his father-in-law, who should be his mother's brother.

Again, although a man presents part of his kill to his father's brothers and mother's sisters, a larger share is given to his actual or potential father-in-law and mother-in-law, and before marriage these may get a specially large share. A man would assist his potential father-in-law and mother-in-law in house building and chena cultivation as a matter of course, but he would only help his other uncles and aunts if asked. When hunting, a son-in-law will usually carry his father-in-law's kill, but he would show the same consideration for his own father and probably for any older man. [482]

We may perhaps fairly sum up this matter by saying, that whereas before marriage a man paid at least as much regard to his future father-in-law as to his own father (and in theory he should pay more), after marriage his father-in-law becomes more important, and the association between father-in-law and son-in-law becomes far closer and more intimate than that existing between father and son. There are, however, certain matters in which father and son are more closely associated than *mama* and *baena*; a boy's bringing up is essentially a matter to which his father attends, and in which the *mama* takes no great part unless the father dies. Again, in theory, sons should take at least as large a part in looking after their aged and infirm fathers as do the latter's sons-in-law. 593 606

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

hypothesis that it should have arisen among them solely for that object. 302

We believe that a lock of hair, either from his own head or from his sister's, was a customary present from the bridegroom to the bride, and therefore to be considered part of the wedding ceremony. The evidence obtained at Bendiyagalge, though not directly bearing out this point of view, supports the hypothesis when considered in conjunction with the information given us at Sitala Wanniya. The wife of old Poromala at Bendiyagalge wore a piece of hair which Poromala had given her. He had not cut it off his own head but had saved the hair which had come out when combing his hair with his hands, and Handi his wife considered this tail of hair as a valuable possession and said she would leave it to her eldest married daughter when she died. She told us that a woman would burn her lock of hair if she had no daughters. She also said that women would only wear hair from their husbands' heads and laughed at the idea of a man wearing an extra piece of hair, although the men usually wear their hair in the same way as the women. 302 431 585

At Sitala Wanniya each married man was questioned separately.

Handuna, the oldest man and our best informant, said that in former days a lock of hair was always given by the bridegroom to the bride, and if he did not offer it, the young girl might ask for it and insist upon having it. In that case the prospective bridegroom would have to cut it off his own head, if his sister happened to be away at the time or if he had no sister, for it was her duty to give one to her brother if she knew that he wanted it for a wedding gift. A man would always be loath to cut his hair, and there are special regulations against this for shamans, so if the girl is willing to accept him without his present, and he is unable to obtain it from his sister or *naena*, the gift will be allowed to lapse. This happened when both Handuna and Vela married. No man would give hair to anyone except his wife. Kaira gave his wife a lock of hair when he was married, and he obtained it in the following way. He said that when discussing the matter of his future marriage at home, and feeling sore at having no hair to give his bride, his younger 302 431 585 593

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

302 sister said, "Don't be sorry, I will give you a lock of my hair."
431 She cut a lock from her own head, which he kept until his
585 marriage when he gave it to his wife while she was still at her
father's cave. Then he took her to his own cave where she
593 made him a waist string on the second or third day after marriage. To his sister who was then unmarried he gave an axe out of gratitude. Nila cut a lock from his head to give his wife, as his sister was away at the time he was married, otherwise she would have given him one. Pema did not give his wife any hair as her mother had given her some.

302 Among the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula the custom
431 of giving hair as a wedding gift was not known, yet the shaman's
585 wife had a lock which her mother had given her. She assured
184 us that only married women might wear it.

Anything like a formal divorce is unknown, but we heard of
586 one instance occurring three generations ago, in which a woman who had gone to live with her husband left him and returned to her parents. The daughter of a Bingoda man, whose nickname Kupunkarea is still remembered, was given to a boy nicknamed Kankuna "Sore Eyes." As he was lazy and took no trouble to support his wife, so that she was frequently obliged to go to her parents for food, they kept her with them. Kankuna was very angry, but he did not threaten violence or attempt to bring back his wife by force. Later she was given to a Vedda of Bandaraduwa and after his death she went to live with a Sinhalese. It was said that she was an unusually pretty girl.

595 It is quite certain that polyandry never existed among uncontaminated Veddas, but at Henebedda we met with one case that must, we think, be called by this name. Before relating this we may, however, call attention to the fact that polyandry is a tolerably common practice among the Sinhalese peasants of the Vedirata, as it is among the less educated classes in other parts of the island[1].

[1] Cf. *Papers on the Custom of Polyandry as practised in Ceylon*, Government Record Office, Colombo, in which Mr R. W. Ievers, speaking of the Kegalla district, says:—"Having been for six years in charge of a Kandyan district (Kegalla), and having to deal with land cases involving rights of inheritance, and having, as Registrar of Kandyan Marriages, to hear divorce cases, I have found that the custom of polyandry was almost universal; and that in the case of a marriage registered under

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
843 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
[283 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded
824] to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

● 593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to
515 name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251

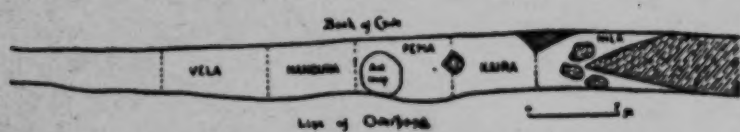


Fig. 9. Plan of Pihilegodagalge.

[342] 423 592

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [595] 837

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

302 sister said, "Don't be sorry, I will give you a lock of my hair."
431 She cut a lock from her own head, which he kept until his
585 marriage when he gave it to his wife while she was still at her
593 father's cave. Then he took her to his own cave where she made him a waist string on the second or third day after marriage. To his sister who was then unmarried he gave an axe out of gratitude. Nila cut a lock from his head to give his wife, as his sister was away at the time he was married, otherwise she would have given him one. Pema did not give his wife any hair as her mother had given her some.

302 Among the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula the custom
431 of giving hair as a wedding gift was not known, yet the shaman's
585 wife had a lock which her mother had given her. She assured
184 us that only married women might wear it.

Anything like a formal divorce is unknown, but we heard of
586 one instance occurring three generations ago, in which a woman who had gone to live with her husband left him and returned to her parents. The daughter of a Bingoda man, whose nickname Kupunkarea is still remembered, was given to a boy nicknamed Kankuna "Sore Eyes." As he was lazy and took no trouble to support his wife, so that she was frequently obliged to go to her parents for food, they kept her with them. Kankuna was very angry, but he did not threaten violence or attempt to bring back his wife by force. Later she was given to a Vedda of Bandaraduwa and after his death she went to live with a Sinhalese. It was said that she was an unusually pretty girl.

●595 It is quite certain that polyandry never existed among uncontaminated Veddas, but at Henebedda we met with one case that must, we think, be called by this name. Before relating this we may, however, call attention to the fact that polyandry is a tolerably common practice among the Sinhalese peasants of the Vedirata, as it is among the less educated classes in other parts of the island[1].

[1] Cf. *Papers on the Custom of Polyandry as practised in Ceylon*, Government Record-Office, Colombo, in which Mr R. W. Ievers, speaking of the Kegalla district, says:—"Having been for six years in charge of a Kandyan district (Kegalla), and having to deal with land cases involving rights of inheritance, and having, as Registrar of Kandyan Marriages, to hear divorce cases, I have found that the custom of polyandry was almost universal; and that in the case of a marriage registered under

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The individuals concerned in the polyandrous marriage at Henebedda are Handuna (8), the Vidane Appuhami (4), and Kandi (10)[1]. It will be seen from the genealogy that Handuna and Appuhami are the sons of a brother and sister, both have intercourse with Kandi, though the latter is nominally the wife of Handuna who is the older man. Kandi is an unusually pretty woman and considerably younger than either. We were told that Appuhami at one time lived with Badeni (11), his father's sister's grandchild, but was compelled to give her up on account of the jealousy displayed by Kandi. 595●

We have already pointed out that a man spends much of his time with his father-in-law, i.e. with his wife's people, hunting and wandering with them and having perfectly free access to his father-in-law's hunting ground and fishing pools; at Sitala Wanniya we were told that after a few days spent in a shelter on the territory in the man's community to which the bridegroom carried his bride on first receiving her, the young couple should return to the bride's group. Even at the present day this is the case to a great extent, though among settled communities as at Bandaraduwa there is a tendency for the women to come to the man's community and stay there with him[2]. 591

Pregnancy is diagnosed after two menstrual periods have been missed. The change in the breasts is not noticed. Birth takes place in the cave (unless labour should come on suddenly and occur in the jungle); no screen is put up, and any woman will assist the parturient woman; the cord is cut with an arrow—the common tool used for all cutting purposes—and the afterbirth is thrown away. The umbilicus is treated with cloth and ashes, and the portion of the umbilical cord which drops from the navel is not preserved. We never heard of a case of twins. [843] 844 [845]

During labour the patient leans back with one shoulder or

the Ordinance the name of the elder brother was given as that of the bridegroom, but everyone was aware that the girl would regard the other brothers as being equally her husbands."

[1] The numbers in parentheses refer to the genealogy on p. 6a.

[2] Both *Asma* and *diga* marriages occur among the peasant Sinhalese but, according to Mr Bibile, *diga* marriage is the common practice.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

v 237 very careful in my inquiries on the subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Singhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it. Tennent's remarks on this subject are wholly inapplicable to the wild Veddahs of Bintenne or Nilgala, though they may apply to those Veddahs of whom he writes.*

v [582] They never marry out of their race, and, with the very smallest cause, the men are exceedingly jealous of their most unattractive wives. They are very careful to keep them apart from their v 592 companions. Their huts contain but one family each, and when they live in caves, each dwelling-place is carefully screened off. There are as many as seventeen separate huts and caves among the seventy-two Veddahs of Nilgala; hardly more than four individuals to each habitation.

v S 595 Polyandry is unknown among them. The practice is alluded to with genuine disgust. I asked a Veddah once, what the consequence would be if one of their women were to live with two husbands, and the unaffected vehemence with which he raised his axe, and said, "a blow would settle it," shewed conclusively to my mind, the natural repugnance with which they regard this national custom of their Kandyan neighbours. Their abstinence from a practice, which, till 1859, was recognized by the laws of the land, is remarkable. So sensitive are they on these subjects, that I know an instance of a Veddah—and he was by no means one of the wildest—drawing his knife, and being with difficulty restrained from using it, at a remark made in jest which he considered a reflection on the honour of their women.†

S 586 It is notorious that the Kandyans have no scruples with regard to divorce. Among them, husbands desert their wives, and wives their husbands, for any or no reason. Sickness is perhaps the most common cause. The heartless desertion of a sick wife is, I think, the worst trait in the Kandyan character, and the cool and unconcerned manner in which they themselves allude to it, shows that it is as common as it is cruel.‡

---

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 444, 2nd edit.

† Tennent says, "The community is too poor to afford polygamy," but I am convinced that is not the cause of its non-existence. We find it in smaller communities than these.

‡ In a civil suit in the District Court some years ago, a witness said in reply to a question from me—"How can I tell how many wives he had? A woman is married to-day, and leaves her husband to-morrow. If the wife gets sick, the husband deserts her; if the husband, the wife deserts him." A young girl of sixteen or so once coolly confessed before me to having had five husbands, three of whom were living, and two present in court, of whom one had just attempted suicide for her sake! I met with an instance of a man who had been married fifteen times; and I have heard of a woman who had had thirteen husbands.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

S: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese 131
chena village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through 361
a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it 101
was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find 161
the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthu- [587]
banda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; 855
he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous [164
spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill 516]
away he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda 361
hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and [184
bust, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. 342]
It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed 101
thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more 161
ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband [582]
barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here [164]
the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vanniya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together [545
in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are 586]
devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

members of single families or small groups of two families living 621
and hunting together.

Each family consists of parents and unmarried children to 596
whom are generally added married daughters and their husbands. 587
It is rare to find a married son with his father and mother, and a widow often marries the brother of her dead husband. We may now give some examples of the communities we actually met, premising that where a community such as that of Godatalawa consists of a single family only, this is probably due to depopulation and "hard times."

By consulting the genealogies on pp. 60 and 61 it will be seen 596
that the Godatalawa family consisted of an old white haired man, Handuna, the "senior" of the group, his wife Dilisini, their daughter Kumi, a girl scarcely past puberty, and another daughter, Mutumenike, whom we did not see. Besides these there were Kaira (Hudubandar) and Kaira (Vinake), both sons of the old man's sister Hudi, and therefore actual or potential sons-in-law, and the two young children of the dead Ukumenike, a daughter of Handuna by his first wife Dingerimenike.

The Sitala Wanniya community when we first met them 621
consisted of two families, those of Handuna the "senior" of the 596
group, and his half brother Vela. Handuna had with him his wife Tandi and his two boys, his married daughter Kandi, and her husband Kaira with his sister Selli and the two young children born to Kaira and Kandi. Vela had only his wife Bevini (sister of Tandi) and his two young children. After a few days they were joined by another family consisting of Nila and his wife Wiri, with their daughter and her husband Paema, an unmarried girl and a small boy. The relationship between Handuna and Nila was that their grandmothers were sisters and their mother and father cousins who reciprocally called each other *akka* (elder sister) and *malya* (younger brother).

KINSHIP.

The system of kinship was studied by means of the 601
genealogies, and the following list of relationship terms compiled from the genealogies shows that the Vedda system of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Adoption is not practised, for the custom of a near relative looking after children who have lost their parents cannot be called by this name. 597 768

Dances play no part in the domestic life of the Veddas, for, although Veddas may perform a few steps of a dance as a sign of pleasure, their dances are mostly if not entirely ceremonial. 535

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER III

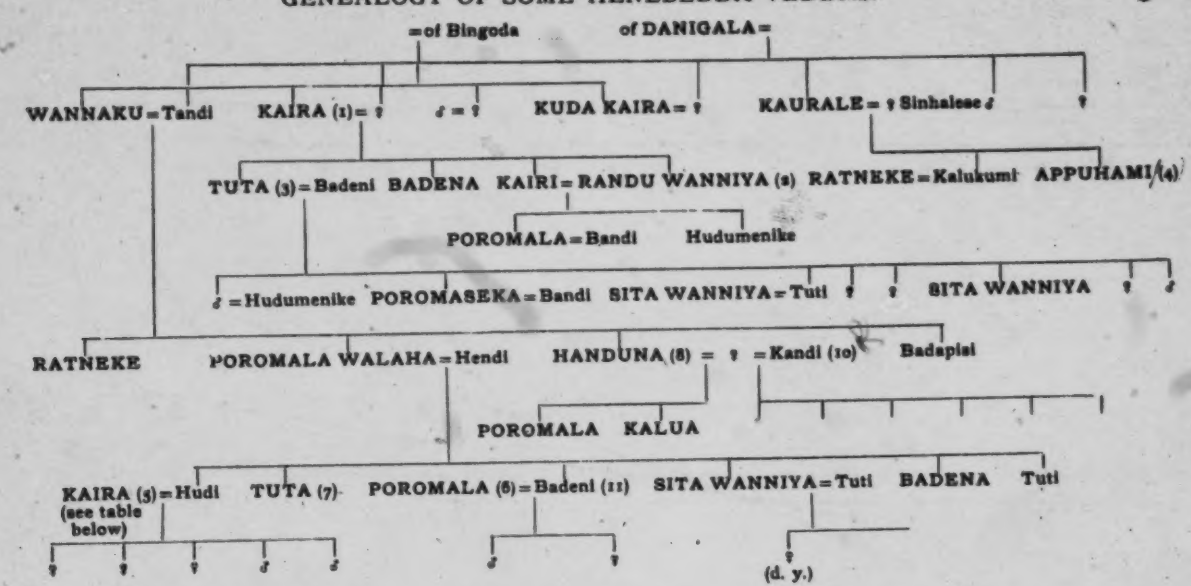
SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

GENEALOGIES.

THE genealogies on the next two pages show the relationship existing between the various individuals of the three Vedda communities, which still retain enough of the old Vedda mode of life to make a study of their organization valuable. At the first glance it is obvious that these genealogies do not go back beyond the memory of middle-aged men of the present day. We are convinced that this is due, not to any general distrust of our inquiries, but simply to certain peculiarities of the Vedda habit of thought which is directly dependent on their mode of life. The first of these is the extraordinary lack of memory shown by every Vedda for the names of individuals of more than one generation older than himself. This may perhaps be due to the fact that the number of individuals whom any one knows well is really small, being necessarily limited to the community to which he himself belongs. The genealogies show how small are these communities and, since every Vedda should marry a first cousin, marriage does little or nothing to enlarge the number of his connections. Further, each of the people with whom he comes in contact is related to him in a definite manner and is called and spoken of by a definite kinship term, so that personal names come to play a very small part in the daily life of the Veddas. It is this, doubtless, that has led to the frequent persistence of the baby names Tuta and Tuti, "little one" in its male and female forms, as the only names by which many individuals are known, and this together with the number of children called by

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

GENEALOGY OF SOME HENEBEDDA VEDDAS.

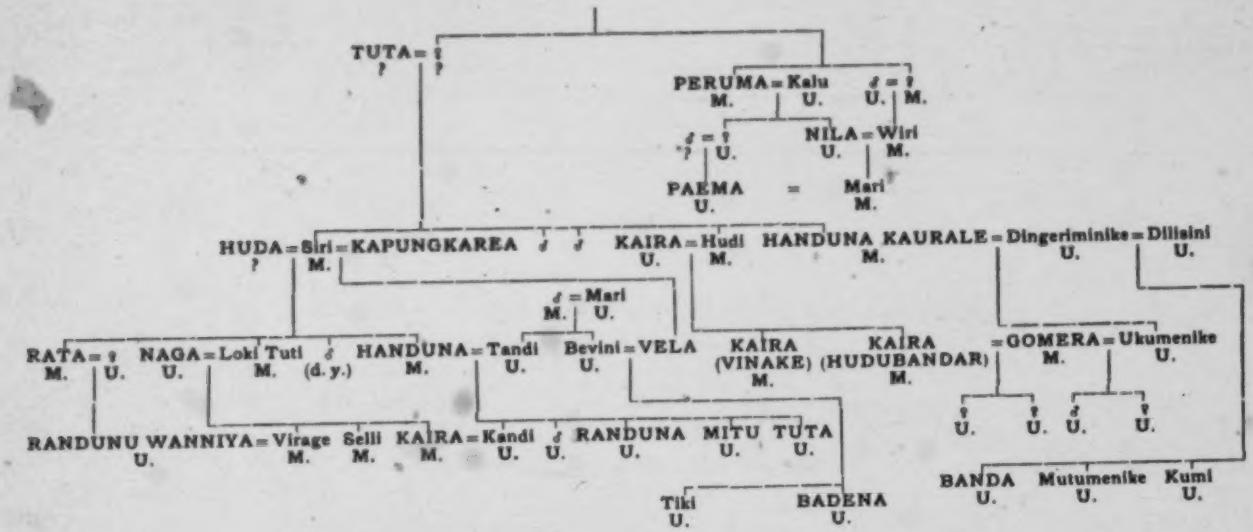


(Numbers in parentheses refer to the text (cf. especially p. 16).)

●601

GENEALOGY OF VEDDAS OF SITALA WANNIYA AND GODATALAWA GROUPS.

(ONLY THE IMMEDIATE ANCESTORS OF PAEMA AND MARI ARE GIVEN.)



Names in Capitals are males, as TUTA; names in small type females, as Siri.
M. = Morane Clan; U. = Unapane Clan; d. y. = died young.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

601 such favourite names as Kaira, Poromala and Handuna leads to
551 confusion, not only in the minds of strangers, but also we believe in the minds of the Veddas themselves.

Sinhalese who come in contact with the Veddas find the same
601 difficulty, and the individuals of certain communities, e.g.
551 Danigala, have each a Sinhalese name by which they are known
197 to the peasant Sinhalese, and which in many instances they themselves recognise, so that some Veddas actually know each other by these Sinhalese names, and give them when asked their own names or those of their companions. This is the explanation of the majority of Sinhalese names occurring in the
601 genealogies. Again, the fact that among the Veddas there is no system of hereditary chieftainship, or any other custom such
[622 as the vendetta, forcing a man to know and remember his grand-
628] fathers, cannot but have assisted to bring about the forgetfulness of previous generations, which with the rarest exceptions makes everyone entirely ignorant of his grandparents. In the case of the Danigala and Henebedda Veddas there was an additional difficulty to be met in conducting our investigations. The men
601 of these communities who for the most part belonged to the
614 Morane and Unapane clans, traditionally the proudest and most
554 important of the Vedda *warugs*, had to a certain extent intermarried with Sinhalese and also with the Veddas of Namadewa clan, a *warugs* which in this part of the country is regarded as of inferior status. They are most anxious to conceal instances of both these classes of marriage and lied freely concerning them and this is the reason for certain lacunae in their genealogies, which in the case of the Danigala community could not have been given at all had not Mr Bibile's position as Ratemahatmaya, i.e. hereditary overlord or "laird" of this part of the country, enabled him to make inquiries from the surrounding peasantry, and thus check, and in many instances correct, the information we obtained from the Veddas themselves.

621 A Vedda community consists of from one to five families who share the rights of hunting over a tract of land, of gathering honey upon it, fishing its streams, and using the rock shelters. But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

members of single families or small groups of two families living 621
and hunting together.

Each family consists of parents and unmarried children to 596
whom are generally added married daughters and their husbands. 587
It is rare to find a married son with his father and mother, and a widow often marries the brother of her dead husband. We may now give some examples of the communities we actually met, premising that where a community such as that of Godatalawa consists of a single family only, this is probably due to depopulation and "hard times."

By consulting the genealogies on pp. 60 and 61 it will be seen 596
that the Godatalawa family consisted of an old white haired man, Handuna, the "senior" of the group, his wife Dilisini, their daughter Kumi, a girl scarcely past puberty, and another daughter, Mutumenike, whom we did not see. Besides these there were Kaira (Hudubandar) and Kaira (Vinake), both sons of the old man's sister Hudi, and therefore actual or potential sons-in-law, and the two young children of the dead Ukumenike, a daughter of Handuna by his first wife Dingerimenike.

The Sitala Wanniya community when we first met them 621
consisted of two families, those of Handuna the "senior" of the 596
group, and his half brother Vela. Handuna had with him his wife Tandi and his two boys, his married daughter Kandi, and her husband Kaira with his sister Selli and the two young children born to Kaira and Kandi. Vela had only his wife Bevini (sister of Tandi) and his two young children. After a few days they were joined by another family consisting of Nila and his wife Wiri, with their daughter and her husband Paema, an unmarried girl and a small boy. The relationship between Handuna and Nila was that their grandmothers were sisters and their mother and father cousins who reciprocally called each other *akka* (elder sister) and *malayu* (younger brother).

KINSHIP.

The system of kinship was studied by means of the 601
genealogies, and the following list of relationship terms compiled from the genealogies shows that the Vedda system of

601 relationship is a late form of the kind known as classificatory. Further, since the Vedda system closely resembles the Sinhalese the one may have been borrowed from the other.

Muttu, father, grandfather.
Atta, mother, grandmother.
Puta or *putu*, son, sister's son (fem. loq.), brother's son (m. loq.).
Duwa or *tuti*, daughter, sister's daughter (fem. loq.), brother's daughter (m. loq.).
Munuburu, grandson.
Miniberi, granddaughter.
Aiya, elder brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.
Maleya, younger brother, maternal aunt's son, paternal uncle's son.
Akka, elder sister, daughter, paternal uncle's daughter.
Naga, younger sister, maternal aunt's daughter, paternal uncle's daughter.
Mama, maternal uncle, paternal aunt's husband.
Nendamma, paternal aunt, maternal uncle's wife.
Lokuappu, paternal uncle (older), maternal aunt's husband.
Kuduappu, paternal uncle (younger), maternal aunt's husband.
Lokuamma, maternal aunt (older), paternal uncle's wife.
Kuduamma, maternal aunt (younger), paternal uncle's wife.
Hura, paternal aunt's son, maternal uncle's son.
Naena, paternal aunt's daughter, maternal uncle's daughter.
Baena, sister's son (m. loq.), brother's son (fem. loq.).
Yeli, brother's daughter (fem. loq.), sister's son (m. loq.).

It will be noticed that none of these terms, except *hura* and *naena* when used between individuals of the same sex, are reciprocal.

582 601 The working basis of the Vedda kinship system is the marriage of the children of brother and sister, but not of two brothers or sisters. Thus, when a woman's son marries his mother's brother's daughter the man's maternal uncle (*mama*) becomes his father-in-law and his maternal uncle's children (his *hura* and *naena*), except the girl he has married, become his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. None of these relatives, however, change their kinship term on this account, *hura* and *naena* being only applied to individuals with whom intermarriage is actually possible, or would be possible if the sex of the speaker permitted it. On marriage the girl's paternal aunt (*nendamma*) becomes her mother-in-law, but as before marriage this woman's children remain her *hura* and *naena*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The words *lage eto*, *lato* or sometimes *leto*, the two last being abbreviations of *lage eto*, were often added to relationship terms; as examples of this we may record *mutta lage eto*, *atta lato*, *maleya leto*. We were told that the term in its various forms had the sense "of" or "from my own people," and it would only be used of near relatives, thus Poromala of Henebedda added some form of this word to the terms by which he called almost all his relations. This was not the case at Sitala Wanniya where Handuna (being then in our camp) said that he might use the term *maleya lage eto* when speaking of his brother who was up in the cave. 601

A man usually spoke of his wife as his "woman," *gani*. Addressing her he would probably say *thopi*, "thou." At Henebedda the term *meli* was used. We have no record as to how a Vedda woman of the Sitala Wanniya group addressed her husband; at Henebedda we were told that a childless woman addressed and spoke of her husband as *wani lage eto* but that after children were born he should be addressed (as among the peasant Sinhalese) as "father of so and so" using the name of the youngest child.

At Unuwatura Bubula it was said that not all *naena* and *kura* should marry, the correct marriage being for a man to marry the daughter of his mother's younger brother. We were not able to satisfy ourselves that this rule is especially observed at the present day. Of fifteen marriages between cousins—none of which are marriages of village Veddas—nine are marriages in which the man married his mother's brother's daughter, five are unions between a man and his father's sister's daughter, and one man married a woman who was equally his mother's brother's daughter and his father's sister's daughter, according to whether the relationship was traced on the mother's or father's side. 582

The number of cousin marriages of which we have details is too small to allow the definite statement that marriages between a man and his mother's brother's daughter were especially frequent, though as far as they go they support this idea, which becomes all the more probable when the specially close relationship existing between a man and his mother's brother (cf. p. 67) is considered.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 Since the children of two brothers or two sisters cannot
601 marry each other, they are not *hura* and *naena* but call each other "brothers" and "sisters," using the terms for elder or younger brother or sister according to their age[1].

(Every Vedda so readily helps all the other members of his
621 community and shares any game he may kill or honey he may
224 take in so liberal a manner that at first it was difficult to deter-
606 mine who were the individuals who had a special claim on others of the group. Certainly at first sight it seemed as if all game were equally divided among the members of the group, but after a little time we perceived that while an unmarried man looked especially after his mother, a married man's father-in-law had at least an equal claim on his son-in-law and in practice often received more attention, since a man generally spent most of his time with his wife's family) That the relationship between
606 father-in-law and son-in-law is very close was shown in a number of ways, thus, when discussing children and their bringing up with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, we asked him whether Veddas
[842] preferred to have a son or a daughter, the answer was prompt and decided, "a daughter, for thus a man obtains a son-in-law";] and on another occasion when discussing relationship he stated very decidedly, *amma mama ekei*, mother and mother's brother (i.e. father-in-law) are alike, and pointed out that as a man treats

[1] It may be worth while to say something concerning the alleged intermarriage of brother and sister among the Veddas, since Bailey and Hartshorne believed that such marriages occurred, and the Sarasins considered further investigation advisable. Our conclusions agree so thoroughly with Nevill's that we feel that we need do no more than quote what he has written on this subject. "Much nonsense has been written by persons who ought to have known better, about marriage of Vaeddas with their sisters. Such incest never was allowed, and never could be, while the Vaedda customs lingered. Incest is regarded as worse than murder. So positive is this feeling, that the Tamils have based a legend upon the instant murder of his sister, by a Vaedda to whom she had made undue advances. The mistake arose from crass ignorance of Vaedda usages. The title of cousin with whom marriages ought to be contracted, that is, mother's brother's daughter, or father's sister's daughter, is *nagu* or *nangi*. This in Sinhalese is applied to a younger sister. Hence if you ask a Vaedda, 'Do you marry your sisters?' the Sinhalese interpreter is apt to say, 'do you marry your naga?' The reply is (I have often tested it), 'yes—we always did formerly, but now it is not always observed.' You say then, 'What? marry your own sister naga?' and the reply is an angry and insulted denial, the very question appearing a gross insult: and if put by a Sinhalese, the Vaedda would probably not even reply to him, but turn away with a gesture of contempt." *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

601 576 Terms of respect were commonly used in addressing the aged, thus although *siya* or *mutta* really mean father or grandfather, these words might be used as terms of respect in addressing any old man, and in the same way the terms *kiriamma* (grandmother) or *atta* might be used to any old woman, and we were told that *siya* was constantly used by members of the group in addressing the "senior" or patriarch. An individual of either sex would call his or her father-in-law's father *siya* or *kiriappa*, and a mother-in-law's mother is addressed as *kiriamma*.

Clan Organization.

614 178 It has already been mentioned that the Veddas at the present day are divided into clans (*waruge*); almost every man who calls himself a Vedda can give the name of his *waruge* and this applies even to many village and coast Veddas in whom there is a minimum of true Vedda blood. The clan organization of the Veddas was first pointed out by Nevill, who says: "The Veddas north of the Mahawaeli Ganga have lost their original divisions... and reduced to a few isolated families....The Vaeddas known as coast Vaeddas have abandoned most of their ancestral customs and I cannot even ascertain from them their original name. Vaeddas of the forest districts do not preserve any tradition of relationship with these Vaeddas of the coast[1]." Nevill then gives 614 the following nine names as those of the Vedda clans, to which he adds the Veddas of Tambalagama Pattu, Kattakulam Pattu and Anurajapura as true Veddas though their *waruge* names seem lost.

1. Morana waruge.
2. Unapana waruge.
3. Bandara or Rugam waruge.
4. Namada, Namadana or Nabadana waruge.
5. Ura-wadiya waruge.
6. Uruwa waruge.
7. Kowil waname.
8. Aembala or Ambala waruge.
9. Tala waruge.

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 176.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 585 291 bind it round him. Many a more civilised wife would rejoice if she could forge new fetters for her husband as binding as these. The utility of the string is simply to keep in its place the scanty rag which constitutes the Veddah costume.* Married or single he must wear one; but when he is married he substitutes for his batchelor's string one of the lady's twisting, and besides its use, it is emblematic of the marriage tie; for as he never parts with it, so he clings to his wife through life.†

V 582 835 I have spoken of the monogamy and conjugal fidelity of the Veddahs as favourably contrasting with the opposite practices among the Kandyans. But there was an ancient custom amongst them which has scarcely yet become extinct, a custom most revolting to every civilized mind. It is that which sanctions the marriage of a man with his younger sister. To marry an elder sister or aunt would, in their estimation, be incestuous, a connection in every respect as revolting to them as it would be to us—as much out of the question and inadmissible as the marriage with the younger sister was proper and natural. It was, in fact, *the* proper marriage, as much so as the marriage between the father's sister's son and the mother's brother's daughter is the most proper that a Kandyan can contract.‡

V 582 835 How far this practice has become obsolete it is hard to say. Amongst the Veddahs of Bintenne it has certainly ceased, and they now regard it with disgust.§ Still it has not very long died out, for many amongst them have seen the children of such marriages, and even cited some by name to me. But I question if it has yet disappeared from amongst the wilder Veddahs of Nilgala. For some time I believed that it was invariably practised there, and

---

* It is, in fact, what the Singhalese call the Diya lancowa, the "water-string," *i. e.*, the string which supports the rag of cloth which natives wear when bathing, and which is "full dress" among the Veddahs.

† The following anecdote is an apt illustration of the value set by a Kandyan on the marriage tie. One of the civil officers of the fort was travelling through his district, explaining the provisions of the new Kandyan marriage ordinance, when a native said to him—"I don't like that ordinance at all." "Why?" he asked. "Why, you tell us we are not to send away our wives, if we like. Now, suppose I bought a piece of rice land, *and afterwards found my wife did not know how to weed!*"

‡ "Every Bedouin has a right to marry his father's brother's daughter before she is given to a stranger; and hence "cousin" (bint' amm), in polite phrase, signifies "wife." Burton's *El Medina Mecca*, vol. iii. A Kandyan would regard such a marriage incestuous, for such first cousins are considered sisters. The term applied to such a female cousin as is V 5 mentioned in the text as the proper bride for a Kandyan is "nœna," which [601] in Veddah dialect is the word for "wife." The corresponding word "noora" is the Veddah term for "husband."

§ Mr. Birch informs me that the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district "indignantly deny marrying their sisters."

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Clouds	Gal pêriya	Walakula	"Gal" is a stone in Singhalese. In Tamil "kâl peria" would signify large stone or rock.
Thunder	Dewôôla andapi	Hena	"Dewôôla" (Singh.), a spirit, a demon, a god; "andapi" (Singh.), has cried out.
Lightning	Ginna wetunu	Widuliya	"Gini wetunu" (Singh.), fallen fire.
The sky	Pombâna	Ahasa	
The earth	Bimi	Bima	
Water	Diya	Dìya	This is also used for rain, for which the Batticalao Veddahs use "wscha" corruption of "wssa" (Singh.), rain.
Heat	Ginna	Grisma	"Gini" (Singh.), fire.
Cold	Ehna	Sitala	I find in "Notes on the Languages of Various Tribes in the Valley of Assam" by Mr. Robinson, inspector of schools in Assam, published in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journals, the word "yen" for cold, in the Khamti, Laos, and Siamese; and "aiyang" in the Khari Naga languages.
Man	Minna	Miniha	
Woman	Mehli	Gœni	"Mœhæli" (Singh.), an old woman.
Child	Petji Kekula Bilinda Witera	Lamaya	"Petji", corruption of "pencha" (Sing.), a child; "kakula" (Singh.), a bud; "bilindâ" (Sihgh.), young—a child; and "witera", a bud; are applied only to the child-spirits—Bilindoo-yakkoo; has been explained before.
Boy	Ammi	Kollâ	In the "Notes" before referred to, I find "amie" in the Miri, Abor, and Khari-naga languages, for man.
Girl	Petti	Keli	"Petti" for "penchi" (Singh.), girl.
Father	Appa	Appa	My father, "appa latto"; my mother, "amma latto"; "latto", particle of possession.
Mother	Amma	Amma	
Husband	Hoora	Swamaya	"Hoora" is the Singh. term for that male cousin who is the proper match for a Singhalese girl, viz. her father's sister's, or mother's brother's son. It is traditional that some Veddahs used this term "cousin" when addressing or speaking of the Kandyan kings.
Wife	Nehna	Stri	"Nœna" is the Singhalese term for the corresponding female cousin.
Head	Iya, eecha	Issa	
Eye	Eyeyi, echel	Ehhé	
Nose	Naya	Nahé	
Hair	Eecha kola	Issa kaya	"Echa" for "issa", the head; "kola" (Singh.), leaves.
Body	Bopati	Enga	"Pett" (Singh.), the side of the body; "bo" (Singh.), great. "Pet" is stomach in the Punjabi language.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

606 All Veddas of a group are so nearly related that, with the exception of the bond of the *mama* and *kaima* relationship, the only duties which clearly fall to any individual on account of his relationship to others are certain ceremonial avoidances. These are limited to members of opposite sexes and practically include all the men and women whom an individual of either sex might not marry. There is the most rigid avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law, and at Godatalawa we had an opportunity of seeing how sternly this rule is carried out. Dilisini is the oldest woman of the community, the wife of the patriarch or "senior" of the group; she is physically unattractive and apparently long past the menopause, nevertheless her son-in-law Kaira who was standing a few paces off would not assist her to rise from the ground, although she had an acutely inflamed knee which was obviously extremely painful. In fact no man may come into any physical contact with his mother-in-law or even approach her closely. Thus, if a man met his mother-in-law in the jungle he would move aside off the track. He may however speak to her in the presence of others, though if he found her alone in the rock shelter he would not enter it until there were others present. Similarly though a man may eat food prepared by his mother-in-law he would not take it directly from her, it would be passed to him by someone else, most probably by his wife. A man avoids his son's wife in precisely the same way, as also his brother's wife, and a woman her sister's husband. It was said that if a man attempted to speak in private to any of these women, she would probably suspect him of endeavouring to make improper advances to her which her kinsmen would resent. A man should also avoid touching the daughters of his mother's sisters and his father's brothers as well as all those girls whom he calls "sisters" if these have attained puberty; he may, however, speak to these relatives. We are not quite clear what is the correct attitude of a man towards his wife's sisters or those of his *naima* whom he does not expect to marry, but we believe that generally speaking any close contact is avoided between adults of opposite sexes, and that practically no man may come in contact with any woman of about his own age except his wife. At Unuwatura Bubula these rules were so

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

rigidly observed that we were told that a man might not assist his sister to rise from the ground if she had fallen down and injured herself. Further, it seemed that he should not see much even of the girl whom he was about to marry until she was handed over to him, though according to our Unuwatura Bubula informants it was not really bad for a man to touch any of his *nanna* and he was allowed to do this in an emergency. At Sitala Wanniya it was said that adult *Aura* and *nanna* should not speak to each other even when it had been arranged that they should marry, and at Omuni we were told that if in the old days a man was seen speaking to an unmarried girl, her outraged relatives would seek to kill him. Children may of course come in contact with their parents to any extent and at any age. 602 [684]

Second marriages are, and always have been frequent, a man often marrying a sister of his deceased wife and a woman marrying one of her dead husband's brothers. We believe that such unions were regarded as both a privilege and a duty, though according to Handuna of Sitala Wanniya a man married his dead wife's sister principally because if he married any one else his children would not be looked after so well. If a widow does not marry one of her dead husband's brothers she may return to her parents, though it seemed that if these were no longer living she would generally stay with her late husband's group, whose duty it would then be to look after her and her children. 587

With regard to name avoidance, a man does not speak the name of his mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and they also refrain from speaking his name, relationship terms being used instead. Nor does a man commonly speak of his son-in-law or father-in-law, or his brother's wife or sister's husband, except by the appropriate relationship terms; beyond this we would only point out that, as already mentioned, neither man nor woman commonly speaks of his or her spouse by name, and there is a general tendency to avoid the use of names and where possible indicate an individual by a relationship term. In no case did we notice any hesitation in giving the name of any adult which we sought to obtain in the course of our inquiries. The objection to saying a young child's name and the reason for this is referred to on p. 103. 551 [606 607]

with the Sinhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests[1].

"I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The 'wilder sept' have had too little communication with Sinhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessities of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrowheads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax, and honey, elk flesh and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Sinhalese, or 'the ubiquitous Moors'[2]."

There are no puberty ceremonies for either sex, except among certain Veddas who have been much influenced by Tamils or Sinhalese, among whom the girls are isolated for a short time at puberty. Thus although the following ceremony is observed at puberty by the Uniche Veddas, there is no doubt that it has been borrowed from the local Sinhalese who have a similar ceremony, though according to our information the latter people do not break the pot. When a girl becomes unwell for the first time one of her *nanas* places a pot of water on her head and goes with her to some place where there is a *naga* tree. Here the *nanas* takes the pot from the girl's head and dashes it on the ground so that the pot breaks. The girl is then secluded in a specially built shelter in which she stays until the end of the period, when she washes and returns to her parents' house. During her seclusion she is attended by a girl, always one of her *nanas*, who brings her food in a vessel set apart for this purpose but which is not cooked at a special fire. Among the wilder Veddas no special measures are taken when a woman menstruates, she is allowed to eat the ordinary food, and to sleep in the cave as usual. But among all the village Veddas, and most of those who have mixed at all with the Sinhalese, the menstruous women are strictly isolated, a little shelter being built for them a few paces from the family hut (Plate XX). At Bendiyagalge, where the Henebedda and Kolombedda people were staying at the time of our visit, menstruous women stayed apart at one corner of the cave, they were fed from the pot in

[1] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285—286.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 291.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 Since the children of two brothers or two sisters cannot
601 marry each other, they are not *hura* and *naena* but call each other "brothers" and "sisters," using the terms for elder or younger brother or sister according to their age[1].

(Every Vedda so readily helps all the other members of his
621 community and shares any game he may kill or honey he may
224 take in so liberal a manner that at first it was difficult to deter-
606 mine who were the individuals who had a special claim on others of the group. Certainly at first sight it seemed as if all game were equally divided among the members of the group, but after a little time we perceived that while an unmarried man looked especially after his mother, a married man's father-in-law had at least an equal claim on his son-in-law and in practice often received more attention, since a man generally spent most of his time with his wife's family) That the relationship between
606 father-in-law and son-in-law is very close was shown in a number of ways, thus, when discussing children and their bringing up with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, we asked him whether Veddas
[842] preferred to have a son or a daughter, the answer was prompt and decided, "a daughter, for thus a man obtains a son-in-law"; and on another occasion when discussing relationship he stated very decidedly, *amma mama ekei*, mother and mother's brother (i.e. father-in-law) are alike, and pointed out that as a man treats

[1] It may be worth while to say something concerning the alleged intermarriage of brother and sister among the Veddas, since Bailey and Hartshorne believed that such marriages occurred, and the Sarasins considered further investigation advisable. Our conclusions agree so thoroughly with Nevill's that we feel that we need do no more than quote what he has written on this subject. "Much nonsense has been written by persons who ought to have known better, about marriage of Vaeddas with their sisters. Such incest never was allowed, and never could be, while the Vaedda customs lingered. Incest is regarded as worse than murder. So positive is this feeling, that the Tamils have based a legend upon the instant murder of his sister, by a Vaedda to whom she had made undue advances. The mistake arose from crass ignorance of Vaedda usages. The title of cousin with whom marriages ought to be contracted, that is, mother's brother's daughter, or father's sister's daughter, is *naga* or *nangi*. This in Sinhalese is applied to a younger sister. Hence if you ask a Vaedda, 'Do you marry your sisters?' the Sinhalese interpreter is apt to say, 'do you marry your naga?' The reply is (I have often tested it), 'yes—we always did formerly, but now it is not always observed.' You say then, 'What? marry your own sister naga?' and the reply is an angry and insulted denial, the very question appearing a gross insult; and if put by a Sinhalese, the Vaedda would probably not even reply to him, but turn away with a gesture of contempt." *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

his mother so should he treat his *mama*. A man's father and his father's brothers are less important than his *mama* who receive the largest share of all game killed by their actual or potential sons-in-law. 606

The love and comradeship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law was often very marked, and sometimes the voice of Handuna of Sitala Wanniya took on a special tone of tenderness when speaking of his *baena*; indeed, the importance of the relationship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law is shown in many ways. Thus not only do they very generally hunt and move about together, but whereas when a girl marries she is often given pots and gourds by her mother, a man receives wedding gifts, which—as is shown in the chapter on land transfer—often consist of tracts of land, not from his father but from his father-in-law, who should be his mother's brother.

Again, although a man presents part of his kill to his father's brothers and mother's sisters, a larger share is given to his actual or potential father-in-law and mother-in-law, and before marriage these may get a specially large share. A man would assist his potential father-in-law and mother-in-law in house building and chena cultivation as a matter of course, but he would only help his other uncles and aunts if asked. When hunting, a son-in-law will usually carry his father-in-law's kill, but he would show the same consideration for his own father and probably for any older man. [482]

We may perhaps fairly sum up this matter by saying, that whereas before marriage a man paid at least as much regard to his future father-in-law as to his own father (and in theory he should pay more), after marriage his father-in-law becomes more important, and the association between father-in-law and son-in-law becomes far closer and more intimate than that existing between father and son. There are, however, certain matters in which father and son are more closely associated than *mama* and *baena*: (a boy's bringing up is essentially a matter to which his father attends, and in which the *mama* takes no great part unless the father dies.) (Again, in theory, sons should take at least as large a part in looking after their aged and infirm fathers as do the latter's sons-in-law.) 593 606

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

606 All Veddas of a group are so nearly related that, with the exception of the bond of the *mama* and *baba* relationship, the only duties which clearly fall to any individual on account of his relationship to others are certain ceremonial avoidances.) These are limited to members of opposite sexes and practically include all the men and women whom an individual of either sex might not marry. There is the most rigid avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law, and at Godatalawa we had an opportunity of seeing how sternly this rule is carried out. Dilisini is the oldest woman of the community, the wife of the patriarch or "senior" of the group; she is physically unattractive and apparently long past the menopause, nevertheless her son-in-law Kaira who was standing a few paces off would not assist her to rise from the ground, although she had an acutely inflamed knee which was obviously extremely painful. In fact no man may come into any physical contact with his mother-in-law or even approach her closely. Thus, if a man met his mother-in-law in the jungle he would move aside off the track. He may however speak to her in the presence of others, though if he found her alone in the rock shelter he would not enter it until there were others present. Similarly though a man may eat food prepared by his mother-in-law he would not take it directly from her, it would be passed to him by someone else, most probably by his wife. A man avoids his son's wife in precisely the same way, as also his brother's wife, and a woman her sister's husband. It was said that if a man attempted to speak in private to any of these women, she would probably suspect him of endeavouring to make improper advances to her which her kinsmen would resent. A man should also avoid touching the daughters of his mother's sisters and his father's brothers as well as all those girls whom he calls "sisters" if these have attained puberty; he may, however, speak to these relatives. We are not quite clear what is the correct attitude of a man towards his wife's sisters or those of his *nana* whom he does not expect to marry, but we believe that generally speaking any close contact is avoided between adults of opposite sexes, and that practically no man may come in contact with any woman of about his own age except his wife. At Unuwatura Bubula these rules were so

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

rigidly observed that we were told that a man might not assist his sister to rise from the ground if she had fallen down and injured herself. Further, it seemed that he should not see much even of the girl whom he was about to marry until she was handed over to him, though according to our Unuwatura Bubula informants it was not really bad for a man to touch any of his *naena* and he was allowed to do this in an emergency. At Sitala Wanniya it was said that adult *hura* and *naena* should not speak to each other even when it had been arranged that they should marry, and at Omuni we were told that if in the old days a man was seen speaking to an unmarried girl, her outraged relatives would seek to kill him. Children may of course come in contact with their parents to any extent and at any age.

Second marriages are, and always have been frequent, a man often marrying a sister of his deceased wife and a woman marrying one of her dead husband's brothers. We believe that such unions were regarded as both a privilege and a duty, though according to Handuna of Sitala Wanniya a man married his dead wife's sister principally because if he married any one else his children would not be looked after so well. If a widow does not marry one of her dead husband's brothers she may return to her parents, though it seemed that if these were no longer living she would generally stay with her late husband's group, whose duty it would then be to look after her and her children.

With regard to name avoidance, a man does not speak the name of his mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and they also refrain from speaking his name, relationship terms being used instead. Nor does a man commonly speak of his son-in-law or father-in-law, or his brother's wife or sister's husband, except by the appropriate relationship terms; beyond this we would only point out that, as already mentioned, neither man nor woman commonly speaks of his or her spouse by name, and there is a general tendency to avoid the use of names and where possible indicate an individual by a relationship term. In no case did we notice any hesitation in giving the name of any adult which we sought to obtain in the course of our inquiries. The objection to saying a young child's name and the reason for this is referred to on p. 103.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

rigidly observed that we were told that a man might not assist his sister to rise from the ground if she had fallen down and injured herself. Further, it seemed that he should not see much even of the girl whom he was about to marry until she was handed over to him, though according to our Unuwatura Bubula informants it was not really bad for a man to touch any of his *naena* and he was allowed to do this in an emergency. At Sitala Wanniya it was said that adult *hura* and *naena* should not speak to each other even when it had been arranged that they should marry, and at Omuni we were told that if in the old days a man was seen speaking to an unmarried girl, her outraged relatives would seek to kill him. Children may of course come in contact with their parents to any extent and at any age.

Second marriages are, and always have been frequent, a man often marrying a sister of his deceased wife and a woman marrying one of her dead husband's brothers. We believe that such unions were regarded as both a privilege and a duty, though according to Handuna of Sitala Wanniya a man married his dead wife's sister principally because if he married any one else his children would not be looked after so well. If a widow does not marry one of her dead husband's brothers she may return to her parents, though it seemed that if these were no longer living she would generally stay with her late husband's group, whose duty it would then be to look after her and her children.

With regard to name avoidance, a man does not speak the name of his mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and they also refrain from speaking his name, relationship terms being used instead. Nor does a man commonly speak of his son-in-law or father-in-law, or his brother's wife or sister's husband, except by the appropriate relationship terms; beyond this we would only point out that, as already mentioned, neither man nor woman commonly speaks of his or her spouse by name, and there is a general tendency to avoid the use of names and where possible indicate an individual by a relationship term. In no case did we notice any hesitation in giving the name of any adult which we sought to obtain in the course of our inquiries. The objection to saying a young child's name and the reason for this is referred to on p. 103.

Lastly, there is the *hangotuwa* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakha-hatte* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom. 222 415 776

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuape**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight. 222 [372]

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *hulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation* to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone. [587] 607 [782]

With smoking *hulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *hulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *hulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives. [412]

---

*"The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

†*Yothinawa* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Haiboa, haiboa, haiboa.
Ma ninthagang hetuakee maritchee,
Ahi upang navanthangis maihi helanry,
Maihi urai opuhora thoffawa hithen,
Hamathoyan santhoisen opuaragana harunahagena.
Tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *waruge* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 836 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

23 custom of the country and also selling those they have bred themselves. However, all this was unknown to us when we first met the people, nor would it have been possible to guess their prosperous condition from the first sight of their settlement. 123 It was well known throughout the Vedirata that investigations were about to be made among the Veddas, and all the village headmen had been given instructions to render assistance. They therefore told the Veddas to expect us, and would have sent for them to come to the Public Works Department bungalow on our arrival had we not expressly stated that we preferred to visit the people in their homes. A very rough track led to the top of 361 the Danigala Hill, about 1200 feet high, where, on a rounded 342 shoulder of rock, stood the skeleton hut of the Danigala Veddas shown in Plate II. This was built on the pattern of the ordinary village Vedda habitations but entirely lacked the slats of bark which make the sides moderately weather proof. By its side was an even rougher shelter consisting of a large bough with the smaller branches trimmed and overlaid with banana leaves. Kaira the patriarch or "senior" of the group sat outside the hut with three other men; there were also present three women, a boy of about 12, and two younger children, and although both of the latter had many teeth they suckled persistently. This hut and some of its occupants are shown in Plate II, the rough shelter by its side in Plate XI, figure 1.

609 Although Mr Bibile, whom all these people knew quite well, 123 was with us, they were quite apathetic, their attitude was clearly not the result of shyness, but simply due to the fact that they took no interest in our presence; the women continued to suckle their infants and the men squatted or lay upon the rocks and chewed in gloomy silence, and when addressed they grunted "yes" or "no." One of the infants who smiled and cooed and tried to gain our attention was the only member of the group who seemed to take the least notice of us. Kaira told us that the people we now saw represented all that remained of the Danigala Veddas. We noticed some bananas (which do not grow wild in Ceylon) on the further side of the ridge and we asked to see their plantation. A prompt denial of its existence was the result, though Kaira afterwards told Mr Bibile that he

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

would show him his chena but that he did not wish the white people to know anything about it. Further talk with these people showed that it was impossible to obtain reliable information from them, they had been utterly spoilt as the result of being frequently interviewed by travellers. 609 123

The Veddas have long been regarded as a curiosity in Ceylon and excite almost as much interest as the ruined cities, hence Europeans go to the nearest Rest House on the main road and have the Danigala Veddas brought to them. Naturally the Veddas felt uncomfortable and shy at first, but when they found that they had only to look gruff and grunt replies in order to receive presents they were quite clever enough to keep up the pose. In this they were aided by the always agreeable villagers ever ready to give the white man exactly what he wanted. The white man appeared to be immensely anxious to see a true Vedda, a wild man of the woods, clad only in a scanty loin cloth, carrying his bow and arrows on which he depended for his subsistence, simple and untrained, indeed, little removed from the very animals he hunted. What more easy than to produce him? The Nilgala headman sends word when strangers are expected, then the Veddas repair to their very striking hut on the rock dome and often post a look-out on a big rock about half way up, for on our second visit the leading man of our party who was carrying the camera stated that he saw a Vedda bolting from this rock as we came up. These folk, who when we saw them [291] wore their Vedda loin cloths and were smeared with ashes, are reported to wear ordinary Sinhalese clothes when not in their professional pose, and Mr Bibile, who has himself seen one or more of them in sarongs, points out that the imposture is kept up for two main reasons; firstly, they fear that their cultivation might be stopped (evidently an echo of the chena difficulty of the Eastern Province), or that they might be taxed if they did not appear to be poor fellows living on hardly won jungle produce; secondly, their pose of poverty interests strangers and procures them visitors, whose generosity is the greater the more primitive their mode of life appears to be.

As a matter of fact the Danigala Veddas like those of Henebedda (with whom we became really friendly) keep cattle 231

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

231 for the Sinhalese of Potuliyadde, receiving every fifth calf that is born. The community has, or recently had, ten or more head of cattle of their own and have sold bulls to the brother-in-law of our *tavalam*[1] leader for as much as 30 Rs., indeed, our *tavalam* leader stated that he had himself visited the Danigala chena and
291 had also seen the cattle. On this occasion Kaira and his sons wore a coloured cloth as the Sinhalese do and their women wore a *kambaya* and coloured breast handkerchief. Mr Bibile was
621 able to confirm some of these statements from his own know-
177 ledge and on making investigations among the local villagers
609 discovered that there was a whole community living on the chena settlement, some of whom had married Sinhalese. Indeed it appeared that not only have members of this community learnt to play the part of professional primitive man, but there has even been specialisation, for as far as we could learn, the men we met at the look-out hut are those who always receive visitors or come to Bibile when sent for, while the others whom we did not see do not pose as wild Veddas. Probably the part they now play had only recently crystallised into a professional rôle, but it must be remembered that so long ago as 1863 Bailey discussing these Veddas, or their fathers, says "they were brought in from the forests to be 'looked at'" and he adds, "I never saw that contempt for money which Tennant supposes is still existing[2]."

101 **Kovil Vanamai.** In the Eastern Province in the neighbourhood of Devulani tank the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are found, this term being applied to a number of groups of Veddas living in this neighbourhood. The name Kovil Vanamai means temple
[346] precincts and seems to have arisen from there being one or more temples in this part of the country, while some of these shrines are traditionally associated with Veddas, apparently with old settled coast and village Veddas, for we have no reason to think that the ancestors of the folk we saw at Bandaraduwa, or the other wilder Veddas of fifty years ago, were in any way guardians of the temples or dependent on their
511 bounty. Although at the present day the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are represented by scattered groups, for the most part

[1] A *tavalam* is a train of pack bulls.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285.

511 439 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 141 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we [illegible] Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 mm. (60¼ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 mm. (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 609 576 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

166 115 Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

651 [illegible]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is 184
evidence that a hundred years ago there were organized com- 361
munities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century.

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the 621
jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here [177]
was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the surrounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure [142]
2), though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, [609]
people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility.

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this [197]
condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always 622
speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an 156
extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1908
AX5 Vedda AX5

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had actually been to the village. They had been sent for often to see others at Wewatte and Alutnuwara bungalows, and for even greater folk had been taken to Kandy. And so they had learnt to shake hands and had picked up exaggerated ideas of their own importance and the value of their information, and expected a present for every remark they vouchsafed. It was a horrible change from the courteous behaviour of the Sitala Wanniya cave Veddas. 574 609 431

As the Dambani folk were so very unfriendly we began to hope the carriers would not come at all that night, there was nowhere for them to sleep, and we thought the Veddas might resent their presence. They told us repeatedly that "Sinhalese men would not dare to come to their village," in spite of the fact that there were two petty Sinhalese traders in the village at the time, who did not even trouble to go away before dark, but seemed naturally to expect a night's lodging, which was granted them without any fuss, and there appeared to be no difficulty about language with them. About six o'clock our servants and the carriers arrived, and curiously enough instead of resenting the intrusion the Veddas seemed very impressed by their number, and presumably our importance, in having so many dependents, for they became much more friendly. 609

The next morning early, we set the phonograph going with a Vedda song: immediately the whole village crowded round us, intensely interested. They recognised the song and said it was very good. The Vidane then sang a song into the machine and was quite excited to hear it repeated, but again began his demand for presents although besides a rupee we had now given white cloth to him and the other men from whom we had got vocabularies. Having obtained records we realised that it was impossible to do any good work among such spoilt people and decided to go to Belligala. We offered some beads to the headman's wife, but she said the string was not long enough; this annoyed us and we asked her if she would prefer not to have any, and on her repeating they were not enough we put them away. 126

The Dambani men said they did not know to which *warige* 614

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 they belonged, which suggested to us that perhaps they belonged to Uru *waruge* or one of the other clans which are considered of inferior status. Although the Arachi of Belligala did not know their *waruge* and believed that they had really forgotten them themselves, our opinion was confirmed by information obtained later from the Arachi of Alutnuwara who said that they were of the Uru and Namadewa *waruge*, while a Vedda of Horabora-wewa told us that his mother came from Dambani and she was a Namadewa woman.

576 609 As the Arachi of Belligala assured us the Bulugahaladena Veddas lived in a condition precisely similar to those of Dambani, we did not visit their village but arranged for two of them to visit us at Belligala; they greeted us in the same way as the Dambani folk, with loud and guttural voices, accentuating all the "chs," and shook hands. They brought some honey and yams. They said they could not bring *bambara* honey (for it was too early in the year) so they had brought honey from the stingless bee. After a little while they gradually dropped their [194] guttural tones, especially when they were speaking to the villagers and not to us, their voices, naturally deep, assumed a sing-song tone not unlike that of Nila of Sitala Wanniya. We consider that the gruffness of these Veddas is almost entirely affectation. They have been expected to be sullen and morose and never to laugh. For thirty years the Arachi of Belligala has acted as "show-man" to the Veddas of his district, and he always speaks to them in their "language" in similar or even fiercer tones, and he has shown them so many white men that he has quite lost count of their number. He has thus helped to keep up the fiction of "wildness," for these Veddas are not wild since they are not shy but come up, shake hands, ask for presents, and offer to dance.

178 We believe that they keep up few, if any, of the old Vedda customs; they cultivate chenas and keep cattle, their bows and arrows are probably more for show than use, for the Arachi told us that some of them possess guns while others go to the Sinhalese and borrow them. Deschamps says that Veddas never 157 laugh nor have they ever been seen to smile. Of course this is not true of the Veddas of Nilgala, nor do we think it is true of

837 whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was very careful in my inquiries on this subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Sinhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it[1]."

The only case of suicide of which we heard took place in 762 connection with a breach of the common rule of conjugal fidelity. 837 Tissahami, the husband of Kumi, younger sister of the headman of the Bandaraduwa Veddas, carried on an intrigue with his *nanu*, an unmarried girl named Kirimenike. When his wife who was not one of his *nanu* discovered the intrigue, she scolded her husband most unmercifully, "Why go to another woman while I live?—better to have gone to your mother than her." Although his intrigue with Kirimenike was of old standing, Tissahami was so upset with the disgrace of publicity that he killed himself in the compound outside his own hut early one morning. He had a gun, and holding the muzzle to the suprasternal notch, he pulled the trigger with his toe. The dead man's [626] relatives were very angry with Kumi for driving him to desperation but they did not threaten her, nor in any way molest her. Kumi and Kirimenike belonged to the same *marage* (Morane) but were unrelated. Kirimenike subsequently married a Vedda, and went to live at Syringawala where she remained until she died.

862 In every respect the women seem to be treated as the equals of the men; they eat the same food; indeed, when we gave 609 presents of food the men seemed usually to give the women and children their share first; the same applies to areca nut and other chewing stuffs. The women are jealously guarded by the men, who do not allow traders or other strangers to see them, and those at Sitala Wanniya were too shy to visit our camp, though they welcomed us to their cave, and the dances performed for our benefit took place in the dense jungle so that the women might be present and partake of the food offered to the *yaka*. We had offered to clear a space by our camp where the light would have been better for photography; however, the

[1] J. Bailey, "Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon," 1863, *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* Vol. II, p. 291.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

men explained that though the ceremonies themselves might be performed anywhere the women would not come to our camp, so the dances must take place at the usual dancing ground in the jungle. The day after hearing the phonograph at our camp, the men came to us to request that we should take it to the cave as they had told their wives about it, and they all wanted to hear it too. From these examples the position of Vedda women will be understood. 562 609

Writing in 1887 Nevill notices a similar state. "As a rule, among the purer Veddas, the younger women are rigorously excluded or rather protected from contact with strangers. They occupy, however, an honourable and free position in the society of their relations. I only once saw the good-looking girls of the pure Vedda family. My guide was then ahead of our party with me, and abruptly, without explanation further than the word 'my house,' dived into the forest, beckoning me to follow. We had only gone a few hundred yards from the path, when we reached a glade with a little shed. Here a party of girls and women and children were collected, and at sight of us the younger women began to slip away into the woods, but at a word from my guide stopped. They then advanced and one by one stepped up to me with graceful courtesy, each making a Sinhalese bow with both hands when quite close to me, and then stepped aside, with or without a few words of simple welcome. There was no haste or reluctance, nor any approach to curiosity shown. I stopped talking with some of the elder women for a short time, and then went on. Three or four of the women had most exquisite figures, like statues of Psyche, and a clear brown skin. They were bare to the waist, and from the knees down. I never saw Vaedda women at all comparable to these, and then only did I realise the stories I had heard from Sinhalese, of the former great beauty of the Vaedda women. On our return, the clan met us by official appointment; but these girls, and one equally statuesque young mother, were conspicuously absent, and I saw it was understood I should regard my interview as a confidential honour, intentionally arranged to make me feel I was personally trusted and distinguished." [576] 142 562 609

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

562 609 "It is probable good-looking women have often been kept back by others who had not equal confidence in me[1]."

855 Veddas are affectionate and indulgent parents, never refusing a small child anything it wants and giving it always of the best. We have frequently seen men save for their children food which had been given to them and which they considered specially good, such as bananas or coconuts. The babies are generally happy, but should they cry their wishes are immediately gratified by either parent. We saw a naked boy of about two and a half years strut proudly up and down outside Pihilegodagalge with his father's axe hung on his shoulder, he was extremely happy and all went well until he threatened one of the dogs with the axe, then his mother was obliged to interfere and the child tried to hit her with it; the father seeing this got up and tried to coax the child into giving up the axe, but the boy was now excited and would not give it up, at last he flung it at his father and hit his leg. The man was obviously annoyed and threw the axe from him into the jungle, but he did not attempt to scold or punish the child who was now howling with rage, indeed, after a little while some food was given him to pacify him.

Another time a woman who had been cutting yams with a knife put this down, when her baby snatched it up, and although she was obliged to watch lest he hurt himself, she allowed him to play with the knife. Yet when a child is old enough to wear a little rag in the way of clothing, possibly from 858 six to eight years old, he is expected to behave himself properly and strange to say he does so. One day it was raining heavily, and we were all sitting in the rock shelter at Pihilegodagalge; at the further end of the cave we noticed a lad of seven or nine years old having a heated argument with his mother, suddenly he turned round and went out into the rain, when he returned he had controlled his temper; later we remarked on this and were told that the lad was considered old enough to behave as a man; a boy of this age would not hit his mother as a little 855 child might do and yet be excused. It may here be mentioned 291 that children of both sexes go naked until about six or seven years old, though perhaps the general age for the assumption of

[1] *Tijdschrift*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 192.

C.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
A25 Vedda A25

CHAPTER V

PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

421 ALL Veddas have a keen sense of ownership, and this is equally developed with regard to the hunting land of the group and the possessions of the individual. It was clear that of old the boundaries of the former were accurately known to all the men of the group and were seldom disregarded except in pursuit of a wounded animal, a contingency especially provided for by the Vedda game laws, and many writers have borne testimony to the unwillingness of Veddas to trespass on the territory of another group.

423 This was noted by Knox, whose remarks on this subject have already been quoted on p. 7. The next mention of 601 this important feature in the organization of the Veddas is made by the Dutch Governor of Ceylon, Ryklof van Goens (1664—1675), the following account being taken from the Drs Sarasin: "The jungle is so divided among the Veddas that every one can easily recognise his boundary...they leave, however, comfortable roads through the interior of their country, for their own purposes as well as for strangers who are obliged to travel from the hills to the plains and vice versa. Don Juan de Costa has told us of such a journey made in the service of Rajah Singha. It was 45 years ago (consequently in 1630) that he descended from the mountains to these Veddah districts. There he was stopped by an archer who was accompanied by others who, armed in a similar manner, stood under the trees. The first enquired his business, whither he intended travelling and what was his mission, whereupon he explained his purpose. He had then to wait there between one and two hours until

C.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

word arrived from the elder of the district. Then one of the archers accompanied him to the boundary which took between two and three hours' walking. Here he had once more to wait until word arrived from the elders of this district, whereupon the first guide handed him over to a second and then returned. In this way the second guide brought him to a third, and the process continued until he had had more than twelve guides, being over seven days on the way before he reached the province of Batticaloa and the flat district which extended to the coast, and is inhabited by Tamils. He and his ten or twelve companions never suffered any want on the way, as the Veddahs supplied them with food, consisting of good dried venison which was preserved in honey, ground nuts (probably yams) and fruit. But none of the Veddahs spoke a word with him or his companions because it was so prescribed by their customs[1]."

423 609 [574]

Nevill's account of the life led by both the wilder and the more sophisticated "forest" Veddas has been quoted on pp. 81 and 82, in the chapter on Family Life. Nevill's experience was chiefly gained among the Veddas of the Bintenne, but if rather less emphasis be laid on the hut built "close to a place where water can be got," and it be realised that even during the hot dry season rock shelters are the common homes of the wilder Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road, all that he says on this subject can be implicitly accepted.

Commenting upon Nevill's account, the Sarasins point out that since trespassing on land belonging to another group leads to fierce quarrels, the condition described by Nevill must be taken to imply that the territory of each group includes the whole or a part of one considerable hill or rock *massif*. Our experience enables us to confirm this suggestion, and it will be shown later that not only are hills the property of particular groups, but that subject to the rights of the group there is also personal property in hills. Text figure 4 is a sketch map of the territory of the Henebedda Veddas, and roughly shows the position of their caves, which are named Bendiyagalge, Pattiavelagalge, Hitibeminigalge, Punchikiriammagalge, Uhapitagalge, Maladeniyagalge and Kirawanbalagalge. The last is almost

423 423 361 [103]

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 479.

5: Spinel II-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

115 On our return journey, passing the ruins of a remarkable aqueduct
173 of stone—the Watawala Kandiya—beside the remains of a crumbling bund, we arrived at Kurunduwina where we met a doddering ancient
439 who claimed to have been alive when the British took Ceylon a hundred years ago. It is not often one meets old folk in these unhealthy lands. Here, I thought, was one who could tell us something about Veddas of a type we could not hope to see; for within view of his hut were the Sittala Wanniya hills, the immemorial homes of the Veddas. But his decrepit mind needed much jogging.

"Are there Veddas here?" I shouted twice into his deaf old ears.

"Now none," he said.

"Did they live on the rocks yonder?" I asked. He nodded affirmatively.

"Did they come here to barter?" I persisted. His tired lack-lustre eyes flashed to a memory as he answered with surprising alacrity, "Yes they came. When they had no food they came to exchange honey and hides for food. The Vedda would sit there, place his bow there, his arrows there, and his axe there, and he would ask for betel. If any one stepped over his weapons by chance, he would leap up in anger, bite the piece of human liver he carried in his betel-bag, and ask, 'Who's this that dares to defy me?' The gleam faded from the old man's eye, his weary look returned and he uttered not another word, question as I might.

The shifting *chenas* scattered about these parts make it very difficult to say where a village begins or ends. We were resting on the banks of the Rambukkan, (a course parallel to which we had so far followed) somewhere on the confines of Payile and Idambowa, when to our surprise we saw a Buddhist priest accompanied by the inevitable *abithaya** and
[609] a tall, wild, naked fellow. A Vedda of Bingoda the latter was said to be. We tried to engage him in talk, but he would have none of it; seated on his haunches he stared at us with a hang-dog apathy eloquent of hunger; this melted away in a broad grin as he left us, greedily chewing the handful of muscatels and biscuits we gave him.

The usual route from here to Potuliyadda lay through the village of Mullagama. As this involved a detour we decided on a more direct if less used track; a decision we afterwards regretted as it lost us the interesting Veddas of Bingoda, and incidentally a clue to the discrepancy between Seligmann's statement and local report regarding the Veddas of the "Nuwaragala hills"—a missed opportunity the full significance of which we were only to realise some five years later after miles of
[621] arduous and unnecessary travel. For the present we were told that the Veddas of Bingoda consisted of only three families, and that, though they forsook their huts for caves during the honey season, they were, if anything, less of the real Vedda than those of Henebedde.

Our journey was now an uncertainty; for the guides were doubtful both of the route and the likelihood of water. The jungle, hitherto dense, gave place to an occasional glade. Late in the evening we found ourselves in a spacious *talawa*, rank with tall grass that quite obliterated our path. Here we were benighted, just as we found a pool adequate to our needs. It was an interesting place, a veritable sanctuary, hill-encircled; an ideal

*A neophyte, attendant on a priest.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

on serener days, it flamed through the Island making it its permanent home, while in India, the land of its birth, it dwindled away.

We had undertaken this trip with the object of visiting Meminigallagolla where we learned the wildest Veddas of the Eastern province lived; but on coming to Omuna we found that that place, only twelve miles away, was quite unknown to the present folk of Omuna, a pathless barrier of dense jungle intervening. We made the best of a bad job; and, abandoning our original project, struck west for Dolagalwella.

At evening we camped by a desolate pool called *Havan-kapana-mulla* (rush-cutting nook). There is barely a spot in these jungles, however lone, that has not its name, thanks to the nomadic Veddas. Here was a glade in which they hunted, or a pool at which they drank, there a hole in which an axe was found (*Poro-thutu-walle*).

The only indications of the track we followed were the barely recognisable prunings, fifteen years old, of saplings. The forest was ideal for travel; in the shelter of the great trees the morning air was cool and refreshing. Coming to the Maduru Oya we walked a mile up-stream and climbed the mimosa-covered bank, soon to be lost in a wilderness of trees. A leader monkey yelled a warning to his clan, a surprised sambur belled startlingly close; but after that a silence prevailed unbroken by the song of a single bird. We spent the night by a rocky streamlet close-hugged by dense forest walls. Heavy clouds crept over us to the rumblings of thunder. The blurred crescent of the moon struggled for freedom. Our camp fires crackled in the ghostly gloom, and quiet human voices pervaded the forest's deadly stillness save for the melody of the trickling water.

> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon lover.

Deserted Mahaella marked the limit of our westward journey. Here we struck at right angles the northern track to Yakkure, but, before taking it, deviated south to the village of Dolagalwella. For three days we had followed uncertain game trails, and seen no human beings besides those of our company. The path now began to show signs of use: there were chipped trees, polished stones on which axes had been whetted, and fire-places where monitors were roasted. Obviously we were nearing civilisation! Indeed, here it was.

Scaling a strong stockade we found ourselves in a *chena*, some twelve acres in extent, in which nestled the half dozen huts of the closely related families of a Vedda patriarchy. The maize and *kurrukhan* crops had been taken, and the place was now rank with a catch-crop of vegetables and fruit: beans, brinjals, melons, cassava, plantains and papaws. Chillies luxuriated; there was not a compound but had its vermilion heap, not a hut but had a section partitioned off with frame and fire-place for drying them during the rains; chillies were the current coin with which these folk traded with the pedlar Moors.

The males of the settlement were away in quest of food, and only the women and children remained. No folk on earth, perhaps, are shier than Vedda women; in the presence of the stranger they are dumb. Some of them were relatively fair-complexioned, presumably from Kandyan admixture; all wore an abundance of bead ornaments, finger

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

with men astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalastic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 [191] 142 301 412

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen floated away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing 136 825

114 487 Even a Vedda child should be able to pick its way through the jungle with no mark to guide it."

361 342 114 We had travelled thus a long while, and for all I knew had lost all trace of the Veddas, when we struck a stream where the foot-prints of a man and a dog were evident. Soon we were climbing up to Dhik-galge, to find, alas! that not only was it deserted, but that no Veddas had been near it for many a long day. The Veddas had lied to the Chetty!

The cave we found ourselves in was a magnificent one—long, spacious and open to the sky, with tall straight trees towering before it. Below, a stream babbled over rocks, making delightful bathing pools. Around, was the tenderest music of birds. It was a romantic spot, specially designed, as it were, by Nature for the jungle-dweller. The dome of the cave was covered with crude drawings. A broken pot had been put in a niche. There were fragments of filthy rag, a large cooking frame and dry leaves which had long previously been slept upon. The rocky floor was smooth in places where *kurrukhan* had been rubbed to flour with flat worn stones, and cupped where maize had been pounded. The *aratchi* of Paragahakelle had spoken true. A handful of moss, peeping from a crevice, revealed, when disturbed, a couple of fledglings. Our first thought was that they were young swiftlets, left there to die by ruthless nest-hunters; but they flew too strongly for that; and soon, the piteous cries of the parent birds told us that we had inadvertently rifled a fly-catcher's nest.

114 It was mid-day, and, being very tired, we sat down to a meal; I to camp-pie and chocolate, the others to raw cassava. Our hunger abated, I reminded our guides that my offer of a reward still stood, and that he would get it, who brought me up with even one of those Veddas wherever he might be. Asking us to stay where we were, Meenemaruwa and the half-Vedda of Galmede vanished into the jungle.

The better part of an hour must have elapsed when we heard the latter calling to us excitedly. He said that Meenemaruwa was in hot pursuit of the Veddas who, to judge by their traces, were making away at great speed, evidently scared by the sight of my shoe-prints.

222 224 482 142 609 Following at a run, we eventually came upon them—a wild, swarthy group of two men and two boys, freighted with the spoils of the chase; each with his sackful of edible bird's nests, dried sambur meat and *bambara* honey; the leaders with two old muzzle-loaders. May the picture not fade. Suthubanda was there, and the youth Badapissa as our sleuths had told us. But the figure that arrested my fancy most was a wild, fiery-eyed, shaggy-haired fellow of twenty-five—an ebon Apollo. Gama he was called because he was born on a journey (*gamana*). To his waist was attached the inflated bladder of the sambur they had killed. Nor did his looks belie his character, for, even as we came up, [578] he flared into foul-mouthed fury at a tired, inoffensive boy of their company.

They were delighted with the tobacco and betel we shared out to them, and gave us honey in return. Money they refused. When we asked them how it was that they had not been in Dhik-galge as they had said they were, their only answer was a hearty laugh!

600 It was hail and farewell! for the hour was past noon, and the Veddas had many miles to make before nightfall; so had we. But those shadows of the spangled forest were soon to call me again.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614
773

waruge from the "Veddas" of Rotawewa—a rice-growing village in Sinhala Pattuwa of Tamankaduwa, the inhabitants of which say they are descendants from Veddas—although all accounts show that they are indistinguishable from their Sinhalese neighbours. "When Kuveni was abandoned by Vijaya she returned with her two children, a boy and girl, to her own people, who killed her. Her children fled to the jungle and lived on the fruits of the '*mora*' tree. One of their children came to Minneriya and founded the Minneriya (now Rotawewa) Veddas of the Morane Waruge." We have not visited these people but it may be assumed that they are at least as sophisticated as the "Veddas" of Yakure.

Unapane. Unapane *waruge* is an offshoot from Morane. A chief's daughter was given to another chief's son. When going to the bridegroom's cave the girl got thirsty on the way and the only water available was a minute trickle down the face of a rock. The man allowed this to soak into a piece of cloth which he squeezed into a bamboo from which the girl drank. This is the origin of the name from *una* "bamboo" and *pane* "water," and the descendants of this couple were called Unapane.

Uru. A Morane girl became pregnant and refused to give the name of her lover. She was beaten and driven away from the group and brought forth her child in a hole dug by a wild boar, *uru*, hence the name Uru *waruge*.

Aembala. Aembala *waruge* has sprung from Unapane. An Unapane girl's husband died while she was pregnant, and all her other relations were dead. When her child was born she left it under a tree while she went to dig yams. On her return she found that red ants (*aembaleo*) had blinded her child, whence the child was called Aembeli, and her descendants formed Aembala clan.

Namadewa. An Aembala woman brought forth a female child under a *namada* tree; this girl was therefore named Namadi and from her descendants arose the Namadewa clan.

382
611

Exogamy prevails among the Veddas of Bintenne and Tamankaduwa and clan descent is matrilineal. These conditions also prevail at Godatalawa and therefore must be assumed to have existed at Galmede whence the Godatalawa family had

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

come, but strangely this and the nearly related Sitala Wanniya Veddas were the only communities to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road in which exogamy prevailed. The Henebedda and Kovil Vanamai Veddas all married freely within the clan. It is, however, probable that this is a recent though not quite modern innovation, since at Henebedda it was said that it was particularly fitting that Morane and Unapane should intermarry. 582 611

Nevill recognised the existence of exogamy, and presumably it was of the Bintenne Veddas that he made the following very definite statement, which applies equally well to the condition of things existing at the present day, even among such sophisticated folk as those of Omuni, where genealogies were taken in order to make quite certain of this matter. "The rule for marriage was stringent. The daughter represents her mother's family, the son also represents his mother's family. In no case did a person marry one of the same family, even though the relationship was lost in remote antiquity. Such a marriage is incest. The penalty for incest is death. Thus the daughter must marry either her father's sister's son, or her mother's brother's son, neither of whom would be of the same clan name. Failing these she may marry any of their name, and should no such bridegroom be available, marriage into a third family becomes necessary[1]." 582

If the distribution of these Vedda communities in which exogamy prevails be studied on the map it will be seen that with the exception of the Sitala Wanniya and Godatalawa (Galmode) groups all the Veddas to the west of the Badulla-Batticaloa road are exogamous, whereas those to the east of the road contract marriage within the clan. [184]

As a matter of convenience we now give a list complementary to that on pp. 71 to 74 showing what *waruge* were represented in each of the communities we visited. Danigala: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the last not acknowledged). Henebedda: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the latter properly forming the Kolombedda community and settlement). Kovil Vanamai (Bandaraduwa): Morane, Unapane, Uru (the latter forming the settlement at Uniche). In all these settlements marriage occurs within the clan. 614 582

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 **Sitala Wanniya.** The Sitala Wanniya people said that Morane and Unapane were the only *waruge* of which they had any first-hand knowledge. They had, however, heard that formerly three other *waruge* called Uru, Kabela and Aembala existed, and that the folk of these *waruge* were of lower status than the people of Morane and Unapane.

Godatalawa (Galmede). These people all belonged to Morane and Unapane *waruge*.

Unuwatura Bubula. The *waruge* of this settlement were Morane, Unapane and Bandara *waruge*. Exogamy was strictly adhered to, and the children took their mother's *waruge*. As far [582] as we could determine, all the poverty-stricken Veddas settled [611] on chenas in the neighbourhood of Kallodi and Maha Oya on the Badulla-Batticaloa road belonged either to Morane, Unapane, Bandara (Rugam) or Uru *waruge*, the Morane and Unapane Veddas of the large chena settlement at Rerenkadi holding the last to be of inferior status.

Lindegala. Three men, the last remains of the Lindegala Veddas, visited us at Kallodi. The oldest of these, the possessor of the *aude* with inlaid silver work referred to on p. 171, was a rather tall stoutly built man who looked like a Sinhalese. He, however, remembered his *waruge* Morane and stated that his wife belonged to Bandara *waruge* and one of his companions who [611] belonged to this *waruge* had a wife belonging to Morane *waruge*. It was stated that children took their mother's *waruge*.

Elakotaliya. The *waruge* of this settlement are Namadewa, 614 Uru and Rugam; exogamy was insisted on, and in all the nine 582 marriages of which we have notes the contracting parties were of different *waruge*. In seven cases Uru and Namadewa *waruge* intermarried, in one instance Namadewa and Rugam *waruge*, while in the last instance the *waruge* of the woman was uncertain. Although it was clearly stated that the children should [611] take their father's *waruge*, it was certain that in some cases they took their mother's *waruge*.

It was said that a man should marry his father's sister's daughter and not his mother's brother's daughter but we could not establish this.

Kalukalaeba. Morane, Namadewa, Uru and Rugam *waruge*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

are represented in this settlement. Although in conversation no importance was attached to exogamy this must be taken to exist since all of the ten marriages recorded are exogamous. These include six marriages of Morane with Namadewa *waruge*, two of Morane and Uru *waruge* and one each of Morane and Rugam *waruge* and of Rugam and Namadewa *waruge*. Children take their mother's *waruge*. 614 582

Yakure. The *waruge* existing here are Namadewa, Aembala, Bendia, Rugam and Tala. Uru *waruge* was known by name but not otherwise, Dehigama was recognised as belonging to the Uva Bintenne and Morane *waruge* as existing in the neighbourhood of Omuni. Exogamy was the rule and occurred in every marriage (8) of which we have records. *Waruge* descent should be in the female line but in some instances children took their father's *waruge*. Seeking to elucidate this matter it was said that whereas girls took their mother's *waruge* boys took their father's, but this rule certainly did not hold in all cases[1]. Cousin marriage was said to be the old custom, but it was admitted that at the present day this custom was more often neglected than observed. 614 582 611

Ulpota. This is said to be the most important of four small settlements of village Veddas in the neighbourhood of Dimbulagala (Gunner's Quoin). These settlements are Ulpota, Kohombolewa, Alagonagoda and Gonandamene all of which, according to Mutua our informant, consist of a small number (Kohombolewa eight, Gonandamene three) of huts. Mutua, who said that he was headman of the Tamankaduwa Veddas, gave the *waruge* of these settlements as Rugam, Aembala and Morane; the last being to his mind less numerous and less important than the others. The conditions as regards *waruge* descent and exogamy are the same as at Yakure. Of fifteen marriages recorded eleven are between individuals of Rugam and Aembala

[1] We may here refer to a statement made while we were investigating this matter at Yakure. "Properly speaking there are no *waruge* among the Veddas, who are only classified into *waruge* for the purpose of marriage." We could not determine what was in our informant's mind, and although we were subsequently told the same by the Ulpota Veddas we could not obtain any light on the subject from either community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 *waruge*, the remaining four between Morane and Aembala (2) or
582 Rugam (2) *waruge*.

611 **Dambani.** These extremely sophisticated Veddas probably belong to Namadewa *waruge* and descent is probably matrilineal.

Malgode (Horaborawewa). Our informants knew of
614 Namadewa, Dehigama and Kapatu *waruge* and no others, but when Morane *waruge* was mentioned to them one man stated that he had heard of a *waruge* of that name.

Girandura. Here too exogamy prevailed though children
[582 took their father's *waruge*, and we could discover no exception to
611] these rules. The marriages we could trace took place between Dehigama and Namadewa *waruge*, and between Dehigama and Uru *waruge*, we consequently assume that these are the *waruge* represented in this community.

THE COMPARATIVE STATUS OF THE CLANS.

614 The members of the Morane and Unapane clans generally considered themselves superior to the Namadewa, Uru and
554 Aembala *waruge*. This feeling was so strong at Henebedda that much difficulty was at first experienced in collecting genealogies. Representatives of the Morane, Unapane and Namadewa clans were for the time living together at Bendiyagalge caves, and the difference in status between the Morane and Unapane on the one hand, and Namadewa on the other, was felt so strongly that the members of the last-mentioned *waruge* invariably denied their clan, while the Morane and Unapane
[582 folk said the Namadewa were their servants. It seemed clear that in the old days Morane and Unapane folk never married into one of the servile clans, but two or three such marriages had taken place within recent years, and in every case these marriages were at first denied. The most striking proof of this feeling was evinced when we had come to know all the members of the community and pretence had been largely given up; Sita Wanniya and Poromala our usual guides, both Morane men, led us one day to the Namadewa chena. The Namadewa men immediately began an angry protest. "These people," they said, meaning Poromala and Sita Wanniya, "call us Namadewa; it

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

[113] Fig. 13. Verda bow and harpoon × $\frac{1}{10}$.
Iron harpoon head × $\frac{1}{3}$.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *waruge* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *waruge*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *waruge* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 330.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 account intelligible we must anticipate certain later chapters to the extent of defining the terms *waruge* and *yaka*, that is we must refer briefly to the essential features of the Vedda social system and religion.

614 Every Vedda belongs to a *waruge* or clan, as the term may be translated, and among a large number of the Vedda communities still existing, exogamy is the absolute rule. Further, with exogamy is associated descent in the maternal line, so that the fundamentals of the social system of the Veddas may, perhaps, be summed up as a clan organization with female descent. There is no evidence, as far as we can determine, of any dual organization of the clans, but perhaps they had originally a territorial distribution. Ignoring for a moment such debatable matters, the Vedda clans are:—

(1) Morane *waruge*.
(2) Unapane *waruge*.
(3) Namadewa or Nabudan *waruge*.
(4) Aembela *waruge*.
(5) Uru *waruge*.
(6) Tala *waruge*.
(7) A number of other so-called *waruge* of minor strength and importance, which perhaps may be local groups that have forgotten their origin and have assumed a name (sometimes obviously a place-name) as a convenience.

769 Turning now to the Vedda religion the word *yaka* (feminine *yakini*, plural *yaku*) is used to denote the spirits of the dead, and since the Vedda religion is essentially a cult of the dead, it is not surprising that the propitiation of the spirits of dead relatives, called the Nae Yaku, is at once its most obvious and important feature. With this is associated the cult of the spirits of certain long dead Veddas who may be regarded as legendary heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka, the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya, a celebrated hunter who lived many generations ago and whose assistance is invoked for good hunting. Kande Yaka especially helps in the tracking of sambur and spotted deer, and with him is often associated Bilindi Yaka, the *yaka* of his younger brother Bilindi. When a deer has been killed the head is set aside, and with rice and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 662

The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802

The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437

The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantaho*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. 582 584 583

Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. 614 554

There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *warugu* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *kangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Veddas are coming more and more in contact with their Sinhalese neighbours, and it is extremely unlikely that the next generation will remain pure.

We visited two of the nearest chena settlements of these people, the huts (Plate X, figure 1) were about as well built as those of the average Sinhalese chena, though the cultivation itself was certainly less systematic and orderly. The Namadewa folk lived in one settlement while the Morane and Unapane inhabited another.

Although all these Veddas have come in contact with the Sinhalese and are visited by Moormen hawkers for trade purposes—as indeed even the wildest have been for many generations—they have retained their old custom of not allowing the stranger in the midst of their settlement where he might meet their women. A rough shelter had been built at one corner of the Namadewa chena in which the pedlars sat and waited until the Vedda men came to bargain with them. Hence in the main these people have retained their old virtues of truthfulness, chastity and courtesy. The first, upon which practically every observer has remarked, was modified in a particular direction, for they all wished to show that they were pure-blooded Veddas of the Morane and Unapane clans, which were considered superior to the rest. So the Namadewa men lied freely, declaring that they belonged to Morane and Unapane, and one young man, otherwise a good informant, insisted that he was still unmarried, as he did not want to own that his wife was a Namadewa woman. Cases of intermarriage with Sinhalese were also emphatically denied, or only admitted after much cross-examination. Plate III represents a number of the men we met at Bendiyagalge.

Danigala. The Danigala Veddas of the Nilgala district present a peculiar phase of the clash of civilization and barbarism. They are the classical "wild Veddas" of Ceylon described by so many travellers; their descent is pure but their own customs have been almost entirely forgotten, and are certainly ignored at the present day. They live in the park country, have a chena and a banana garden, and do a good trade in cattle both by herding for the Sinhalese, retaining every fifth calf as is the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason
161 to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this
221 time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led
621 a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakhan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

222 Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and
411 arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda
423 chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to
621 the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellaveilagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

614 The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *varuge*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states
197 that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil
121 tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirakadai*, "nothing," is said

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *kodai, tiru* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure 1) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *maraga* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *maraga* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Aracchi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had actually been to the village. They had been sent for often to see others at Wewatte and Alutnuwara bungalows, and for even greater folk had been taken to Kandy. And so they had learnt to shake hands and had picked up exaggerated ideas of their own importance and the value of their information, and expected a present for every remark they vouchsafed. It was a horrible change from the courteous behaviour of the Sitala Wanniya cave Veddas. 574 609 431

As the Dambani folk were so very unfriendly we began to hope the carriers would not come at all that night, there was nowhere for them to sleep, and we thought the Veddas might resent their presence. They told us repeatedly that "Sinhalese men would not dare to come to their village," in spite of the fact that there were two petty Sinhalese traders in the village at the time, who did not even trouble to go away before dark, but seemed naturally to expect a night's lodging, which was granted them without any fuss, and there appeared to be no difficulty about language with them. About six o'clock our servants and the carriers arrived, and curiously enough instead of resenting the intrusion the Veddas seemed very impressed by their number, and presumably our importance, in having so many dependents, for they became much more friendly. 609

The next morning early, we set the phonograph going with a Vedda song: immediately the whole village crowded round us, intensely interested. They recognised the song and said it was very good. The Vidane then sang a song into the machine and was quite excited to hear it repeated, but again began his demand for presents although besides a rupee we had now given white cloth to him and the other men from whom we had got vocabularies. Having obtained records we realised that it was impossible to do any good work among such spoilt people and decided to go to Belligala. We offered some beads to the headman's wife, but she said the string was not long enough; this annoyed us and we asked her if she would prefer not to have any, and on her repeating they were not enough we put them away. 126

The Dambani men said they did not know to which *marage* 614

614 they belonged, which suggested to us that perhaps they belonged to Uru *warige* or one of the other clans which are considered of inferior status. Although the Arachi of Belligala did not know their *warige* and believed that they had really forgotten them themselves, our opinion was confirmed by information obtained later from the Arachi of Alutnuwara who said that they were of the Uru and Namadewa *warige*, while a Vedda of Horabora-wewa told us that his mother came from Dambani and she was a Namadewa woman.

576 609 As the Arachi of Belligala assured us the Bulugahaladena Veddas lived in a condition precisely similar to those of Dambani, we did not visit their village but arranged for two of them to visit us at Belligala; they greeted us in the same way as the Dambani folk, with loud and guttural voices, accentuating all the "chs," and shook hands. They brought some honey and yams. They said they could not bring *bambara* honey (for it was too early in the year) so they had brought honey from the stingless bee. After a little while they gradually dropped their [194] guttural tones, especially when they were speaking to the villagers and not to us, their voices, naturally deep, assumed a sing-song tone not unlike that of Nila of Sitala Wanniya. We consider that the gruffness of these Veddas is almost entirely affectation. They have been expected to be sullen and morose and never to laugh. For thirty years the Arachi of Belligala has acted as "show-man" to the Veddas of his district, and he always speaks to them in their "language" in similar or even fiercer tones, and he has shown them so many white men that he has quite lost count of their number. He has thus helped to keep up the fiction of "wildness," for these Veddas are not wild since they are not shy but come up, shake hands, ask for presents, and offer to dance.

178 We believe that they keep up few, if any, of the old Vedda customs; they cultivate chenas and keep cattle, their bows and arrows are probably more for show than use, for the Arachi told us that some of them possess guns while others go to the Sinhalese and borrow them. Deschamps says that Veddas never 157 laugh nor have they ever been seen to smile. Of course this is not true of the Veddas of Nilgala, nor do we think it is true of

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they saved a little money and bought a patch of land of about 11 acres from Government, which land they now cultivate with paddy.... There are sixteen houses in the Vedda Settlement of Rotawewa, and the householders in every case are descendants of Veddas. They are Sinhalese without any signs of Tamil admixture." 105 L21

They say they are of the Morane *warige*, and they seem not to know any other *warige*. Mr Horsburgh however states that "there is one other Vedda village in Sinhala Pattuwa besides Rotawewa, viz. Gallinda, with about three families who are the same people as those of Rotawewa." [614]

As a matter of convenience we have prepared a tabular summary of the conditions prevailing at the various settlements of wild and village Veddas that we visited. Besides those mentioned, many other families and even isolated individuals exist scattered throughout the Vedirata, especially in the neighbourhood of the Badulla-Batticaloa road near Maha Oya and Kallodi. These folk are in the last stage of degeneration, having given up their own wandering life and habits; they have mostly drifted into Sinhalese villages there to die out miserably. 105 177 511

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

such favourite names as Kaira, Poromala and Handuna leads to confusion, not only in the minds of strangers, but also we believe in the minds of the Veddas themselves.

Sinhalese who come in contact with the Veddas find the same difficulty, and the individuals of certain communities, e.g. Danigala, have each a Sinhalese name by which they are known to the peasant Sinhalese, and which in many instances they themselves recognise, so that some Veddas actually know each other by these Sinhalese names, and give them when asked their own names or those of their companions. This is the explanation of the majority of Sinhalese names occurring in the genealogies. Again, the fact that among the Veddas there is no system of hereditary chieftainship, or any other custom such as the vendetta, forcing a man to know and remember his grandfathers, cannot but have assisted to bring about the forgetfulness of previous generations, which with the rarest exceptions makes everyone entirely ignorant of his grandparents. In the case of the Danigala and Henebedda Veddas there was an additional difficulty to be met in conducting our investigations. The men of these communities who for the most part belonged to the Morane and Unapane clans, traditionally the proudest and most important of the Vedda *warugs*, had to a certain extent intermarried with Sinhalese and also with the Veddas of Namadewa clan, a *warugs* which in this part of the country is regarded as of inferior status. They are most anxious to conceal instances of both these classes of marriage and lied freely concerning them and this is the reason for certain lacunae in their genealogies, which in the case of the Danigala community could not have been given at all had not Mr Bibile's position as Ratemahatmaya, i.e. hereditary overlord or "laird" of this part of the country, enabled him to make inquiries from the surrounding peasantry, and thus check, and in many instances correct, the information we obtained from the Veddas themselves.

A Vedda community consists of from one to five families who share the rights of hunting over a tract of land, of gathering honey upon it, fishing its streams, and using the rock shelters. But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

601 576 Terms of respect were commonly used in addressing the aged, thus although *siya* or *mutta* really mean father or grandfather, these words might be used as terms of respect in addressing any old man, and in the same way the terms *kiriamma* (grandmother) or *atta* might be used to any old woman, and we were told that *siya* was constantly used by members of the group in addressing the "senior" or patriarch. An individual of either sex would call his or her father-in-law's father *siya* or *kiriappa*, and a mother-in-law's mother is addressed as *kiriamma*.

Clan Organization.

614 178 It has already been mentioned that the Veddas at the present day are divided into clans (*waruge*); almost every man who calls himself a Vedda can give the name of his *waruge* and this applies even to many village and coast Veddas in whom there is a minimum of true Vedda blood. The clan organization of the Veddas was first pointed out by Nevill, who says: "The Veddas north of the Mahawaeli Ganga have lost their original divisions... and reduced to a few isolated families....The Vaeddas known as coast Vaeddas have abandoned most of their ancestral customs and I cannot even ascertain from them their original name. Vaeddas of the forest districts do not preserve any tradition of relationship with these Vaeddas of the coast." Nevill then gives 614 the following nine names as those of the Vedda clans, to which he adds the Veddas of Tambalagama Pattu, Kattakulam Pattu and Anurajapura as true Veddas though their *waruge* names seem lost.

1. Morana waruge.
2. Unapana waruge.
3. Bandara or Rugam waruge.
4. Namada, Namadana or Nabadana waruge.
5. Ura-wadiya waruge.
6. Uruwa waruge.
7. Kowil waname.
8. Aembala or Ambala waruge.
9. Tala waruge.

(*Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 174)

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

In this list no account is taken of the coast Veddas, of whom Nevill says that they "evidently belong to several distinct sections....Only the old men speak what they call Vaedda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Vedda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Vaedda.... The Vaeddas say they never were related to these Coast Vaeddas, and do not know when they came to the coast, or where they came from, nor did they ever hear that they belonged to any *waruge* of the race.

"The Coast Vaeddas do not know when they came, or how they came, but they say that long ago their ancestors came from the Gala, far beyond the hills to the west[1]."

The Doctors Sarasin state that they attempted to map the territorial distribution of the clans given by Nevill, but on account of the vagueness of his statement were unable to do this. With regard to Nevill's clans we must point out that his 5th, 6th, 7th clan names are open to criticism. *Kovil wanasne* is a descriptive term meaning "temple precincts" and, as has already been stated, is the general name for certain Veddas who live in the Eastern Province in the neighbourhood of Devulani tank and who belong to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*. It was formerly the general name for the Veddas who lived in the neighbourhood of the Kataragam temple in the extreme south of Uva.

As for Nevill's Ura-wadiya *waruge* and Uruwa *waruge*, these are not two *waruge* each having one of these names but are other names for the Uru *waruge* mentioned on p. 33. The nine clans given by Nevill are thus reduced to seven and, as will be shown later, there is every reason to believe that this number must be still further reduced by the exclusion of Rugam, i.e. Bandara *waruge*, from the list.

We may now give the distribution of the *waruge* as determined by ourselves.

Morane. This clan is found at Nilgala, Henebedda, Bandarahawa (Kovil Vanamai Veddas), Sitala Wanniya, Godatalawa (Galmede Veddas), and among the Mudugala Veddas now settled at Unuwatura Bubula, as well as among many of the last

(1 *Ethnologia*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 183.)

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 remains of the Veddas who lead a miserable existence in the neighbourhood of the Badulla-Batticaloa road between Kallodi and Maha Oya. The Morane clan probably also exists at Bingoda near Mullagama, and a few Morane people are to be found among the village Veddas of Tamankaduwa. There is, however, reason to believe that this clan has been recently introduced from Omuni, where there are many people who in spite of the Sinhalese blood in their veins say they belong to Morane *waruge*.

Unapane. The distribution of this clan is the same as Morane, and judging from the fact that all the Bingoda people we met said they were Unapane, it must be especially strong there.

Namadewa. This clan is found at Henebedda where that part of the jungle known as Kolombedda was pointed out as their property, and among the village Veddas in Uva Bintenne (Dambani, Bulugahaladena, Girandura). It also occurs in Tamankaduwa where it was one of the chief *waruge* of Elakotaliya, Kalukalaeba and Yakure.

Uru. This clan is found at Uniche among the village Veddas of Bintenne and Tamankaduwa and among the coast Veddas. Its name was known to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas and to many of the small settlements in the neighbourhood of Maha Oya.

Aembala. Some of the coast Veddas say they are of this clan which is also found in Tamankaduwa, at Yakure and Ulpota. The name of this *waruge* was known to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas.

Tala. This clan was only known at Yakure.

The distribution of Namadewa, Uru, Aembala and Tala *waruge* described above agrees with that given by Nevill.

Besides the *waruge*, the distribution of which has just been described, certain other alleged *waruge* were mentioned to us. In some instances it was certain that these were merely groups of people who were named after the locality they now live in or formerly inhabited. The most important of these territorial names was Rugam. The Rugam *waruge* was accounted an offshoot of Morane, and since Rugam is the name of a large and important tank some 12 miles from Maha Oya where Veddas

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

were formerly numerous, it seems reasonable to suppose that Rugam *waruge* was originally a local group called after the territory they inhabited. 614

Dehigama is another *waruge* name given as one to which a small number of Veddas of Uva Bintenne belonged and is avowedly a place name.

Bendiya was also given as a *waruge* name and perhaps is also a place name.

With regard to the origin of the names of the genuine Vedda *waruge*, the only hint that any of them are recognised by Veddas as springing from place names was that conveyed by the statement of a number of Morane men that their ancestors came from Moranegala in the Eastern Province, but no Unapane man ever suggested that his clan had originally come from the place of that name near Kallodi. Moranegala is a hill name, and probably the hill has been named from the *mora* trees (*Nephelium longana*) which it may be assumed grew there, so that Moranegala means "the hill of the *mora* trees," and it might be argued that Morane *waruge* derived its name from the *mora* tree. Some support for this argument might be adduced from the fact that in songs collected at Sitala Wanniya both men and women of Morane *waruge* are addressed as "*mora* flowers." We were unable to discover that any Veddas had legends of the origin of their clans, but this is not to be wondered at in view of the almost total absence of myths among them. The Sinhalese on the other hand have legends of origin for four of the Vedda clans, and these legends, varying only slightly in form, can be collected from the Sinhalese all over the Vedda country. This, as well as the fact that Mr Bibile heard most of them many years ago from his father, show that they are not of recent origin, or invented for the benefit of European inquirers. [773]

With the exception of the legend of the origin of Morane *waruge* given by Mr B. Horsburgh the accounts here given of the origin of the Vedda clans were obtained from the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde, but the same stories with only slight variations were also obtained from the Lindegala "Veddas" and the Arachi of Belligala. 614 773

Mr Horsburgh obtained his account of the origin of Morane

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614
773

waruge from the "Veddas" of Rotawewa—a rice-growing village in Sinhala Pattuwa of Tamankaduwa, the inhabitants of which say they are descendants from Veddas—although all accounts show that they are indistinguishable from their Sinhalese neighbours. "When Kuveni was abandoned by Vijaya she returned with her two children, a boy and girl, to her own people, who killed her. Her children fled to the jungle and lived on the fruits of the '*mora*' tree. One of their children came to Minneriya and founded the Minneriya (now Rotawewa) Veddas of the Morane Waruge." We have not visited these people but it may be assumed that they are at least as sophisticated as the "Veddas" of Yakure.

Unapane. Unapane *waruge* is an offshoot from Morane. A chief's daughter was given to another chief's son. When going to the bridegroom's cave the girl got thirsty on the way and the only water available was a minute trickle down the face of a rock. The man allowed this to soak into a piece of cloth which he squeezed into a bamboo from which the girl drank. This is the origin of the name from *una* "bamboo" and *pane* "water," and the descendants of this couple were called Unapane.

Uru. A Morane girl became pregnant and refused to give the name of her lover. She was beaten and driven away from the group and brought forth her child in a hole dug by a wild boar, *uru*, hence the name Uru *waruge*.

Aembala. Aembala *waruge* has sprung from Unapane. An Unapane girl's husband died while she was pregnant, and all her other relations were dead. When her child was born she left it under a tree while she went to dig yams. On her return she found that red ants (*aembaleo*) had blinded her child, whence the child was called Aembeli, and her descendants formed Aembala clan.

Namadewa. An Aembala woman brought forth a female child under a *namada* tree; this girl was therefore named Namadi and from her descendants arose the Namadewa clan.

582
611

Exogamy prevails among the Veddas of Bintenne and Tamankaduwa and clan descent is matrilineal. These conditions also prevail at Godatalawa and therefore must be assumed to have existed at Galmede whence the Godatalawa family had

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

come, but strangely this and the nearly related Sitala Wanniya Veddas were the only communities to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road in which exogamy prevailed. The Henebedda and Kovil Vanamai Veddas all married freely within the clan. It is, however, probable that this is a recent though not quite modern innovation, since at Henebedda it was said that it was particularly fitting that Morane and Unapane should intermarry. 582 611

Nevill recognised the existence of exogamy, and presumably it was of the Bintenne Veddas that he made the following very definite statement, which applies equally well to the condition of things existing at the present day, even among such sophisticated folk as those of Omuni, where genealogies were taken in order to make quite certain of this matter. "The rule for marriage was stringent. The daughter represents her mother's family, the son also represents his mother's family. In no case did a person marry one of the same family, even though the relationship was lost in remote antiquity. Such a marriage is incest. The penalty for incest is death. Thus the daughter must marry either her father's sister's son, or her mother's brother's son, neither of whom would be of the same clan name. Failing these she may marry any of their name, and should no such bridegroom be available, marriage into a third family becomes necessary[1]." 582

If the distribution of these Vedda communities in which exogamy prevails be studied on the map it will be seen that with the exception of the Sitala Wanniya and Godatalawa (Galmede) groups all the Veddas to the west of the Badulla-Batticaloa road are exogamous, whereas those to the east of the road contract marriage within the clan. [184]

As a matter of convenience we now give a list complementary to that on pp. 71 to 74 showing what *warugs* were represented in each of the communities we visited. Danigala: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the last not acknowledged). Henebedda: Morane, Unapane, Namadewa (the latter properly forming the Kolombedda community and settlement). Kovil Vanamai (Bandaraduwa): Morane, Unapane, Uru (the latter forming the settlement at Uniche). In all these settlements marriage occurs within the clan. 614 582

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 **Sitala Wanniya.** The Sitala Wanniya people said that Morane and Unapane were the only *waruge* of which they had any first-hand knowledge. They had, however, heard that formerly three other *waruge* called Uru, Kabela and Aembala existed, and that the folk of these *waruge* were of lower status than the people of Morane and Unapane.

Godatalawa (Galmede). These people all belonged to Morane and Unapane *waruge*.

Unuwatura Bubula. The *waruge* of this settlement were Morane, Unapane and Bandara *waruge*. Exogamy was strictly adhered to, and the children took their mother's *waruge*. As far as we could determine, all the poverty-stricken Veddas settled on chenas in the neighbourhood of Kallodi and Maha Oya on the Badulla-Batticaloa road belonged either to Morane, Unapane, Bandara (Rugam) or Uru *waruge*, the Morane and Unapane Veddas of the large chena settlement at Rerenkadi holding the last to be of inferior status.

[582 611]

Lindegala. Three men, the last remains of the Lindegala Veddas, visited us at Kallodi. The oldest of these, the possessor of the *aude* with inlaid silver work referred to on p. 171, was a rather tall stoutly built man who looked like a Sinhalese. He, however, remembered his *waruge* Morane and stated that his wife belonged to Bandara *waruge* and one of his companions who belonged to this *waruge* had a wife belonging to Morane *waruge*. It was stated that children took their mother's *waruge*.

[611]

Elakotaliya. The *waruge* of this settlement are Namadewa, Uru and Rugam; exogamy was insisted on, and in all the nine marriages of which we have notes the contracting parties were of different *waruge*. In seven cases Uru and Namadewa *waruge* intermarried, in one instance Namadewa and Rugam *waruge*, while in the last instance the *waruge* of the woman was uncertain. Although it was clearly stated that the children should take their father's *waruge*, it was certain that in some cases they took their mother's *waruge*.

614 582

[611]

It was said that a man should marry his father's sister's daughter and not his mother's brother's daughter but we could not establish this.

Kalukalaeba. Morane, Namadewa, Uru and Rugam *waruge*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

are represented in this settlement. Although in conversation no importance was attached to exogamy this must be taken to exist since all of the ten marriages recorded are exogamous. These include six marriages of Morane with Namadewa *waruge*, two of Morane and Uru *waruge* and one each of Morane and Rugam *waruge* and of Rugam and Namadewa *waruge*. Children take their mother's *waruge*. 614 582

Yakure. The *waruge* existing here are Namadewa, Aembala, Bendia, Rugam and Tala. Uru *waruge* was known by name but not otherwise, Dehigama was recognised as belonging to the Uva Bintenne and Morane *waruge* as existing in the neighbourhood of Omuni. Exogamy was the rule and occurred in every marriage (8) of which we have records. *Waruge* descent should be in the female line but in some instances children took their father's *waruge*. Seeking to elucidate this matter it was said that whereas girls took their mother's *waruge* boys took their father's, but this rule certainly did not hold in all cases[1]. Cousin marriage was said to be the old custom, but it was admitted that at the present day this custom was more often neglected than observed. 614 582 611

Ulpota. This is said to be the most important of four small settlements of village Veddas in the neighbourhood of Dimbulagala (Gunner's Quoin). These settlements are Ulpota, Kohombolewa, Alagonagoda and Gonandamene all of which, according to Mutua our informant, consist of a small number (Kohombolewa eight, Gonandamene three) of huts. Mutua, who said that he was headman of the Tamankaduwa Veddas, gave the *waruge* of these settlements as Rugam, Aembala and Morane; the last being to his mind less numerous and less important than the others. The conditions as regards *waruge* descent and exogamy are the same as at Yakure. Of fifteen marriages recorded eleven are between individuals of Rugam and Aembala

[1] We may here refer to a statement made while we were investigating this matter at Yakure. "Properly speaking there are no *waruge* among the Veddas, who are only classified into *waruge* for the purpose of marriage." We could not determine what was in our informant's mind, and although we were subsequently told the same by the Ulpota Veddas we could not obtain any light on the subject from either community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 *waruge*, the remaining four between Morane and Aembala (2) or
582 Rugam (2) *waruge*.
611 **Dambani.** These extremely sophisticated Veddas probably belong to Namadewa *waruge* and descent is probably matrilineal.

Malgode (Horaborawewa). Our informants knew of
614 Namadewa, Dehigama and Kapatu *waruge* and no others, but when Morane *waruge* was mentioned to them one man stated that he had heard of a *waruge* of that name.

Girandura. Here too exogamy prevailed though children
[582 took their father's *waruge*, and we could discover no exception to
611] these rules. The marriages we could trace took place between Dehigama and Namadewa *waruge*, and between Dehigama and Uru *waruge*, we consequently assume that these are the *waruge* represented in this community.

THE COMPARATIVE STATUS OF THE CLANS.

614 The members of the Morane and Unapane clans generally considered themselves superior to the Namadewa, Uru and
554 Aembala *waruge*. This feeling was so strong at Henebedda that much difficulty was at first experienced in collecting genealogies. Representatives of the Morane, Unapane and Namadewa clans were for the time living together at Bendiyagalge caves, and the difference in status between the Morane and Unapane on the one hand, and Namadewa on the other, was felt so strongly that the members of the last-mentioned *waruge* invariably denied their clan, while the Morane and Unapane
[582] folk said the Namadewa were their servants. It seemed clear that in the old days Morane and Unapane folk never married into one of the servile clans, but two or three such marriages had taken place within recent years, and in every case these marriages were at first denied. The most striking proof of this feeling was evinced when we had come to know all the members of the community and pretence had been largely given up; Sita Wanniya and Poromala our usual guides, both Morane men, led us one day to the Namadewa chena. The Namadewa men immediately began an angry protest. "These people," they said, meaning Poromala and Sita Wanniya, "call us Namadewa; it

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

is not so, we are as good as they," and again on leaving they declared that even if they were not Morane folk they were certainly as good, for had not the eldest born of Kaira the patriarch of Danigala, a Morane man, married a woman from their family? This last statement was proved to be true by the genealogy. As neither we nor our guides said anything to provoke these remarks the intensity of the feeling cannot be doubted. At Bandaraduwa there were only Morane and Unapane men, but they said that Uru *warugs* were their servants, and that some people of this clan lived near Uniche; Wannaku seen later was doubtless one of these. At the chena settlement at Rerenkadi one woman said the Uru *warugs* were "dirty" people. This was one of the first Vedda communities we visited, and the significance of the remark was not realised at the time. At Dambani the people professed to have forgotten their *warugs*; we therefore surmised that they might belong to one of the inferior clans, and later at Horaborawewa a Vedda boy said his mother was a Namadewa woman from Dambani. Additional evidence in support of this view was furnished by the statements of the Alutnuwara Arachi recorded on p. 52.

The services that the inferior clans were said to render to other clans were as follows: when big game was shot and fish caught the Namadewa men must carry it, and they must make the creeper ladders for gathering rock honey. How much of this work was really done by Namadewa people is extremely difficult to say, it is scarcely credible that when living apart from the servile clans the Morane and Unapane men would send for them to carry a kill, but when Poromala of Henebedda (Morane) had killed a deer and cut it up on the *talawa* near our camp, it was noticed that Kalua, a Namadewa boy who had not been hunting, came down from the cave and carried back the greater part of the meat.

The Territorial Grouping of the Clans.

Although at the present day it cannot be said that a territorial grouping of the clans certainly exists, or ever existed, there is considerable evidence that this once prevailed. We

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 would in the first place refer to what we have already stated to be the geographical distribution of the clans at the present day. The fact that Unapane *waruge*, so important to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road and in its immediate vicinity to the west, is absent in Tamankaduwa is extremely suggestive, as is the limited distribution and importance of Morane *waruge* in Tamankaduwa. The existence of only one known Tala *waruge* centre (Yakure) and the limited distribution of Aembala *waruge* which, as far as we can determine, only exists in the country round Gunner's Quoin and among the coast Veddas who have avowedly come from inland, points in the same direction, as does the name Rugam *waruge* derived from the country round the tank of that name and often applied to a sub-group of Morane who are also called Bandara *waruge*. Turning now to evidence of a rather different nature our old Kandyan informant, whose statements have been quoted at length on pp. 29 to 34, was very emphatic in assuring us that the local representatives of Morane and Unapane clans, the two *waruge* with which he was well acquainted in his youth, each had their own territory and caves, and even at the present day the information we were able to gather strongly pointed to Bingoda being an old centre of the Unapane clan, while Danigala was probably a Morane centre. Again Kolombedda was quite definitely said to be the Namadewa territory, and the Bandaraduwa community stated that a certain area in the neighbourhood of Uniche was the domain of the local group of the Uru *waruge*.

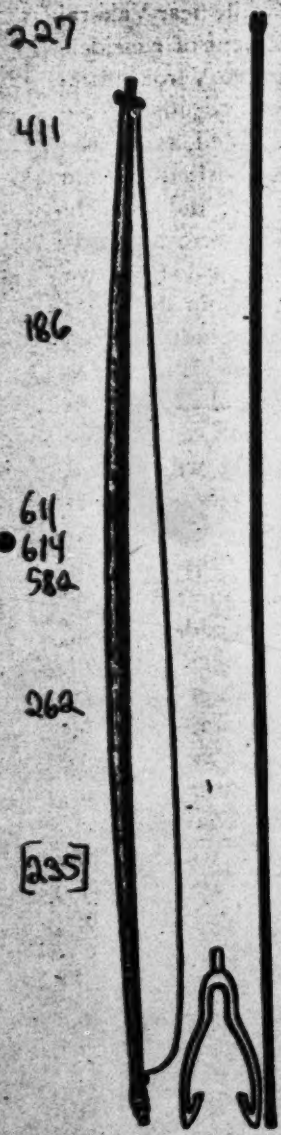
1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

There are a few Verdas at Panichchenkeni, while near Vakarai still further to the north there is a Verda settlement of considerable size. Some eight miles beyond this are two Verda settlements Parchenai and Nargantonai situated close together. We heard of other smaller settlements of Coast Veddas in the neighbourhood of Batticaloa, but these were not visited as time was short and it appeared that those Verdas we did not see differed in no respect from those we met. We were told that formerly there were Coast Veddas south of Batticaloa and we later discovered that there were, and still are, certain shrines or temples within a few miles of the coast (e.g. at Mandur), which were generally recognised as Vedda shrines at which Veddas especially worshipped. This matter has been alluded to in Chapter VIII, and here it is only necessary to point out that the religion of the Coast Veddas is strongly tinged with Tamil customs and beliefs; indeed, many Verdas had Hindu sect marks upon their foreheads. 361 [778]

Some, but not all, of the Coast Veddas know the names of the *waruge* to which they belong, and a few also know the names of some of the more important *waruge* of the Veddas inland. Uru *waruge* appears to be the *waruge* to which most of the Coast Veddas who remembered their ancestral *waruge* belonged, but a few men stated that they belonged to Ogatam, Kavatam, Umata or Umatam, Aembalaneduwe and Aembale *waruge*; the last named and the one before it probably being the same as the Aembela *waruge* found inland. Some of the Coast Veddas whom we questioned said they had heard of, and still knew of certain of the old Vedda *waruge*, and such men were generally able to mention Morane *waruge* while fewer also knew of Unapane *waruge*. 614

The Coast Veddas have become expert fishermen and make and use various forms of nets including a cast net. They also spear and shoot fish, using a bifid iron spear-head which they have adopted from the Tamils. For shooting fish they use the usual Vedda bow, but the arrow has become a harpoon with a shaft as long as the bow into which the iron with its running line fits loosely. One of the nets used by the Coast Veddas is seen drying behind the house in the background of Plate LXIX, 226 227 411 227

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5



[113] Fig. 13. Verda bow and harpoon × 1/10.
Iron harpoon head × 1/3.

fig. 2, while Mr Storey's book contains an excellent photograph of these people spearing fish[1].

The length of the Verda bow and harpoon shaft shown in fig. 13 are 208 cm. and 220 cm. respectively. The bow is an extremely powerful weapon, its diameter at its thickest part being about 3·3 cm.

In spite of the perfectly obvious fact that the majority of the Verdas are more Tamil than Vedda the old Vedda pride of blood survives and some of the older Verdas denied that they intermarried with Tamils.

Children of marriages in which the *waruge* of the contracting parties were known took their father's *waruge*, but it seemed to be a matter of no account whether or no individuals of the same *waruge* intermarried.

Everyone avoids eating fowl and all our informants both male and female denied that they ever ate it, though often suggesting that others might do so. On the other hand, one informant who bred fowls for sale summed the matter up with an emphatic "Veddas don't eat fowls." No reason was given for this abstinence but all agreed that their ancestors had not eaten fowl, though the majority of our informants admitted that they would breed fowls for sale and kill and prepare fowls for others to eat. Beef was said to be generally avoided though it was not

[1] *Hunting and Shooting in Ceylon*, London, 1907, p. 330.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177] primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 According to my authority the Veddas indulged in no games, unless, indeed, the custom of tossing dry leaves in the air and speculating on their position when they fell back upon the ground could be called a game. This, I am told, was only an occasional recreation, and indulged in by boys alone.

423 614 628 The limits of the hunting ground were jealously guarded by the Veddas, and anything like poaching by the members of one clan in the area recognized as belonging to another was punishable by death. Should a hunter lose his way and fall into the hands of a neighbouring clan, he would be closely watched, remaining for the time being in a sort of captivity. If the man's conduct during that time was such as to disarm suspicion he was permitted to go, and might even be accompanied to the confines of the clan's hunting ground, but he would have to proceed at once without looking back, or his conduct might lead to the belief that he was a spy, with fatal consequences.

226 The method of fishing was to hem in a piece of water by closely fencing in both ends of the stream. People would then enter the enclosed piece of water, armed with slender sticks, thrashing the water therewith till a fish was actually struck, when it would be captured. I saw this actually done in one pool on the Kumbukkan.

173 My informant told me that the Veddas were at one time harassed by a race of pygmy people, called the Nittawo, who lived in the country known as Lenama, that extended from Bagura in the Panawa Pattu in the east to the confines of the Kattaragama hills on the west.

According to him, these people lived in small troops of from 10 to 40, inhabiting caves, hollow trees, and crevices of precipices. They were about 3 feet or a little more in height, exactly like normal human beings, only in miniature. Their legs were hairy like those of the Wanduroo; they walked erect, and had no tails.

Their arms were short and very powerful, with strong hands, and talon-like finger-nails with which they tore and disembowelled whatever they captured. These generally were small animals, such as hare, mouse-deer, monkeys, iguanas, and tortoises. Their method of attack was by surrounding

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *hanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
[283 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded
824 to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *warage*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *warages*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *warage* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

5: Spittel D-S (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Unapana *waruge*, like all the other *waruges*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *waruge* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *waruge* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *waruge* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *waruges* after similar occurrences under *nabudu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gamana*). 614 173 [551]

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season. 177 178

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *kanava* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukkan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukkan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukkan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter, he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more." [437]

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas. 161 186 731

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

423
614

Boundary tree marked with bow mark or *dhuna henu*. (Page 79)

411

A Vedda archer of Bintenne. (Page 76)

[Facing p.77]

5: Spittel B-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

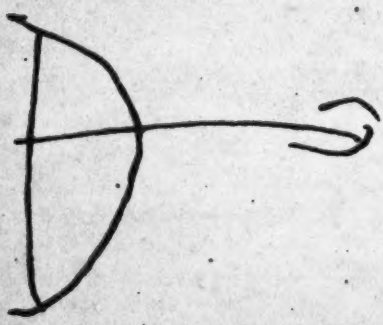
4. VEDDA JUNGLES

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them

ISAIAH.

THE forests we were now in were the immemorial haunts of the Veddas of Bingoda, Galmede and Sittala Wanniya. They stretched from Bingoda to Newaragala, and included such famous Vedda hills as Walimbe (Friar's Hood) and Bandaradua. The Magalavatan Aar cleaves this country on its way to Unichi tank. The jungle is virginal, but one is surprised to find here an occasional guava bearing luscious fruit, and much wild cinnamon. *Palu* and *veera*, so abundant in the more southern forests, is wanting here. 131 [137]

Nowhere is the Vedda more at home than in this wilderness, intersected by game trails only known to him and wild animals, and studded with the rocks that hold his caves. This land is all their wealth. By old Vedda law it is divided into *panguas* or shares, marked off by such natural landmarks as streams, rocks, or conspicuous trees scored with the *dhuna hena* (bow mark) distorted beyond recognition with age. The *panguas* of the Bingoda Veddas are six:—(1) Madana-gama: (2) Marana-pangua: (3) Kumburu-wella-gama (kuda and maha): (4) Bingoda: (5) Kakalana-bokke: (6) Bandaradua. Of these, the first three are included under the name Galmede and are now the property of Suthu Banda; the last three are Kaurala's. Each of these divisions, in days of greater prosperity, had its own chieftain. 423 614



Dhuna-hena or bow mark drawn by Vedda

It is to the credit of these Veddas that they alone of all the Veddas in Ceylon can still name their shares, indicate their boundaries, and observe the traditional law of non-transgression, hunting only in their allotted spheres. Suthu Banda, for instance, would not take the swiftlets' nests on Walimbe because they were Kaurala's by right; nor would he break the hives beyond Newaragala because those lands, once Vedda, have now lapsed to the Sinhalese.

Land goes to the eldest child whether son or daughter; failing them to the nephew. In the old days the proofs of inheritance were a white stone (*kirivanagala*) and molar tooth, bound together with a wisp of human hair; later the *ola* supplanted it; and still later a paper document issued by Government, and so carefully hidden away that it was invariably eaten by termites! These people, it would appear, were wiser than Government in their choice of a seizin. 428

[p. 79]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 I shall say nothing, for they have long associated, although they have not yet intermarried, with the neighbouring Singhalese. The former resemble those of Nilgala. If they are less wild, it is but a shade less wild, almost too slight to be called more civilized. [361] They, in like manner, are distributed in small tribes or families. [342] They live in huts formed of boughs and bark, not so much from any advance in civilization, as from the dearth of rock caves, which abound in Nilgala; but they, too, become Troglodytes in [241] wet weather. They cultivate small patches of chena,* but their [224] chief source of livelihood is the produce of the chase, and honey; and they move about from forest to forest, guided by the blossoming of the flowers, in search of bees and game. Their number in [161] 1856 was 364, but some of these even were much more wild than others.

Both Nilgala and Bintenne Veddahs regard, for each tribe, 423 particular tracts of country as their own, and are, as Knox tells us, careful not to trespass over each other's bounds, and they observe the custom, still prevalent among Kandyans, which entitles [224] the lord of the soil to a portion of the game killed upon it.†

In my description of the wild Veddahs of Nilgala, and those 184 of Bintenne, it is well to bear in mind that, though they are not 619 fifty miles apart, there is no communication whatever between them. No individual Veddah of the one district ever saw one of the other. They are entirely distinct; but distinct only in geographical position. They have inherited the same customs, superstitions, names, and dialect.‡

In appearance, the Veddahs differ materially from the Singha- 142 lese. They are smaller in every respect, and rather darker, or, more properly, more dusky in complexion. They are short, slightly built, yet very active. Though far from being muscular, their limbs are firmly knit together, and they are athletic and [147] capable of enduring great fatigue. Though spare, they are generally in very fair condition, and look more healthy than many of the Singhalese in the adjoining districts.§

141 The tallest Veddah I ever saw, a man so towering above his

* A "chéna" is a patch of ground cleared from the forest for cultivation. The jungle is burnt down, a crop taken off, and then suffered to grow up again. It is recleared again after intervals of from five to ten years.

† This custom is called gang-gâté, lit. village hind leg; "gama" would be better translated "township", as it signifies a tract of ground within certain limits. The lord of the soil claims the "hind leg" of any deer, etc., killed within his bounds.

‡ The Veddahs of the Badulla Bintenne appear a distinct sept; those of Nilgala are connected with a Veddah family living just across the Batticaloa boundary, close to which their country lies.

§ I use the term "Singhalese" and "Kandyan" in distinction from "Veddah."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

231 for the Sinhalese of Potulliyadde, receiving every fifth calf that is born. The community has, or recently had, ten or more head of cattle of their own and have sold bulls to the brother-in-law of our *tavalam*[1] leader for as much as 30 Rs., indeed, our *tavalam* leader stated that he had himself visited the Danigala chena and
291 had also seen the cattle. On this occasion Kaira and his sons wore a coloured cloth as the Sinhalese do and their women wore a *kambaya* and coloured breast handkerchief. Mr Bibile was
621 able to confirm some of these statements from his own know-
177 ledge and on making investigations among the local villagers
609 discovered that there was a whole community living on the chena settlement, some of whom had married Sinhalese. Indeed it appeared that not only have members of this community learnt to play the part of professional primitive man, but there has even been specialisation, for as far as we could learn, the men we met at the look-out hut are those who always receive visitors or come to Bibile when sent for, while the others whom we did not see do not pose as wild Veddas. Probably the part they now play had only recently crystallised into a professional rôle, but it must be remembered that so long ago as 1863 Bailey discussing these Veddas, or their fathers, says "they were brought in from the forests to be 'looked at'" and he adds, "I never saw that contempt for money which Tennant supposes is still existing'."[2]

101 **Kovil Vanamai.** In the Eastern Province in the neighbourhood of Devulani tank the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are found, this term being applied to a number of groups of Veddas living in this neighbourhood. The name Kovil Vanamai means temple
[346] precincts and seems to have arisen from there being one or more temples in this part of the country, while some of these shrines are traditionally associated with Veddas, apparently with old settled coast and village Veddas, for we have no reason to think that the ancestors of the folk we saw at Bandaraduwa, or the other wilder Veddas of fifty years ago, were in any way guardians of the temples or dependent on their
511 bounty. Although at the present day the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are represented by scattered groups, for the most part

[1] A *tavalam* is a train of pack bulls.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 putation when he first joined our party, but it was very soon evident that he was handier, quicker and more intelligent in every way than the other peasant Sinhalese with whom we came in contact. Still later we discovered that by his influence a large clearing had been illegally made in a remote part of the jungle near Nuwaragala, and that on account of this he was doing his best to prevent our coming in contact with the Sitala Wanniya Veddas in whose territory the clearing had been made. Although in this he played us false and caused much needless trouble we found him in other matters a perfectly trustworthy witness, and as he had associated more or less constantly with the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from the age of 10 to 20, there is every reason 161 to accept his account of their condition 25 years ago. At this 221 time there were about 50 families, i.e. some 200 people, who led a wandering hunting life for half of the year, during which time 621 they lived in rock shelters and depended largely on honey; for the rest of the year they paid more or less attention to chena cultivation, growing especially maize and *kurakhan* (*Eleusine coracana*). Two or three families—not necessarily the same year after year—would usually wander and hunt together; such groups of families might also make chenas together, though five or six families would often join to make a single chena.

222 Although they had a few guns even 20 years ago, bows and arrows were in common use and much of their hunting consisted 411 of monkey drives. There were no mixed Sinhalese and Vedda 423 chenas then. The Arachi remembers three caves belonging to 621 the ancestors of the present Bandaraduwa Veddas, viz. Walimbagalagalge, Ellavellagalge and Vianbendegalge. Each family was the recognised possessor of one or more rocky hills on which there were colonies of the rock bee, but the whole of the small hunting community would join to collect honey from each hill and the honey was always equally shared.

614 The Kovil Vanamai Veddas belonged to Morane and Unapane and Uru *waruge*. The latter lived apart near Uniche, i.e. between Tumpalamcholai and the coast. The Arachi states 197 that the language has altered during the last 20 years, Tamil 128 tending to displace Sinhalese, thus *tirakodoi*, "nothing," is said

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they had been called upon to pay a chena tax as well as 1·50 Rs. per adult male road tax. Of course they were unable to collect this money and they dreaded the ensuing penalty, that of serving on the roads, for should the two young men leave the settlement the old man and woman and the girl must starve, the first being too old to work and the woman a cripple. Their plight would have been just as bad had the young man gone to work on some Sinhalese rice fields in order to earn the money[1].

Degenerate Veddas in the neighbourhood of the main Badulla-Batticaloa road[2]. The main road from Badulla to the east coast passes through country that was once the centre of the Vedirata, and on either side of it at a distance of some 2—6 miles are various settlements of half-bred and degenerate Veddas who will soon be entirely lost among the Sinhalese. Plate XIV, figure 1, represents two men of this class: it is obvious that the young man would pass for a Sinhalese, indeed in spite of his bow and arrows and traditional scanty Vedda garb the condition of his hair shows that he has at least been following a Sinhalese mode of life. It is possible that the whole Vedda get-up may have been assumed for our benefit, though in view of the comparative skill with which he handled his bow we do not think this likely. The old man was doubtless one of the last degenerate Veddas of the district.

Before passing to village Veddas a word must be said concerning the Omuni folk and those of Unuwatura Bubula. Sir James Emerson Tennant, in his work *Ceylon* published in 1859, states that Mr Atherton, A.G.A., in conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, attempted to civilise the Veddas[3]. In 1838 "cottages were built for them in their own district, rice land assigned to them, wells dug, coconuts planted, two communities were speedily settled at Vippammadvo." A

[1] This is a not uncommon practice at the present day.

[2] This road is only some forty or fifty years old, Mr Warren tells me that "the old road from Badulla to Batticaloa joined the road from Alutnuwara. It crossed the present east road about Kallodi and must have worked its way in the neighbourhood of the present road to Tampalancholai and so to the ferry into Batticaloa." Part of this track is still used as a short cut. "There was another road from Passera through Mahagama past Mahakandiyawewa to Mandar; *tawilons* travel that way now."

[3] Tennent, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 447.

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 school was founded and two other settlements fromed at
621 Oomany and Villengelavelly. However, the enterprise was soon
797 abandoned owing to the misconduct of some of the teachers. "But," continues Tennant, "the good effects of even this temporary experiment were apparent; not one of the Veddas returned to his cave and savage habits... The other colony at Oomany continues to the present day prosperous and successful, twenty-five families are resident around it, rice and other grains are produced in sufficiency and coconuts are planted near the cottages. The only desertions have been the departures of those in search of employment, who have removed to other villages in quest of it. The school was closed in 1847 owing to there being no more children at the time requiring instruction..."

177 The colony can no longer be called "prosperous and success-
62 ful," indeed, we found it in a state of semi-starvation. Before 1838, when these people were induced to settle, there can be little doubt that they were living in a somewhat similar condition to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas of the present day, but since then there has been a considerable infusion of foreign blood, for it has long been the habit of criminals and others desirous of concealment, to seek refuge with the village Veddas, who usually receive them kindly and accept them as members of their community. Since the artificial origin of this settlement is known it cannot be regarded as belonging to the village Veddas, but rather to a colony of degenerate settled Veddas.

511 Omuni. At Maha Oya three half-bred Veddas from Omuni
687 were seen who had been brought in by the Sinhalese headman to work on the road as they had not paid their "road tax." It was unnecessary for them to plead they were poor and hungry, for their miserable condition showed this all too clearly. Happily Mr. S. W. Woodhouse, the district judge, was then in Maha Oya and realising that while these men were absent from their village, their women and children would be in a worse plight than ever, he excused them their tax and sent them back to
511 Omuni. About a week later we visited Omuni and although we were met with the customary gift of honey to which were added a few berries, it was obvious that the settlement was really short of food and this in spite of a number of families having left some

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is evidence that a hundred years ago there were organized communities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century. 184 361

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the surrounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure 2), though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility. 621 [177] [142] [609]

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been [197] 622 156

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

sparse undergrowth, so that it was an ideal place for a camp, within easy distance of water. They may remain at this place three or four months, or even longer, before they seek a new village site, but probably they never go far from Horabora tank, on account of the great supply of lotus and other seeds which the lake affords. 361

"None of them is tattooed, and they wear very few ornaments. Both sexes, however, perforate the lobe of the ear, and through the opening pass a wire, strung with beads or seeds. The women sometimes enlarge this perforation, and wear in it a plug, made by rolling a strip of palm leaf into a cylinder, from one half to an inch in diameter. 301 304

"We got from them one of their earthen bowls that had rough patterns drawn upon it, but saw no other evidence of artistic ability. They make coarse mats and baskets of reeds and strips of bamboo, and use gourds and coconut shells for water bottles and cups. Spoons and ladles they make from a piece of coconut shell, with two holes, on one side, and a stick thrust through them to form a handle[1]." 415 [531]

Village Veddas of Tamankaduwa.

There are a number of communities of village Veddas in Tamankaduwa, all of which show marked evidence of intermarriage with the Sinhalese and Tamils. 144 621

Elakotaliya. There is a large Vedda chena here, but most of its inhabitants were away at the time of our visit, those present appeared distinctly half-bred. Their mode of life is similar to that prevalent at Dambani and Bulugahaladena, i.e. they are occupied in chena cultivation, cattle rearing, and do a little hunting, but as they have not specially preserved it for show purposes they have forgotten the Vedda dialect. However, they remember their *waruge* and practise exogamy; they also reverence the Nae Yaku. 105 621

Kalukalaeba. Another settlement was seen at Kalukalaeba, here were about twelve mud huts, all empty on our arrival, as it was the harvesting season and the people had gone to live

[1] "Notes of a trip to the Veddas of Ceylon." *Bulletin of the Free Museum of Science and Art of the University of Pennsylvania*, Vol. III, 1901. [113]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

105 on their chena. We waited here a little while and two Veddas
●.621 passed, one carrying a gun; we asked them to return to their chena and fetch some of the other villagers. Soon some twenty
[431] men and about as many women and children arrived bringing us presents of honey, pumpkins and sweet potatoes. Scarcely any of them presented the Vedda type, they were all distinctly larger and more heavily built. Except their knowledge of their *waruge* and recognition of the Nae Yaku all remains of Vedda customs seemed to have been lost.

Yakure. The inhabitants of Yakure, a village about six miles from Kalukalaeba, call themselves Veddas, though physically (Plate XVI, figure 1) they would pass as Tamils or mixed
[194] Tamils and Sinhalese, and show even less evidence of Vedda blood than do the Kalukalaeba people. Their village consists of about 40 mud houses and is compactly built; a great number of cattle was seen grazing outside the confines of the village. Like the Kalukalaeba folk they know their *waruge* and invoke the Nae Yaku, but they have a temple, a simple mud hut, and worship a number of Sinhalese gods. Some men (Plate XVI, figure 2) from a village called Ulpota near Gunner's Quoin were
[197] seen here who also appeared to have mixed blood; they knew the "Vedda language," that is to say we were able to get from them about the same number of words as we obtained at Dambani. When one of them was asked when this dialect was used he replied "only when we are sent for by the Government agent or any other white man." Among themselves they speak
[191] Sinhalese though they can also speak Tamil as it is largely the language of Tamankaduwa.

Rotawewa. There is a settlement of alleged Veddas at Rotawewa about six miles from Minerriya tank. Concerning these we were told that they cultivated rice, and were in no respect different from the neighbouring Sinhalese, while Mr Jayawardene writes: "There is only one village of Veddas in Sinhala Pattu of Tamankaduwa District, and that village is Rotawewa, about six miles from Minerriya. These Veddas lived on the chase and subsequently took to chena clearings, and when the place began to be frequented by the low-country Sinhalese and other traders, some of them were able to sell their meat to them and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they saved a little money and bought a patch of land of about 11 acres from Government, which land they now cultivate with paddy.... There are sixteen houses in the Vedda Settlement of Rotawewa, and the householders in every case are descendants of Veddas. They are Sinhalese without any signs of Tamil admixture." 105 L21

They say they are of the Morane *warige*, and they seem not to know any other *warige*. Mr Horsburgh however states that "there is one other Vedda village in Sinhala Pattuwa besides Rotawewa, viz. Gallinda, with about three families who are the same people as those of Rotawewa." [619]

As a matter of convenience we have prepared a tabular summary of the conditions prevailing at the various settlements of wild and village Veddas that we visited. Besides those mentioned, many other families and even isolated individuals exist scattered throughout the Vedirata, especially in the neighbourhood of the Badulla-Batticaloa road near Maha Oya and Kallodi. These folk are in the last stage of degeneration, having given up their own wandering life and habits; they have mostly drifted into Sinhalese villages there to die out miserably. 105 177 511

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

such favourite names as Kaira, Poromala and Handuna leads to confusion, not only in the minds of strangers, but also we believe in the minds of the Veddas themselves.

Sinhalese who come in contact with the Veddas find the same difficulty, and the individuals of certain communities, e.g. Danigala, have each a Sinhalese name by which they are known to the peasant Sinhalese, and which in many instances they themselves recognise, so that some Veddas actually know each other by these Sinhalese names, and give them when asked their own names or those of their companions. This is the explanation of the majority of Sinhalese names occurring in the genealogies. Again, the fact that among the Veddas there is no system of hereditary chieftainship, or any other custom such as the vendetta, forcing a man to know and remember his grandfathers, cannot but have assisted to bring about the forgetfulness of previous generations, which with the rarest exceptions makes everyone entirely ignorant of his grandparents. In the case of the Danigala and Henebedda Veddas there was an additional difficulty to be met in conducting our investigations. The men of these communities who for the most part belonged to the Morane and Unapane clans, traditionally the proudest and most important of the Vedda *warugu*, had to a certain extent intermarried with Sinhalese and also with the Veddas of Namadewa clan, a *warugu* which in this part of the country is regarded as of inferior status. They are most anxious to conceal instances of both these classes of marriage and lied freely concerning them and this is the reason for certain lacunae in their genealogies, which in the case of the Danigala community could not have been given at all had not Mr Bibile's position as Ratemahatmaya, i.e. hereditary overlord or "laird" of this part of the country, enabled him to make inquiries from the surrounding peasantry, and thus check, and in many instances correct, the information we obtained from the Veddas themselves.

A Vedda community consists of from one to five families who share the rights of hunting over a tract of land, of gathering honey upon it, fishing its streams, and using the rock shelters. But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

members of single families or small groups of two families living and hunting together. 621

Each family consists of parents and unmarried children to whom are generally added married daughters and their husbands. It is rare to find a married son with his father and mother, and a widow often marries the brother of her dead husband. We may now give some examples of the communities we actually met, premising that where a community such as that of Godatalawa consists of a single family only, this is probably due to depopulation and "hard times." 596 587

By consulting the genealogies on pp. 60 and 61 it will be seen that the Godatalawa family consisted of an old white haired man, Handuna, the "senior" of the group, his wife Dilisini, their daughter Kumi, a girl scarcely past puberty, and another daughter, Mutumenike, whom we did not see. Besides these there were Kaira (Hudubandar) and Kaira (Vinake), both sons of the old man's sister Hudi, and therefore actual or potential sons-in-law, and the two young children of the dead Ukumenike, a daughter of Handuna by his first wife Dingerimenike. 596

The Sitala Wanniya community when we first met them consisted of two families, those of Handuna the "senior" of the group, and his half brother Vela. Handuna had with him his wife Tandi and his two boys, his married daughter Kandi, and her husband Kaira with his sister Selli and the two young children born to Kaira and Kandi. Vela had only his wife Bevini (sister of Tandi) and his two young children. After a few days they were joined by another family consisting of Nila and his wife Wiri, with their daughter and her husband Paema, an unmarried girl and a small boy. The relationship between Handuna and Nila was that their grandmothers were sisters and their mother and father cousins who reciprocally called each other *akka* (elder sister) and *maleya* (younger brother). 621 596

KINSHIP.

The system of kinship was studied by means of the genealogies, and the following list of relationship terms compiled from the genealogies shows that the Vedda system of 601

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 Since the children of two brothers or two sisters cannot
601 marry each other, they are not *kuwa* and *mama* but call each other "brothers" and "sisters," using the terms for elder or younger brother or sister according to their age[1].

621 (Every Vedda so readily helps all the other members of his
224 community and shares any game he may kill or honey he may
606 take in so liberal a manner that at first it was difficult to determine who were the individuals who had a special claim on others of the group. Certainly at first sight it seemed as if all game were equally divided among the members of the group, but after a little time we perceived that while an unmarried man looked especially after his mother, a married man's father-in-law had at least an equal claim on his son-in-law and in practice often received more attention, since a man generally spent most of his time with his wife's family) That the relationship between
606 father-in-law and son-in-law is very close was shown in a number of ways, thus, when discussing children and their bringing up with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, we asked him whether Veddas
[842] preferred to have a son or a daughter, the answer was prompt and decided, "a daughter, for thus a man obtains a son-in-law"; and on another occasion when discussing relationship he stated very decidedly, *aunna mama ekei*, mother and mother's brother (i.e. father-in-law) are alike, and pointed out that as a man treats

[1] It may be worth while to say something concerning the alleged intermarriage of brother and sister among the Veddas, since Bailey and Hartshorne believed that such marriages occurred, and the Sarasins considered further investigation advisable. Our conclusions agree so thoroughly with Nevill's that we feel that we need do no more than quote what he has written on this subject. "Much nonsense has been written by persons who ought to have known better, about marriage of Vaeddas with their sisters. Such incest never was allowed, and never could be, while the Vaedda customs lingered. Incest is regarded as worse than murder. So positive is this feeling, that the Tamils have based a legend upon the instant murder of his sister, by a Vaedda to whom she had made undue advances. The mistake arose from crass ignorance of Vaedda usages. The title of cousin with whom marriages ought to be contracted, that is, mother's brother's daughter, or father's sister's daughter, is *naga* or *nangi*. This in Sinhalese is applied to a younger sister. Hence if you ask a Vaedda, 'Do you marry your sisters?' the Sinhalese interpreter is apt to say, 'do you marry your naga?' The reply is (I have often tested it), 'yes—we always did formerly, but now it is not always observed.' You say then, 'What? marry your own sister naga?' and the reply is an angry and insulted denial, the very question appearing a gross insult; and if put by a Sinhalese, the Vaedda would probably not even reply to him, but turn away with a gesture of contempt." *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Things new to them which we showed

them often provoked peals of laughter; to see the eldest and
152 most venerable man solemnly have his thumb nail pressed by
[522] a brass machine (algometer) was particularly amusing to the rest of the community, one man actually rolling on the ground with laughter. The old man took it all in excellent part and smiled indulgently. Doubtless Veddas vary much in character, but all except the "show" Veddas are genial and courteous, and have always been rightly considered truthful. At Sitala
153 Wanniya Handuna was the most intelligent man, keenly in-
554 terested in all the new things we showed him; he obviously
156 ruled the community by force of character, coupled with the fact that he was a shaman. Nila, however, was also a shaman, but he was obviously not so strong a man as Handuna, to whose opinion he deferred, and naturally took second place. Vela, half-brother of Handuna, was extremely shy but by no means stupid, he generally tried to get out of doing things, professing inability, but when urged by Handuna did everything as well as the other men. Kaira, *baena* (son-in-law) to Handuna, was intelligent and talkative and inclined to be boastful. Pema, *baena* to Nila, did not speak much, chiefly we thought because he was a young man and had not much to tell, for although he did not chatter like Kaira he smiled and did not hang his head when addressed, as Vela did.

Whether staying in a "private" or "communal" cave the
342 family life continues in much the same manner. If in a com-
592 munal cave, each family keeps strictly within its own limits,
621 the women may always be seen at exactly the same spot, and
423 when the men come in they sit or lie beside their wives, keeping to that part of the cave floor that belongs to them as carefully as though there was a partition dividing it from that of their neighbours. Figure 2 is a plan of Pihilegodagalge showing the actual division of floor space. Food is frequently
621 cooked by one woman and shared by all the members of
422 the community, in fact, although it might be cooked separately, it did not seem that any food was private property. One other fact was very noticeable in communal caves, namely, that men never kept their bows and arrows in their own division, but always put them all together in a particular

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251

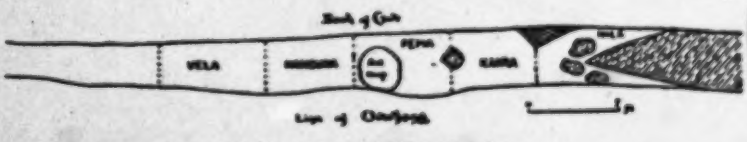


Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge. [342] [423] 592

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [695] 837

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

*621 771 To illustrate and prove these propositions we must examine in detail the beliefs of some of the communities in which each stage is respectively dominant. The Veddas met at Godatalawa and Sitala Wanniya form the best example of the first stage of belief. In comparing their beliefs it must, however, be remembered that the Godatalawa family have drifted away from their hunting grounds and are in dire want, and that their oldest man and leader (now quite infirm though still mentally vigorous) was never a shaman and consequently could give only the lay opinion of his group on religious matters. It must then not be assumed that no spirits beyond the *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Bilindi Yaka were known to the shaman of the Galmeda community, although the fact that the laymen only knew of these spirits shows how vastly more important they were than any other.

The Sitala Wanniya people, on the other hand, were living in a condition which must have been general from ancient times up to about 70 years ago. Four of the five families had never made even rough chena or built bark houses, but lived on game, honey and yams and wandered about from rock-shelter to rock-shelter within their territory.

776 782 At Godatalawa Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were both known though they were not recognised as brothers, and Kande Yaka was said to be greater than all other *yaku*. They are the two principal *yaku* invoked in order to obtain game, but with them there are invoked three other *yaku*, who, it was stated, are not the spirits of the dead but have existed as *yaku* from the beginning. These were, however, of little importance, and our informant, an old man the senior of the group but not a shaman, did not remember their names. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka would be invoked in order to obtain game at the *hirikoruka* ceremony, or simply when dancing round an arrow struck in the ground. These dances were not in gratitude for game already killed, but when the hunting had been successful, pieces of flesh from the neck and chest of the kill were cooked on the ashes and Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked to come to this offering which a few minutes later would be consumed by the Veddas. If part of the meat were not thus

[224]

Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 We found that the Coast Veddas spoke of themselves as
113 Verdas and said that long ago their fathers came from inland.
191 They all speak Tamil, but some assert that they still know, and at times use among themselves, their old Vedda language, but when we asked the men who made this statement to speak in their ancestral dialect they spoke Sinhalese[1]. Besides this a few of the older men know the names of some of the Vedda *warige*, while others are able to trace their descent to them.

142 The Coast Vedda is darker, taller and more stoutly built than the true Veddas. In fact they generally resemble low caste Tamils, yet in almost every settlement there are one or two men shorter than their comrades and presenting an almost typical Vedda caste of countenance. The women are all much
[291] bigger than true Vedda women and would pass for Tamils, after whose fashion they dress.

Plate LXVIII, figs. 1 and 2, represent Verdas from settlements to the north of Kalkudah.

241 The Verdas build comfortable huts in small clearings, usually
342 within a mile of the sea; they cultivate maize and pumpkins and other easily grown crops round their houses and in patches of clearing in the surrounding jungle.

415 They have plenty of pots and baskets and also possess drums
534 and fishing gear, so that their mode of life differs but little from
• 621 that of the poor and low caste Tamils who are their neighbours. One, two, or more rarely, three houses stand in each clearing, and it seems that the people living in each clearing are closely related by blood or connected by marriage.

The chief Verda settlements north of Batticaloa are Pellan-
361 chenai near Kalkudah 20 miles from Batticaloa and at Varkanari
505 some 10 miles north of Kalkudah on the far side of the river which is crossed by a ferry at Valarchchenai. At Panichchenkeni some 14 miles further north is another ferry, where the local Verdas act as ferrymen, while there are two other Verda settlements some three miles beyond the ferry at sites called Vellaiade and Kandaladi respectively.

[1] Nevill (loc. cit.) noticed the same state of affairs, he said "Only the old men speak what they call Veddda, which is pure but quaint Sinhalese with a Veddda accent, as a rule, though mixed with some words characteristic of true Veddda."

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human
[411 voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow
412] carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of
[342] these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close
[162] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha*
[164 *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and
[146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially
177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to
142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children
524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry
415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*
224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of
231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food
264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in
261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few
415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months
221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or
222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

904 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we
[276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as as leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [825] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 ● Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in 222 families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 252 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 757 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 262 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all 164 were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This [757] his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: 000 those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

000 The next noon we were on the river making easy passage with the current all in our favour, and travelling at ten times the speed we had laboured up. The boatmen who had spent the night on the bank looked as if they were afflicted with measles, so remorselessly had the mosquitoes handled them ; and already one of them was shivering with malaria.

The heat of noon on the river was intense ; and the splash of the oars or the sight of boys bathing at the draw-wells gave little appeasement. No bird had the heart to sing. As we passed, king-fishers flashed out of their cool retreats, coveys of stove-curlew ran up the shoals, and submerged wild buffaloes floundered up the bank. Clusters of yellow butterflies sipped moisture from the wet sand. A brahminy kite, its feet immersed in the shallows, whistled a warning to its mate that answered from afar.

● 621 At Kandakadu, where we met the first Vedda and his child, we spent the night ; and, having two hours daylight to spare, decided to visit his village, in spite of being advised against it at that hour, as elephants were plentiful. The place was disappointing as regards Veddas ; for, [342] instead of the crude huts we hoped to see, we found well built houses with cattle and fowls in plenty ; and the inhabitants, though they called themselves Vedda, were Tamils to all appearance. Nevertheless, we 136 saw here a sight we would not have missed. In a field in full view of the village, and bordering a pool where women went for water, were three elephants belly-deep in the tall grass feeding with the indifference of cattle. The forest between this village and the river veritably teemed with traces of elephants.

000 At the Verugal junction we were greeted by a fine old Arab in baggy breeches and skull-cap. His house, a stout three-storied structure, was designed to stand the stress of floods. When the lower floors were submerged he would remain islanded on the upper which had mud floors to permit of cooking. On the rich silt left in his garden when the waters ebbed, he planted tobacco and the luxuriant vegetables he was now selling our boatmen. A stern man was Mohamed Sultan as he was called. When one of our party cut more sugar-cane than he intended taking, he was brought to his senses quickly enough with a single sentence. The aggrieved one afterwards confided to me that Mohamed was once a notorious robber of Kiniyai where he lived killing and eating other people's cattle !

We rapidly drifted toward the end of our journey, having done in a day and half downstream what we had taken seven days upstream to accomplish. As we reached the river-mouth the mosquito hosts were abroad, a storm threatened, but the fishers of the estuary were unconcernedly hauling their nets to a song.

5: Spittel II-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

115 On our return journey, passing the ruins of a remarkable aqueduct of stone—the Watawala Kandiya—beside the remains of a crumbling 173 bund, we arrived at Kurunduwina where we met a doddering ancient who claimed to have been alive when the British took Ceylon a hundred 439 years ago. It is not often one meets old folk in these unhealthy lands. Here, I thought, was one who could tell us something about Veddas of a type we could not hope to see; for within view of his hut were the Sittala Wanniya hills, the immemorial homes of the Veddas. But his decrepit mind needed much jogging.

"Are there Veddas here?" I shouted twice into his deaf old ears.

"Now none," he said.

"Did they live on the rocks yonder?" I asked. He nodded affirmatively.

"Did they come here to barter?" I persisted. His tired lack-lustre eyes flashed to a memory as he answered with surprising alacrity, "Yes they came. When they had no food they came to exchange honey and hides for food. The Vedda would sit there, place his bow there, his arrows there, and his axe there, and he would ask for betel. If any one stepped over his weapons by chance, he would leap up in anger, bite the piece of human liver he carried in his betel-bag, and ask, 'Who's this that dares to defy me?' The gleam faded from the old man's eye, his weary look returned and he uttered not another word, question as I might.

The shifting *chenas* scattered about these parts make it very difficult to say where a village begins or ends. We were resting on the banks of the Rambukkan, (a course parallel to which we had so far followed) somewhere on the confines of Payile and Idambowa, when to our surprise we saw a Buddhist priest accompanied by the inevitable *abithaya** and a tall, wild, naked fellow. A Vedda of Bingoda the latter was said to be. [609] We tried to engage him in talk, but he would have none of it; seated on his haunches he stared at us with a hang-dog apathy eloquent of hunger; this melted away in a broad grin as he left us, greedily chewing the handful of muscatels and biscuits we gave him.

The usual route from here to Potuliyadda lay through the village of Mullagama. As this involved a detour we decided on a more direct if less used track; a decision we afterwards regretted as it lost us the interesting Veddas of Bingoda, and incidentally a clue to the discrepancy between Seligmann's statement and local report regarding the Veddas of the "Nuwaragala hills"—a missed opportunity the full significance of which we were only to realise some five years later after miles of arduous and unnecessary travel. For the present we were told that [621] the Veddas of Bingoda consisted of only three families, and that, though they forsook their huts for caves during the honey season, they were, if anything, less of the real Vedda than those of Henebedde.

Our journey was now an uncertainty; for the guides were doubtful both of the route and the likelihood of water. The jungle, hitherto dense, gave place to an occasional glade. Late in the evening we found ourselves in a spacious *talawa*, rank with tall grass that quite obliterated our path. Here we were benighted, just as we found a pool adequate to our needs. It was an interesting place, a veritable sanctuary, hill-encircled; an ideal

*A neophyte, attendant on a priest.

2. FOREST CHILDREN

●621 THE village of Potuliyadda lies in the heart of the country of the Henebedde Veddas. We had hoped to take these people unawares in their homes some three miles away; but it was not to be; for a Vedda boy who had witnessed our arrival had forestalled us.

We were at lunch, when my friend, whose seat commanded a view of the jungle, quietly remarked, "Hullo; who are these? Veddas without a doubt."

142 157 [411] [622] Five men, armed with bows, arrows and axes, strode in single file under the leadership of a small one-eyed man, half of whose face was covered by an awful scar which puckered an eyeless socket, giving a touch of pathos to an otherwise harsh expression. Such was Poromola, chief of the Henebedde Veddas also called *Walaha* (bear) for obvious reasons. Then there was Handuna a fine type of wild man; though close on fifty his figure was well-knit, and this combined with his goatee beard and tousy head gave a strength and rugged dignity to his bearing. There were also a tall bearded man of forty, loquacious and sophisticated enough when you knew him; a lanky, slouching, beady-eyed fellow; a robust, curly-haired bumpkin; and lastly, the snub-nosed little mischief-maker to whom we owed the honour of this visit.

123 As the Veddas came up to us, they uttered some fierce jargon we did not understand. It was pretty obvious they were acting; and not caring to encourage them in this, I casually motioned them away. They retired mumbling. We recalled them later to find them in dudgeon, evidently not being used to such treatment. They stared mutely at us affecting not to understand a word of the Sinhalese in which I addressed them. I tried again and again, but not by the flicker of an eyelid did they signify comprehension. Civility and persuasion having failed, I tried the effect of candour, telling them that we were not gullible strangers and knew all about them. This also was without effect.

Opening Seligmann's book, which contained the portraits of these very Veddas taken ten years previously, we suited picture to prototype. They gazed uncritically with stolid intentness showing no surprise or enthusiasm. I asked them whether they remembered the author and his wife who had spent so much time with them and been so kind to them. One nodded, and the others' faces betrayed interest. Thus was the first barrier carried.

Gradually we won them over one by one; but despite our best efforts the conversation flagged. And we, tired of making all the advances simulated an indifference we far from felt, and took to our books.

"We are hungry," said Handuna after a while. "Will you not give us food?"

We could only offer them money, an almost useless thing to the Vedda. We had made the serious mistake of coming unprovided with a surplus of rice, betel, arecanut and tobacco; for the surest way to the heart of the Vedda is through his stomach. We

361 [103] to a cleft fragment of stone resembling a giant lizard crawling up the sheer face of the rock.

[241] We found Bowala deserted. The young coconut and areca palms, plantains, sugar-canes and pine-apples there were choked with grass and lantana. The huts were falling to pieces and leaked like sieves as we found to our cost when a shower overtook us; the grass thatch, ruined [136] by white ants, was the home of innumerable rats, brahmin-lizards and poisonous *karawalas** that hung head-down from the rafters ready to strike.

221 The desolate state of the hamlet is explainable by the *chena* life of the people. In December, as the crops ripen, they forsake their homes for the shacks of the *chena*, leaving perhaps an aged couple behind. In April, when the crops of *kurrukhan* and maize have been taken, they return to the village to repair their huts and wean back to life such plants as have survived the inroads of wild animals and weeds. In July, *chena* land is leased again; and so the wasteful routine is repeated. 621 A hamlet occupied for six months and abandoned for six has not much chance of headway. If the population of a village is at all numerous, there are sufficient people to occupy both *chena* and village, without detriment to either; if the community is very small they remain *chena* dwellers with no permanent homes; if intermediate, we find the state of things at Bowala. In favoured places a mere nucleus of human beings swells in time to a thriving and populous village. But in the insalubrious *Vanni* privation and ignorance keep the numbers low. Two dwindling villages may combine to save one from extinction. Often a place populous to-day is a wilderness to-morrow and *vice versa*. This is typical of the kaleidoscopic way the forest hamlets change. Names so fine on maps—Illukpitiya, Mahaella, Embillene—are found when reached to be derelict; a crumbling hut perhaps hidden in jungle, or a hardy tamarind or palmyrah the sole witness of vanished homes.

101 Bowala folk are better jungle men than many farther inland. Though far from fastidious in their choice of meats, for they eat the mongoose [262] land rat, they abhor the porcupine, sure mark of Vedda ancestry. They [287] fashion bags of beaten *riti* bark and carry pouches of monkey skin that [281] ladies might envy. Their bed-frames are spanned with sambur-hide, 415 their powder flasks are the dried scrota of sambur. A monkey skin, stretched over a coconut shell fitted with handle, screw and string, and [534] manipulated with a small bow, serves them as a violin out of which they scrape mournful disharmonies. They snare the smaller animals, such as 224 the hare, pangolin and chevrotan, with *habbakas* or weighted frames poised over passages used by these animals; we saw one of these set for 222 chevrotan with a bundle of urine-drenched leaves for bait. Some among 481 them could brave the formidable heights of Westminster Abbey in quest of the combs of the rock bee—the most hazardous of jungle pursuits.

000 We spent the night in a large cave at the base of Westminster Abbey and made the ascent next morning, replenishing our water bottles at a small basin formed by the buttressing roots of a rock-tamarind and rejoicing in the grandiloquent name, for so trivial a thing, of *Kothuru-pathaha* (gnat-water-hole).

It had rained all night and there was still a drizzle. Squeezing through crevices, crouching through low caves, climbing trees, clinging to rough

*Small venomous snakes.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and "tame" Veddas, and to come to more recent times, there is 184
evidence that a hundred years ago there were organized com- 361
munities of house-building Veddas, while certain Veddas received grants of land from the Sinhalese kings, and on these lived as definite village communities until quite recently, probably till within the last half century.

Village Veddas of Uva Bintenne.

Dambani. The present community of Dambani, in the 621
jungle between Kallodi and Alutnuwara, may serve as an example of a village Vedda community. Some twenty families living in tolerably built houses keep buffaloes and cultivate chena, the latter being big enough not only to supply their own wants, but to permit of a lively trade with Sinhalese traders. These Dambani folk have been known to the Arachi of Belligala as a flourishing community in the same social condition for the last thirty years, and he states that they were in this condition in his father's time. A short visit was sufficient to show that here [177]
was a community which, though it had lost many Vedda beliefs, still retained others, and was so strong and independent that there was little likelihood of its immediate fusion with the surrounding population. Physically these people (Plate XV, figure [142]
2), though somewhat darker and often of a stouter build than the Danigala Veddas, could not be mistaken for Sinhalese. The Dambani people are unfortunately "show" Veddas, that is to say, [609]
people who have been sent for so often by white visitors that they have learnt certain tricks, which they show off directly they see a European, and so constantly demand presents that serious work with them is an impossibility.

A positive advantage which has, however, arisen from this [197]
condition, is that these folk have kept up the remains of the so-called Vedda language. The headman in whose district these Veddas are situated is largely responsible for this, for he always 622
speaks to them in their own dialect in harsh tones. He is an 156
extremely kind old man, and answers definite questions perfectly truthfully, yet like so many Sinhalese, he generally says only what he thinks is expected of him, hence, the belief in the fierce sullen ways of the Veddas and their inability to laugh has been

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1908
AX5 Vedda AX5

622 unconsciously fostered by him. A brief account of our visit to
156 Dambani will best show the present condition of these people.

While in the jungle we were suddenly met by four Veddas,
177 who greeted the Arachi in a deep and apparently fierce tone, he
576 returning the greeting in the same manner. To our surprise these men came up to one of us (C. G. S.), shook hands, and then turned and led us to their village, on the way to which we passed a couple of "tame" buffalo that tried to charge
[361] us. There were three huts in the village and the headman's wife—not at all shy or diffident—after shaking hands took one of us (B. Z. S.) by the arm and led her into a hut. This
[342] had a good roof and walls of sticks, only one side being closed by bark slats, it was full of pumpkins and other chena
126 produce, which were however soon removed. We then sat down to take vocabularies, as the talk going on around us sounded quite different from Sinhalese and they professed not to understand our interpreter who was unable to follow them. So we
574 spoke through the Arachi. The headman's wife brought us each
609 some honey and yams and commanded us to eat. We sucked
43) the honey comb, but that did not satisfy her and she tried to feed one of us (B. Z. S.) with yams herself and to pour water down her throat. After giving us a few Vedda words, the Vidane (headman) began to talk very angrily and then stalked out of the hut. He complained that we had not given him presents and refused to speak another word until we gave him something. Other men came into the village making a total of about 10 or 11 grown men and some boys, but only two middle-aged women, the wife of the Vidane and another, so it was evident that there were other huts in the neighbourhood. We told the Vidane that our carriers would bring presents and made him and a few other men come back to the hut. But after every two or three words there were more angry protests and our interpreter explained that "other white men had not treated them so." When they raised their voices their talk sounded fierce, every word being shouted with emphasis and accompanied by scowling looks. Then we found out from the Arachi that these like the Danigala Veddas were "show Veddas" who had been utterly spoilt by presents from "distinguished visitors," some of whom

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 them was their unhuman apathy and utter lack of interest.... Although we came upon them unexpectedly, and although, as they told us later, they had never before seen white people, nevertheless, neither of them showed the slightest astonishment or interest in our appearance; both glanced up for a second, and then cast down their eyes, and continued silently shelling the seeds of the lotus pods beside them, and stirring the simmering pot over the fire. Near the other huts, women and children were occupied at the same task; some were sitting on the ground around a pile of lotus pods, others were attending to the cooking. At first the children seemed a little frightened at us, but contrary to expectation, did not rush off to the jungle....

"At the time of our visit there were but three men and 511 seventeen women and children in Makulugulla; these were 342 distributed in five shelters or huts. The chief's house was made of four upright posts and a flat thatched roof of palm leaves, but [184 without walls or flooring. The other huts were shaped like 622] A-tents, one was thatched with coarse grass, the other covered with large circular leaves of the lotus. The remaining two huts were shaped like wall tents, the roofs of grass or palm-leaf thatch, and the walls of bark. They all had dirt floors, and not one of them was over eight feet square. In three of the huts the utensils, such as earthen pots, baskets, gourds and mats, were piled on the ground at one end; in only two were there any [356 shelves. The floor of each, however, was neatly swept, and even outside the huts, where all but the aged and the very young slept, the ground had been swept clear of leaves and twigs.

"The cooking was all done out of doors, at a fire-place 511 consisting of three stones; and the cook was honoured by [352 having a seat, either a block of wood or the dried skin of the 354] Axis deer or the Muntjac. We were also surprised to see their providence, in that they had quite a good-sized bundle of dry 364 firewood on store in the huts. We expected to find the village reeking with refuse and decaying game, of which we heard that they were fond, but the place was free from smells, and really 361 clean. The jungle at this spot was composed of large trees and

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

601 such favourite names as Kaira, Poromala and Handuna leads to
551 confusion, not only in the minds of strangers, but also we believe in the minds of the Veddas themselves.

Sinhalese who come in contact with the Veddas find the same
601 difficulty, and the individuals of certain communities, e.g.
551 Danigala, have each a Sinhalese name by which they are known
197 to the peasant Sinhalese, and which in many instances they themselves recognise, so that some Veddas actually know each other by these Sinhalese names, and give them when asked their own names or those of their companions. This is the explanation of the majority of Sinhalese names occurring in the
601 genealogies. Again, the fact that among the Veddas there is no system of hereditary chieftainship, or any other custom such
[622 as the vendetta, forcing a man to know and remember his grand-
628] fathers, cannot but have assisted to bring about the forgetfulness of previous generations, which with the rarest exceptions makes everyone entirely ignorant of his grandparents. In the case of the Danigala and Henebedda Veddas there was an additional difficulty to be met in conducting our investigations. The men
601 of these communities who for the most part belonged to the
614 Morane and Unapane clans, traditionally the proudest and most
554 important of the Vedda *waruge*, had to a certain extent intermarried with Sinhalese and also with the Veddas of Namadewa clan, a *waruge* which in this part of the country is regarded as of inferior status. They are most anxious to conceal instances of both these classes of marriage and lied freely concerning them and this is the reason for certain lacunae in their genealogies, which in the case of the Danigala community could not have been given at all had not Mr Bibile's position as Ratemahatmaya, i.e. hereditary overlord or "laird" of this part of the country, enabled him to make inquiries from the surrounding peasantry, and thus check, and in many instances correct, the information we obtained from the Veddas themselves.

621 A Vedda community consists of from one to five families who share the rights of hunting over a tract of land, of gathering honey upon it, fishing its streams, and using the rock shelters. But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291
301
415
516

"Their homes, the shelter of the trees." (Page 9)

142
291
622

Naida and his family. (Page 9)

[facing p. 9]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as as leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [825] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 222 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 252 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 757 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all 262 were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut 164 shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

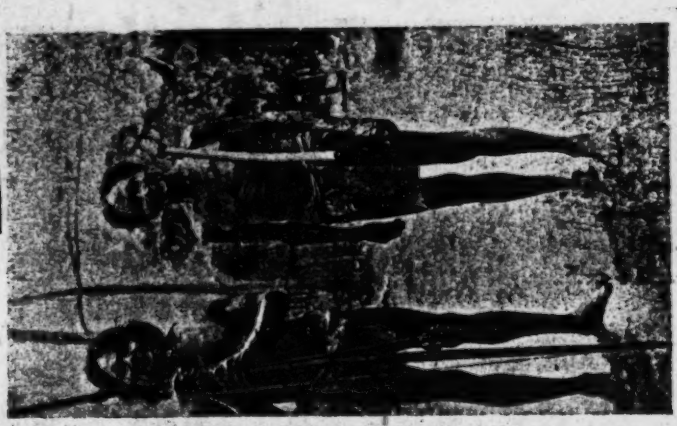
The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This [757] his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

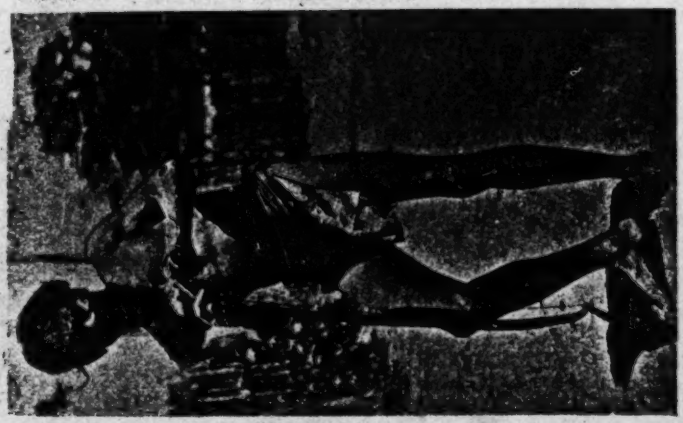
It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: 000 those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
411
211
[412
482]
622



The best of the Henneboddi Veddas.—Porombola and Handuna (Page 16)



Handuna strings his bow (Page 16)

[facing p. 16]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. FOREST CHILDREN

621 THE village of Potuliyadda lies in the heart of the country of the Henebedde Veddas. We had hoped to take these people unawares in their homes some three miles away; but it was not to be; for a Vedda boy who had witnessed our arrival had forestalled us.

We were at lunch, when my friend, whose seat commanded a view of the jungle, quietly remarked, "Hullo; who are these? Veddas without a doubt."

142 157 [411] [622] Five men, armed with bows, arrows and axes, strode in single file under the leadership of a small one-eyed man, half of whose face was covered by an awful scar which puckered an eyeless socket, giving a touch of pathos to an otherwise harsh expression. Such was Poromola, chief of the Henebedde Veddas also called *Walaha* (bear) for obvious reasons. Then there was Handuna a fine type of wild man; though close on fifty his figure was well-knit, and this combined with his goatee beard and tousy head gave a strength and rugged dignity to his bearing. There were also a tall bearded man of forty, loquacious and sophisticated enough when you knew him; a lanky, slouching, beady-eyed fellow; a robust, curly-haired bumpkin; and lastly, the snub-nosed little mischief-maker to whom we owed the honour of this visit.

123 As the Veddas came up to us, they uttered some fierce jargon we did not understand. It was pretty obvious they were acting; and not caring to encourage them in this, I casually motioned them away. They retired mumbling. We recalled them later to find them in dudgeon, evidently not being used to such treatment. They stared mutely at us affecting not to understand a word of the Sinhalese in which I addressed them. I tried again and again, but not by the flicker of an eyelid did they signify comprehension. Civility and persuasion having failed, I tried the effect of candour, telling them that we were not gullible strangers and knew all about them. This also was without effect.

Opening Seligmann's book, which contained the portraits of these very Veddas taken ten years previously, we suited picture to prototype. They gazed uncritically with stolid intentness showing no surprise or enthusiasm. I asked them whether they remembered the author and his wife who had spent so much time with them and been so kind to them. One nodded, and the others' faces betrayed interest. Thus was the first barrier carried.

Gradually we won them over one by one; but despite our best efforts the conversation flagged. And we, tired of making all the advances simulated an indifference we far from felt, and took to our books.

"We are hungry," said Handuna after a while. "Will you not give us food?"

We could only offer them money, an almost useless thing to the Vedda. We had made the serious mistake of coming unprovided with a surplus of rice, betel, arecanut and tobacco; for the surest way to the heart of the Vedda is through his stomach. We

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

837 whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was very careful in my inquiries on this subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Sinhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it[1]."

The only case of suicide of which we heard took place in
762 connection with a breach of the common rule of conjugal fidelity.
837 Tissahami, the husband of Kumi, younger sister of the headman of the Bandaraduwa Veddas, carried on an intrigue with his *naena*, an unmarried girl named Kirimenike. When his wife who was not one of his *naena* discovered the intrigue, she scolded her husband most unmercifully, "Why go to another woman while I live?—better to have gone to your mother than her." Although his intrigue with Kirimenike was of old standing, Tissahami was so upset with the disgrace of publicity that he killed himself in the compound outside his own hut early one morning. He had a gun, and holding the muzzle to the suprasternal notch, he pulled the trigger with his toe. The dead man's
[626] relatives were very angry with Kumi for driving him to desperation but they did not threaten her, nor in any way molest her. Kumi and Kirimenike belonged to the same *waruge* (Morane) but were unrelated. Kirimenike subsequently married a Vedda, and went to live at Syringawala where she remained until she died.

562 In every respect the women seem to be treated as the equals
609 of the men; they eat the same food; indeed, when we gave presents of food the men seemed usually to give the women and children their share first; the same applies to areca nut and other chewing stuffs. The women are jealously guarded by the men, who do not allow traders or other strangers to see them, and those at Sitala Wanniya were too shy to visit our camp, though they welcomed us to their cave, and the dances performed for our benefit took place in the dense jungle so that the women might be present and partake of the food offered to the *yaku*. We had offered to clear a space by our camp where the light would have been better for photography; however, the

[1] J. Bailey, "Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon," 1863, *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* Vol. II, p. 291.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

interfusion of Vedda blood—the apathetic look, the scanty beard, were 131
unmistakably there. The area we had to traverse was not extensive, hemmed in, as it was, by the Bibile-Maha Oya road on the one hand and Mahaweli on the other. It is five miles from Alutnuwara to Arawatta; six miles from that to the Ulhitiya Oya; thence seven to Beligalla which is within four to six miles of Bulugahadena and Dambana, the Vedda haunts of to-day. The going is through forest comparatively well peopled; and *chenas* are frequently met with; changing from year to year, these often absorb the path and obliterate it, causing deviations which lead astray even guides conversant with the country a few months previously.

We were nearing Bulugahadena when we met our first Vedda of these 101
parts—a tall, picturesque fellow with ear-rings, shouldering his bow [301]
stave with a small gourdful of honey slung on its end. Unspoilt, reserved
and natural, in contrast to his fellows whom we afterwards met, he was [157]
the finest Vedda we saw in Bintenne.

In an environment, not of virgin forest, but of derelict *chenas* we found [301]
the Veddas of Bulugahadena. They lived scattered about, a hut or two
to each *chena*, and not in groups as one so often sees; the explanation
we were given for this was not the obvious one that *chenas* were appar- [626]
ently easier of acquisition here than elsewhere, but that it served to keep
the families apart and prevent social entanglements, Veddas being very 152]
jealous of their women.

There was no reserve about these people. As we approached each 576
hut, the men, armed with axes, bows and arrows, came out and greeted
us vociferously in the Vedda language; Sinhalese they affected not to [411]
know. Their women were mostly sullen and silent; but one at least gave
us a better reception than her husband did. Here and there a sickly
wretch craved for medicine.

Their huts, made of bark slats and wattle, were too well built for 342
Vedda habitations; they had not that crudity and unkemptness so
characteristic of the huts of the wilder Veddas, and most of them were
finished off with a neat fence-work. There was no lack of *kurrukhan* [241]
and maize here; and on the whole they seemed a fairly prosperous and
contented community.

The Veddas of Dambana, who lived four miles away, were much the 101
same as those of Bulugahadena; and so were the others we met scattered
about these jungles. One lot we found picturesquely grouped in a 361
rock-shelter, reproducing to perfection the old cave life; but they were
obviously there for our benefit!

Of these Veddas, considered as a whole, we may say that we had never 161
before seen so many of them as on this short trip of barely a week. On
previous journeys, after having traversed miles and miles of jungle, we
had met only a Vedda here and a Vedda there, never more than a dozen
in all, often but one or two. But in Bintenne we saw no less than about
fifty good specimens. Though they were obviously sophisticated by 177
their nearness to Badulla and the many occasions on which their
representatives had been on show, Vedda blood is still strong in Bintenne.
This is the place to come to if one wishes to pick up the few words that
are left of the Vedda language, and the art of making bows and arrows;
but apart from that, these people are too civilised to be interesting.

One episode we experienced here is worth recalling. Two Veddas, 224
better disposed towards us than the rest, one with his lip all askew from

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

423 The care with which the seclusion of the rock-shelter is still maintained probably belongs to a different category of ideas, and is an example of the jealousy with which Vedda women are guarded.

423 At Sitala Wanniya we heard of the following method of settling disputes concerning boundaries, though Handuna my informant had never known of any example of a difficulty of this kind arising, and had only heard of the method of settling them from his father and father-in-law. When two Veddas, or groups of Veddas, are not satisfied as to the position of a boundary, the disputants each bring their "seisin" stone to the land over which the quarrel has arisen. Here the stones are placed in pots upon supports of the kind used in the Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa (Plate XXXVI, figure 1). When this has been done the disputants invoke certain spiritual agencies, but who these are my informants could not tell me. As a result of this, a wild animal, usually an elephant, would come and destroy the pot set up by the party wrongfully claiming the tract of land.

231 Every Vedda has one or two dogs with which he does not readily part, though with characteristic generosity he is ever willing to give away pups to any of his friends or relatives. Vedda dogs are invariably well fed and well treated, and it was clear that the warmest feelings exist between a man and his dogs. As evidence of the importance of dogs in the community we may cite their use as wedding gifts and refer to the process of anointing them with a part of the offering dedicated to the *yaku* described in Chapter VI. Bailey's account of the relation of Vedda dogs to their masters brings out so much of this feeling that it is quoted here at length. "They have dogs perfectly trained to follow up and pull down the wounded deer. These they value highly; but they are of no distinct breed and do not differ from the ordinary country dogs. But it would appear that at a time when hunting was of more importance to them than it is now, the dog was more valued....

"But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his 231 possessions he values most his bow, which is placed under his 435 head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

such favourite names as Kaira, Poromala and Handuna leads to confusion, not only in the minds of strangers, but also we believe in the minds of the Veddas themselves.

Sinhalese who come in contact with the Veddas find the same difficulty, and the individuals of certain communities, e.g. Danigala, have each a Sinhalese name by which they are known to the peasant Sinhalese, and which in many instances they themselves recognise, so that some Veddas actually know each other by these Sinhalese names, and give them when asked their own names or those of their companions. This is the explanation of the majority of Sinhalese names occurring in the genealogies. Again, the fact that among the Veddas there is no system of hereditary chieftainship, or any other custom such as the vendetta, forcing a man to know and remember his grandfathers, cannot but have assisted to bring about the forgetfulness of previous generations, which with the rarest exceptions makes everyone entirely ignorant of his grandparents. In the case of the Danigala and Henebedda Veddas there was an additional difficulty to be met in conducting our investigations. The men of these communities who for the most part belonged to the Morane and Unapane clans, traditionally the proudest and most important of the Vedda *warugé*, had to a certain extent intermarried with Sinhalese and also with the Veddas of Namadewa clan, a *warugé* which in this part of the country is regarded as of inferior status. They are most anxious to conceal instances of both these classes of marriage and lied freely concerning them and this is the reason for certain lacunae in their genealogies, which in the case of the Danigala community could not have been given at all had not Mr Bibile's position as Ratemahatmaya, i.e. hereditary overlord or "laird" of this part of the country, enabled him to make inquiries from the surrounding peasantry, and thus check, and in many instances correct, the information we obtained from the Veddas themselves.

A Vedda community consists of from one to five families who share the rights of hunting over a tract of land, of gathering honey upon it, fishing its streams, and using the rock shelters. But the whole of the community does not commonly move about its territory as one band, it is far more common to find only the

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 According to my authority the Veddas indulged in no games, unless, indeed, the custom of tossing dry leaves in the air and speculating on their position when they fell back upon the ground could be called a game. This, I am told, was only an occasional recreation, and indulged in by boys alone.

423 614 628 The limits of the hunting ground were jealously guarded by the Veddas, and anything like poaching by the members of one clan in the area recognized as belonging to another was punishable by death. Should a hunter lose his way and fall into the hands of a neighbouring clan, he would be closely watched, remaining for the time being in a sort of captivity. If the man's conduct during that time was such as to disarm suspicion he was permitted to go, and might even be accompanied to the confines of the clan's hunting ground, but he would have to proceed at once without looking back, or his conduct might lead to the belief that he was a spy, with fatal consequences.

226 The method of fishing was to hem in a piece of water by closely fencing in both ends of the stream. People would then enter the enclosed piece of water, armed with slender sticks, thrashing the water therewith till a fish was actually struck, when it would be captured. I saw this actually done in one pool on the Kumbukkan.

173 My informant told me that the Veddas were at one time harassed by a race of pygmy people, called the Nittawo, who lived in the country known as Lenama, that extended from Bagura in the Panawa Pattu in the east to the confines of the Kattaragama hills on the west.

According to him, these people lived in small troops of from 10 to 40, inhabiting caves, hollow trees, and crevices of precipices. They were about 3 feet or a little more in height, exactly like normal human beings, only in miniature. Their legs were hairy like those of the Wanduroo; they walked erect, and had no tails.

Their arms were short and very powerful, with strong hands, and talon-like finger-nails with which they tore and disembowelled whatever they captured. These generally were small animals, such as hare, mouse-deer, monkeys, iguanas, and tortoises. Their method of attack was by surrounding

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

175
105

different fashion from all other, and the *Chingulays* will not use them.

"They have a peculiar way by themselves of *preserving Flesh*. They cut a hollow Tree and put honey in it, and then fill it up with flesh, and stop it up with clay. Which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want.

"It has usually been told me that their way of *catching Elephants* is, that when the Elephant lyes asleep they strike their ax into the sole of his foot, and so laming him he is in their power to take him. But I take this for a fable, because I know the sole of the Elephants foot is so hard, that no axe can pierce it at a blow; and he is so wakeful that they can have no opportunity to do it.

"For portions with their Daughters in marriage they give hunting Dogs. They are reported to be courteous. Some of the *Chingulays* in discontent will leave their houses and friends, and go and live among them, where they are civilly entertained. The tamer sort of them, as hath been said, will sometimes appear, and hold some kind of trade with the tame Inhabitants, but the wilder called *Ramba-Vaddahs* never show themselves."

175
648

From Knox's account it is evident that in his time or a little before this, some of the Veddas were in touch with the court and were even sufficiently amenable to discipline to be of use as an auxiliary fighting force, indeed, there is abundant evidence that long before this a part of the inhabitants of Ceylon, with enough Vedda blood in them for their contemporaries to call them Veddas, were politically organized and constituted a force whom the rulers of the island found it necessary to consider. Upon this subject we cannot do better than quote part of a letter from Mr H. Parker in which this authority states his views on this subject. "At the time when Sinhalese history begins, a part of them [Veddas] had reached a far more advanced state than the others. They were politically organised, and according to the Mahavansa had a supreme king and subordinate chiefs 80 years after Wijaya became king[1].

[1] "He established the yakkhas Kalavela in the eastern quarter of the city [Anuradhapura]; and the chief of the yakkhas, Citta, he established on the lower side of the Abhaya tank. He (the king), who knew how to accord his protection with

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

"The invaders, or rather settlers, from the valley of the Ganges intermarried with these more advanced natives, and became the Sinhalese of the present day (with a later mixture of Tamil or Indian blood). 175 648

"The wilder natives continued to lead the life of their primitive ancestors, and only to a very limited extent intermarried with the Sinhalese.

"Three or four centuries ago the Vaeddas were spread over the Matale district and the North-western Province, and I believe Sabaragamuwa[1]." 175

discrimination, established the slave born of the yakkha tribe, who had formerly rendered him great service, at the southern gate of the city. He established within the garden of the royal palace the mare-faced yakkhini, and provided annually demon offerings to them as well as to others.

"In the days of public festivity, this monarch, seated on a throne of equal eminence with the yakkha chief Citta, caused joyous spectacles, representing the actions of the devas as well as of mortals to be exhibited.....

"This monarch befriending the interests of the yakkhas, with the co-operation of Kalavela and Citta, who had the power (though yakkhas) of rendering themselves invisible (in the human world), conjointly with them, enjoyed his prosperity." *Mahawanso*, Chapter x, p. 44 (Tournour's translation). Further, the same king "provided...a temple [or "tala tree," the readings differ] for the Vyadha-deva" which Mr Parker states must refer to the Vedda God.

[1] Additional evidence for this is given by Nevill who says—"I have unpublished MSS. which represent the Vaeddas as found in the forests north of Putlam at the time of Bhuwaneka Bahu Raja of Kotta (about 1466 A.D.), and another which represents Vaeddas as the chief inhabitants of the Matale district in the region of Raja Sinha, about 1635 A.D." (*Taprobanian*, Vol. II, April 1883, p. 30). With regard to Veddas in Sabaragamuwa, Bailey notes that—"Though traces of their former existence there are evident and numerous, there is every reason to believe that many centuries have passed since they were there. Fields, villages and families yet retain the name Veddahs, as Weddeya pangoo, Wedde coombore, Wedde watte, Wedde ela, Wedde gala, Wedklege etc.....Indeed, Saffragam, or Habara gamowa, means the district of Veddahs, or barbarous people: and in this form of the word, the former existence of Veddahs again can be traced, as Habara goddege, Habara kadowa, etc. It is traditional throughout Saffragam, that once Veddahs predominated over Sinhalese in that district, and that, as the latter gained ground, the former withdrew towards Bintenne and Wellasse.....Mr Macready, of the Civil Service, has given me very important proof of the existence of Veddahs 'near the Samanta mountains' [Adam's Peak]. He has given me the translation of some stanzas from a Sinhalese poem, written about 400 years ago, called the Pirawi Sandese, or the dove's message. The poem treats of a message sent, by means of a dove, from Cotia (near Colombo) to Vishnu at Dondera, at the extreme south of the island. The dove takes its course exactly over the district lying below Adam's Peak. The poet addresses the dove, and tells her she will see 'the daughters of the Veddahs' clothed in Riti bark, their hair adorned with peacock's plumes. So wild are they that the poet describes the herds of deer as being startled at the sight of them." ("Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

202
648

Turning now to the message sticks, certain conventional signs scratched on leaves or flat slips of wood were at times sent by Sinhalese chiefs to the Veddas as an intimation that they required them to bring venison and honey. These signs always took one form, representing a carrying stick (*pingo*), to each end of which a circular object representing a pot of honey was attached. By the side of the pot of honey there were generally drawn two short vertical lines, immediately beneath which were a number of rather longer horizontal lines. Each pair of horizontal lines represented a joint of venison and the vertical lines immediately above them the cord by which they would be suspended from the *pingo*. As far as we could determine no other form of written message ever passed between the Sinhalese and Veddas, but there is no doubt that although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas knew nothing of such messages the Danigala Veddas recognised their meaning and acted on them. Mr Bibile told us that on one occasion when he had sent this message scratched on an *ola* leaf to the headman of the Danigala Veddas he had received the honey and venison he had asked for in about a week. We were told that on receiving this message a Vedda might say

[539]

Dik, dik, ewuwā; kac kuṭṭā
Waṭa kuru ewuwā; paeni muṭṭā[1]
Koṭa koṭa ewuwā; mac kuṭṭā[2].

Long long (ones I) have sent; cut pingos
Round (ones I) have sent; honey pots
Short short (ones I) have sent; cut meat.

and represent this modified to suit the convenience of the peasant Sinhalese who, as already mentioned, have much Vedda blood in them.

[1] *Muṭṭa* may be a verb, *muṭṭiya* is a pot.

[2] *Kuṭṭa* appears to be derived from v. *kotanawā*, to chop or cut; compare colloquial *bunnā*, "I have drunk," from v. *bonawā* and other instances. We are indebted to Mr Parker for these notes as well as for the transliteration and translation of the message.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had never thought the matter over. Nevertheless they honour the names which like the Sinhalese they call Yakas with food, dances or offerings. Any monotheistic idea of God is absent both in 'Nature' and in 'Culture' Veddas[1]."

The three strata of belief to which we referred at the beginning of this chapter and which exist among the Veddas of the present day, have not fused so thoroughly that there is any great difficulty in isolating them. We believe they may be tabulated as follows:

I. The Cult of the dead, including the cult of the spirits of recent ancestors, i.e. of the Nae Yaku and the *yaku* of certain Veddas who have been long dead and may well be regarded as heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka.

II. The Cult of foreign spirits, who have become naturalised and have taken the friendly protective nature of the Vedda *yaku*.

III. The Cult of foreign spirits who, though not often regarded as such, have retained their foreign nature and are in the main terrible or even hostile.

Another feature of the last stratum of thought is the endowment of true Vedda *yaku* with foreign attributes[2]. When the history of the island is considered, it is not surprising that the first condition, which may be considered the primitive religion of the Veddas, should nowhere be found standing alone at the present day. It is impossible to say how much the Indian invaders influenced the aboriginal inhabitants of Laṅka (Ceylon) when they took possession of the island under Vijeyo about 500 B.C., for the few references made to Veddas in the ancient chronicles of the country throw no light on this subject.

Knox mentions that Veddas paid a tribute of game and honey to the Sinhalese, and in his day there were "wild and tame" Veddas, and it is certain that from the middle ages onwards there was a considerable amount of intercourse between at least the tamer Veddas and the Sinhalese. Therefore it is natural that foreign beliefs should have gradually infiltrated the native Vedda cult.

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] The invocation (No. 214) to Ambérapoti Kirimmá given on p. 316 is an excellent example of this. Bilindi Yaka is here treated as if he were a Sinhalese or Tamil deity.

782
539

XXXVI. *Nārusayi saduna, bōrusayi saduna. Gini Rāhu Bandāra ena velata hadu āhwahamak sandi ga.*

The Nā tree is made, and the Bō tree is made. At the time when the chief, Gini Rāhu, comes, a fight with swords will be made.

The Veddas could neither explain the meaning of the words of this invocation, nor state the significance of the whole.

Unuwatura Bubula.

XXXVII. *Gini wahalak sādala, raṇ kāla pandamak sādala, raṇ i iṭi sādala, Gini Rāhu Baṇḍāra raṇ i iṭi sādala mē magul maduwaṭa waḍinna raṇ mōlat balanna.*

As we have constructed a Fire Palace, as we have made a light (resting) on a golden support (?), as we have made with wax golden arrows, O Chief, Gini Rāhu, as we have made with wax golden arrows, be pleased to proceed to this festival shed and to look at the golden mortar also.

The Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula understood this invocation in a somewhat different sense.

Gini Rāhu Bandar come to this shelter, look upon the golden mortar. The shelter has a roof of fire, within it is a golden torch and golden bees'-wax.

Invocations sung at the Kolamaduwa Ceremony.

782
648

We were told that the *kolamaduwa* ceremony was performed until recently with considerable pomp and circumstance by the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, gave us the following invocations as some of those that he learnt to sing when as a youth he lived among the Veddas. Tissahami wrote down these invocations after the partial rehearsal of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which was arranged for our benefit at Henebedda, a description of which is given in Chapter IX.

When discussing the *kolamaduwa* we were told that Veddas were sometimes sent for by the peasant Sinhalese because of the superior protection afforded to the cattle fold by their invocations and dances. The tradition as to this practice was quite definite

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and we do not doubt that it occurred formerly, but we could hear of no recent instance in which Veddas alone officiated. 782 648

This did not surprise us for we met with no Veddas who knew these long invocations, and we believe that this practice must have ceased throughout the Vedirata at least two or three generations ago. The necessary conditions existed in those days when, as we were assured, there were communities of village Veddas with shaman of repute such as no longer exist, and we may instance the history of Lindegala given on pp. 171 and 172 as a case in point. Nevertheless the custom survives in a modified form, for Tissahami with three Veddas performed a *kolamaduwa* ceremony at Damenegama in 1903 with the object of stopping an epidemic, alleged to be dysentery, which was then raging in the neighbouring villages. [731] [755]

A very large number of spirits are invoked, but as has been indicated in Chapter IX Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, and the *yaku* of the recent dead were not of the number. This demonstrates that the ceremony as it at present exists is essentially foreign, and therefore the length and nature of the three invocations given are not surprising. The invocation to Unapane Kiriamma which recites her deeds agrees well with all we could find out about her independently, and suggests that these invocations arose among such settled village Veddas as those mentioned in the Sinhalese chronicles referred to in the first chapter. 782

The four invocations written down by Tissahami were discussed at length with him, the shaman of the Henebedda Veddas sitting with us, though as this man—a half bred—knew only parts of these invocations and greatly admired Tissahami, the translations obtained in this way only represent the opinion of Tissahami, and presumably that of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from whom he learnt them in his youth. In these circumstances it is not surprising that two of these translations differ considerably from those furnished by Mr Parker, and this difference is so great in the invocation (No. XXXIX) which should be sung while the leaves are being slashed from the *kolamaduwa* (cf. p. 269) that we have thought it best to give our field version as well as Mr Parker's translation. Some of the allusions, for instance, the reference to the shark contained in the first portion 782 539

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411 648 It appears that painted and lacquered arrows were sometimes presented to the Veddas by the Sinhalese kings as signs of gratitude or favour, just as ceremonial forms of other objects were presented to particular Sinhalese[1]. Dr Willey told me of a lacquered bow and arrow which he heard of among a community of sophisticated Veddas, and which he was told ultimately found their way to the Kandy Museum. Among the peasant Sinhalese of Nilgala we heard of a lacquered arrow—said to have been lost recently—which, according to tradition, had been presented many generations ago to the Vedda ancestors of its last owner by one of the kings of Ceylon. With regard to the specimen in the Kandy Museum, the arrow is feathered in the usual Vedda style, the condition of the lacquer on it shows that it is of considerable age. The iron which is said to belong to it is loose, and it is entirely unlike any arrow head we have seen. Instead of having a tang it has a socket into which the end of the shaft must have fitted, and there is a shoulder or "stop" upon the iron. The bow shown us as having been acquired with the arrow was in much better condition and had a small band of silver or some metal resembling silver round it. According to the account given at the museum both specimens were procured from a priest who gave a history of the specimens which does not connect them with any Veddas[2].

224 177 Traps and snares are unknown among the least sophisticated Veddas, but at Danigala we saw a small deadfall trap avowedly introduced.

HONEY.

222 The importance of honey in the Vedda diet has been mentioned in Chapter IV as well as the large part it plays in barter. The honey of the *bambara* (*Apis indica*) is taken in June and July, though at other times of the year small combs are taken

[1] There is in the Colombo Museum a beautifully lacquered weaver's shuttle, presented to certain cloth makers by one of the Sinhalese kings.

[2] It was stated that the bow and arrow had been found in the verandah of a disused house with some broken articles said to have been thrown there, having been taken from the *walawwa* (house) of Molligoda Adigar. The house was in the Kegalle district. The villagers gave the bow and arrow to a priest who brought them to the museum.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 those only who are the most barbarous, who have preserved in all essentials their isolation from other races intact, that we must expect to find the most marked peculiarities.

101 The term Veddah—or Weddah—in itself, indicates no particular race. It simply means "a hunter", and is, in India, applied to aboriginal or barbarous tribes generally.*

In this sense, a great portion of the population of the eastern parts of Ceylon appears, at some period or another, to have been so called. There are still extensive districts known as "Weddirata", or the country of the Veddahs, the inhabitants of which, although they are, owing to the remoteness of their situation, less civilized than the bulk of the people of the island, are not Veddahs, but Singhalese, in kindred, religion, and customs.

101 It is highly probable that the people of these remote districts and of others, where Veddah descent is still claimed, are more 174 directly derived from the race which originally stocked the island than those who inhabit such parts of it as were more accessible to the settlers from Continental India, who, in process of time superseded the aborigines.†

But the people distinguished in Ceylon, by the name of Vedda 131 dahs—wholly distinct, as I have said, even from those who, though now Singhalese, yet describe themselves as descended from Veddah ancestors, are to be found in the districts of Batti-

---

* Weddà (Singhalese) an archer; some trace it to Bedda (Jungle). Introduction to Alwis' Sidath Sangarawa.

Vedán (Tamil), a hunter—one who lives in the woods; a name given to rude tribes, aborigines in the Indian peninsula. Vedan (Tamil), corruptly Vaidan, Veddah, also Beddah, or Weden—a hunter, a fowler; a name given to wild tribes, inhabiting the hills and forests of the south of India almost in a state of nature—probably the aboriginal race of the peninsula. Prof. Wilson's *Glossary of Revenue and Judicial Terms.* The word Veddah is still used in Ceylon as a hunter, and so applied to persons, not "Veddah" in the limited sense of the word.

† The Weddirates were, under the native government, exempted from 648 all service save military—the most honourable; and rendered tribute to the king, of beeswax, dried flesh, and honey, which was continued for some time after we obtained possession of the Kandyan provinces. But the inhabitants of these districts marry and associate with those of the adjoining districts, and are apparently the same people. There may exist some eth- 142 nical difference; indeed, I think even an unscientific eye can detect a difference in the appearance, not only of these people, but of the Wanniahs of the northern and central parts of Ceylon, when compared with the ordinary natives. I have tried to obtain skulls of the different races, of which there are many in the island, viz., Tamils, Moors, Singhalese of the low country and of the Kandyan provinces, the people of the Weddiratas —Wanniahs of Neweraka-lawiya and Batticalas—Mookwas of the north-west and east provinces, Malays, Goorowas, Rhodias, etc., but it is most difficult to obtain them. The subject may be worthy of the attention of the Ethnological Society, though beside the object of this paper.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 422 [685]

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days. 648 685 [754]

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in goal, he might carry back with him some little civilization to his own people. 648

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist. [301]

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguano, and pengolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, 262

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Samba deer (*rusa Aristotelis*). [136]

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252]

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

Tennent says truly, that they have "no system of caste among themselves; but, singular to say, this degraded race is still regarded by the Singhalese as of most honourable extraction, and is recognized by them as belonging to one of the highest castes;"* and he relates a legend, in which he says this belief originates; a legend, however, at which, he tells us, the Veddahs themselves smile, and of which they profess their ignorance. 648 [564]

As I shall afterwards show, I do not think this legend, which is confessedly not a Veddah tradition, has anything to do with the consideration with which, so far as their caste goes, the Singhalese regard them. Were there no better reason, the fact that the legend is by no means universal among the Singhalese residing in their vicinity, would probably be sufficient reason to reject it.

But Tennent has not been correctly informed with regard to their own belief regarding their own origin. For strange as it appears, they claim to be of royal descent. Beyond this vague assertion they profess to know nothing. They do not attempt to trace their descent from any particular king. They know nothing of their history. This is their *one* tradition; and though the neighbouring Singhalese, on whom they affect to look down, smile at their claim to such an illustrious origin, they do "regard them as of most honourable extraction," and in reply to any inquiry respecting it, only repeat the Veddah version of their royal lineage. It is said, too, that in the time of the native government the Veddahs always spoke of the king as "hoora," or "cousin."† 173

The Veddahs have no particular name by which they distinguish themselves, which would aid us in speculating on their origin. They simply call themselves "Weddah," and are so called, while they speak of the ordinary natives of the country as "Singhalese." The term "Habara," or "wild, barbarous," is applied to Veddahs, in books, and also "Vannacharakiya," which means "a hunter." 101

As Knox has told us, they speak the Singhalese language; but they do so with an accent and intonation so strange, that it sounds like some foreign tongue. It seems, as it were, "broken Singhalese," such as a man would speak to whom the language was an acquired one, so much does their pronunciation differ from that of their Kandyan neighbours. Although the identity between the Veddah dialect and Singhalese is evident, when they are compared with each other, it would require a very quick and accurate ear, indeed, to detect the similarity between them when both are spoken. 191 197

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, c. iii.

† It is reported, too, that some Veddahs do not claim royal descent, but that only a portion of them do. The Bicetean and Nilgala Veddahs certainly, say they, are "Raja-wansiya," of royal lineage.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 "But surely there are Veddas in Galmede; everybody told us so," I insisted.

"Veddas of a sort, yes," was the reply; "and perhaps among them, one or two good ones; but the best live away in the caves, in those rocks yonder. Now if you'd come yesterday you'd have seen two of them who brought me some goas in exchange for betel and tobacco."

000 Disappointment melted into sudden hope. So, there were real Veddas still left. But oh! these people. Was ever chase so disheartening? Always the promise, never the fulfilment. Were we chasing phantoms of the wilderness, mocking spirits of a dead race, intolerant of the intrusion on their tranquil sepulchres?

There was no possibility of visiting the cave-Veddas that day. So I decided to stay over and visit them the next morning, travelling across the pathless hills to the high road; while my companion,—fed up to the teeth by now at the very mention of the word Vedda, and in a bad way with festering tick-bites, heat exhaustion, and lack of fresh food—tried to dissuade me from an adventure that promised no success. But I was bent on it. So we agreed that most of the bearers should accompany him to Maha Oya by an easier route, while I remained behind with three men and a two days' ration of tinned food.

With nightfall my prospect of securing a guide to the Galmede hills was no nearer than in the morning. The only man who could be relied on was down with fever. I was seated disconsolately in the Chetty's garden after dinner, close to a chatting group, when suddenly I saw a shadow slip in out of the darkness and join them; there was some whispering; "Ah, is this the man they call Meenemaruwa?*" I heard
● 648 one of my bearers ask.

241 "Yes, I am he they call murderer, rogue and everything besides."
115 The answer came loud and unabashed from the man himself.

Rumour had spoken of him as far away as Kotelinda; and it had not spoken kindly. He lived three miles up the river by himself, inspiring the neighbourhood with awe of him. He was in a quandary that night. Returning home after a short absence, he had found that his brother had been taken into custody for illicit *chena* cultivation. He waxed eloquent on his wrongs, while the others listened: "Now what I want to know," he said "is why they should have taken my brother, who is a fool and cannot say a word in his defence, when they might have taken me? No, they wouldn't do that because I can talk. My brother cultivated the *chena* it is true, but it was I who gave it to him; the land is mine. They want me to pay taxes, I who am a Vedda! My grandmother was a
[626 Vedda of Veddas, you should have seen her. How well I remember the
789] piece of human liver she carried in her betel-bag. We children would take it from her and want to throw it away; she would pluck it from us, saying, 'Hu, what do you want with this, isn't it mine?' Io, why do they treat me like this? Someone is angry with me. It must be the *aralchi*. No, the *aralchi* is good to me; he and I are friends. Now *Hettyar*, what must I do? I must go to the courts myself and get a petition drawn." Thus he talked interminably, while I wondered how a Vedda could come to argue like a lawyer.

"Now leave all that aside," I interrupted, "and tell me how I am to see these Veddas of the rocks tomorrow."

*Murderer.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they had been called upon to pay a chena tax as well as 1·50 Rs. per adult male road tax. Of course they were unable to collect this money and they dreaded the ensuing penalty, that of serving on the roads, for should the two young men leave the settlement the old man and woman and the girl must starve, the first being too old to work and the woman a cripple. Their plight would have been just as bad had the young man gone to work on some Sinhalese rice fields in order to earn the money[1].

Degenerate Veddas in the neighbourhood of the main Badulla-Batticaloa road[2]. The main road from Badulla to the east coast passes through country that was once the centre of the Vedirata, and on either side of it at a distance of some 2—6 miles are various settlements of half-bred and degenerate Veddas who will soon be entirely lost among the Sinhalese. Plate XIV, figure 1, represents two men of this class: it is obvious that the young man would pass for a Sinhalese, indeed in spite of his bow and arrows and traditional scanty Vedda garb the condition of his hair shows that he has at least been following a Sinhalese mode of life. It is possible that the whole Vedda get-up may have been assumed for our benefit, though in view of the comparative skill with which he handled his bow we do not think this likely. The old man was doubtless one of the last degenerate Veddas of the district.

Before passing to village Veddas a word must be said concerning the Omuni folk and those of Unuwatura Bubula. Sir James Emerson Tennant, in his work *Ceylon* published in 1859, states that Mr Atherton, A.G.A., in conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, attempted to civilise the Veddas[3]. In 1838 "cottages were built for them in their own district, rice land assigned to them, wells dug, coconuts planted, two communities were speedily settled at Vippammadvo." A

[1] This is a not uncommon practice at the present day.

[2] This road is only some forty or fifty years old, Mr Warren tells me that "the old road from Badulla to Batticaloa joined the road from Alutnuwara. It crossed the present cart road about Kalledi and must have worked its way in the neighbourhood of the present road to Tumpalancholai and so to the ferry into Batticaloa." Part of this track is still used as a short cut. "There was another road from Passera through Madagama past Makakandiyaweva to Mandur; *furikas* travel that way now."

[3] Tennant, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 447.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

511 a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to
439 take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

142 Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on
141 which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 metres (60½ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 metres (61½ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

609 Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

202 When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they
609 stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and
576 did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen
166 at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately
115 pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very
651 poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as
[Lessons; see p. xx. — Analysis]

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

these village Veddas, though they seem to be of a somewhat morose disposition. He also said they take no interest in things unknown to them. However, the phonograph attracted as much attention and interest as it always had from Veddas and Sinhalese alike, and we distinctly saw one Vedda smile when his song was reproduced. 157

The chena settlement at Wallampelle was seen, but here it appeared that much intermarriage had taken place with the Sinhalese. 144

Malgoda. There are a number of people very mixed blooded, but calling themselves Veddas, living at Malgode on the shores of Horaborawewa, a beautiful tank traditionally associated with the Veddas. They have dropped their old Vedda customs so entirely that the local Sinhalese no longer look upon them as true village Veddas, an attitude that has perhaps been fostered by the fact that here in Uva where the Veddas are exempt from all taxation these people pay road tax. Such at least was the point of view of the Arachi of Alutnuwara, "how can these people be Veddas?—they pay road tax." In spite of this there is no doubt that they are largely of Vedda descent and in many instances remember their *wariga*. They live in very poorly built houses and depend largely on the seeds of the lotus for food. They still pose as pure-blooded Veddas to white visitors, and have been recently described by Drs H. M. Hillier and W. H. Furness, 3rd. "We followed the jungle path along the eastern shore of the lake, sometimes over outcrops of granite, or down by the lake side...and after following our guide through thick undergrowth for half-an-hour, suddenly, and without warning, we came out into a cleared space, where there was the merest excuse for a hut, and beside it a man and woman squatting side by side and cooking something in a blackened earthen pot, which rested on a fire of twigs and branches; a little beyond them were more huts and more women and children—lo! the Village Veddahs. The elderly man and woman whom we first saw had between them scarcely a yard of coarse cloth as clothing, their hair hung loose in dishevelled twists and strings about their faces, and they both squatted so low that their knees stood up above their shoulders. But the most impressive thing about 144 177 361 [651] 511

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for 276
I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that [651]
was paid usually in these particular commodities.

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, 231
and special names were given to these pets. 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron 411
for the manufacture of their particular implements, which 412
consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, 326
or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; 439
the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head.

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take [628]
the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda.

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunu- 411
madala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. [824]
It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only.

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a 372
vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on [824]
a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and 423
steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title 428
deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

423 But what irony is all this talk of chiefs and clans and possessions, where
656 only a mere handful of spiritless people is concerned. The Veddas alone recognise their boundaries, Government does not. Quite rightly they are not permitted to fell their forests without sanction, or to give their lands away; for what would be easier than to cozen such simple folk. These Veddas may cultivate *chenas* with permission from Government but without tax; a privilege they are impotent to avail themselves of, and are still hunters enough to disregard, whether under encouragement or compulsion. "What lands have the Veddas now?" lamented Kaurala. "Our rightful lands! Why should we be deprived of them? The earth of our land is honey to us". And in those words he spoke the doom of his race.

Let us leave the last of the Veddas alone, and not try to fashion them to our ways; for that would kill them the sooner. Let them die out, scattered in their lonely jungles, the hunters they have always been. A few decades hence and the Vedda will be but a name.

651 Not every Vedda is exempt from taxation. I believe those in the Eastern Province are taxed, while those of Uva are not. Why this distinction, it is hard to understand; except for the plea that nowadays it is difficult to say who is a Vedda and who not. But, in cases of doubt, the conditions of life that characterise a particular community should be the criterion that influences the decision, favourably or otherwise. It does seem hard that these poor people, who never handle a single cent from one year's end to another, and have barely a rag with which to cover their nakedness, should have to pay a tax of two rupees with the richest in the land! In default of payment, a penalty of some ten days' work on the roads is imposed; an equitable provision on the face of it; but what of the family with the bread-winner thus engaged? After all, these people only live from day to day; and even sickness very often means starvation.

241 As for *chena* cultivation,* there can be little doubt that it is the one form
311 of agriculture, best suited to the primitive folk of the arid forests; but a serious attempt should be made to better the wasteful methods now in
656 vogue. I remember once travelling through a Province where a progressive, but misguided policy—as applied to these parts—prevailed: *chena* licences had been with-held that year with a view to enforcing paddy cultivation; (in such forests! and among such folk!). The result was disastrous. It was heart-rending to see the starved, emaciated villagers Sinhalese and Veddas alike, digging out wild, unsavoury yams from
261 the baked ground. They would have given their lives for a little *kurrukhan* or maize, which was nowhere to be had.

Chenas represent a very primitive and wasteful form of agriculture. In June of each year an area of jungle is leased by several families. The trees are felled, and burnt two weeks later. The land is then cleared, except for a residue of charred trunks. Temporary huts are suitably disposed, and the whole surrounded by a fence-work of burnt logs, so strong that it must be proof against elephants, so tall that it must top the sambur's leap, so close that it must keep out the hare. By August this work is completed.

In September the crops are sown;—Maize or *irinsu* which takes 4 months, and manioc which takes a year to mature; vegetables such as pumpkins, melons and beans (*pukul, wattaha, ihimbiri, kahiri, leema*); yams such as *kukul-alla, wal-alla, watapol, kodol*. In October and November, *kurrukhan*, chillies, green-gram, and perhaps a little paddy is planted.

During February, March, and April the *kurrukhan* and maize crops are harvested—or rather what is left of them when the elephants and drought have had their say

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

423 But what irony is all this talk of chiefs and clans and possessions, where only a mere handful of spiritless people is concerned. The Veddas alone
656 recognise their boundaries, Government does not. Quite rightly they are not permitted to fell their forests without sanction, or to give their lands away; for what would be easier than to cozen such simple folk. These Veddas may cultivate *chenas* with permission from Government but without tax; a privilege they are impotent to avail themselves of, and are still hunters enough to disregard, whether under encouragement or compulsion. "What lands have the Veddas now?" lamented Kaurala "Our rightful lands! Why should we be deprived of them? The earth of our land is honey to us". And in those words he spoke the doom of his race.

Let us leave the last of the Veddas alone, and not try to fashion them to our ways; for that would kill them the sooner. Let them die out, scattered in their lonely jungles, the hunters they have always been. A few decades hence and the Vedda will be but a name.

651 Not every Vedda is exempt from taxation. I believe those in the Eastern Province are taxed, while those of Uva are not. Why this distinction, it is hard to understand; except for the plea that nowadays it is difficult to say who is a Vedda and who not. But, in cases of doubt, the conditions of life that characterise a particular community should be the criterion that influences the decision, favourably or otherwise. It does seem hard that these poor people, who never handle a single cent from one year's end to another, and have barely a rag with which to cover their nakedness, should have to pay a tax of two rupees with the richest in the land! In default of payment, a penalty of some ten days' work on the roads is imposed; an equitable provision on the face of it; but what of the family with the bread-winner thus engaged? After all, these people only live from day to day; and even sickness very often means starvation.

241 As for *chena* cultivation,* there can be little doubt that it is the one form of agriculture, best suited to the primitive folk of the arid forests; but a
311 serious attempt should be made to better the wasteful methods now in
656 vogue. I remember once travelling through a Province where a progressive, but misguided policy—as applied to these parts—prevailed: *chena* licences had been with-held that year with a view to enforcing paddy cultivation; (in such forests! and among such folk!). The result was disastrous. It was heart-rending to see the starved, emaciated villagers Sinhalese and Veddas alike, digging out wild, unsavoury yams from
261 the baked ground. They would have given their lives for a little *kurrukkan* or maize, which was nowhere to be had.

Chenas represent a very primitive and wasteful form of agriculture. In June of each year an area of jungle is leased by several families. The trees are felled, and burnt two weeks later. The land is then cleared, except for a residue of charred trunks. Temporary huts are suitably disposed, and the whole surrounded by a fence-work of burnt logs, so strong that it must be proof against elephants, so tall that it must top the sambur's leap, so close that it must keep out the hare. By August this work is completed.

In September the crops are sown:—Maize or *irinδu* which takes 4 months, and manioc which takes a year to mature; vegetables such as pumpkins, melons and beans (*pukul, wattaka, thimbiri, kakiri, leema*); yams such as *kukul-alla, wal-alla, watapol, kodol*. In October and November, *kurrukkan*, chillies, green-gram, and perhaps a little paddy is planted.

During February, March, and April the *kurrukkan* and maize crops are harvested—or rather what is left of them when the elephants and drought have had their say

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. 'What would you do,' I asked a Veddah once, 'if your bow were stolen?' 'No one could steal it,' he replied, 'the dog would not let him.' 'But if anyone killed your dog?' His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 435

"And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic[1]. He never attempted to deny what he had done. 'It is true,' he said at the coroner's inquest, 'I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted for my support[2].'" 231 674

The following is a list of the names of dogs and bitches obtained from the Henebedda Veddas: 552

Dogs. Kapura, Kadiya (*kadi*, black ant), Muranduwa (obstinate), Hudena (white), Pandina (spotty), Dimbula, Boriya, Taniya, Tambula, Senba, Katakaluwa (black mouth), Bahira, Pulana, Kambiliya, Komiya (a Sinhalese corruption of "come here," the name of a dog belonging to the Korale of Nilgala).

Bitches. Pandi (spotty), Katakalu (black mouth), Handani (white), Dassi (clever), Dimbile, Makedi (like iron), Bosari, Hudu Valli, Mukulu.

The following list represents the usual property of an elderly Vedda, that is, of one of the influential men of the group, and actually records the property of Poromala (Walaha) the "senior" of the Henebedda Veddas; one axe, bow and arrows, three pots, a deerskin, a "flint and steel" and supply of tinder, a gourd for carrying water, a betel pouch containing betel cutters and some form of vessel or small box, perhaps of metal (e.g. an old brass covered cartridge case), for holding lime. Most Veddas also possess a certain amount of cloth besides that actually in use on their person, and Handuna was no exception to this rule. 422

Kaira of Henebedda had only two pots, but otherwise the list of his property is identical with that already given. Handuna

[1] "The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance."

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.*, pp. 186—187.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Munronia pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
824 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
• 674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

than in densely populated areas, where the individuality of the creature is lost in environmental immensity. In the one case he and his are known, in the other he and they are but a fraction.

Considerations of space preclude my enlarging on this subject, or describing in detail the individual conditions of the different villages that I explored, but I venture to think that a careful examination of local factors would throw much light on the evolution of the race from its early stages of primitive existence to its present state of partial civilization.

Domestic Animals.—These consist of cattle, buffaloes, goats, dogs, cats, and fowls.

Black cattle are abundant in all the inhabited parts of the country I explored, and naturally more so where the opportunities for trade in them exists than in very isolated places. Milk is nearly always procurable, but I heard of no instance of children being exclusively reared upon cow milk. Buffaloes are, where possible, reared for agricultural purposes, and also for the supply of milk, which is often turned into a form of junket that is in much demand.

In one village in the Panawa Pattu I found a Tamil man owning a large herd of buffaloes, and to my surprise I found that he called them by individual names, the animals responding to his call.

I was informed that quite a large proportion of the domesticated buffaloes were half-breeds between the wild and the tame. This may explain why the Vedda-country animal is so much larger than the buffalo of, say, the Western Province.

Goats are rare, and only occur where there are Tamil or Moorish people. I met with them occasionally, but nowhere away from the influences above mentioned. Pigs, except wild, I never met with. Dogs are plentiful, and of a much superior build and type to the village pariah of the civilized country. This is doubtless due to the care the real Vedda has bestowed upon this animal from the earliest time. In point of size the dogs of the Vedda country are large, powerfully built, and bold. Black and white, or brown and white, are the usual colours of these animals. Cats are, generally speaking, scarce, though I remarked at Kumuna that while I only saw one dog, I found six cats in that little village.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 if they have even any language. "Some," he says, "are so degraded that it has appeared doubtful whether they possess any language whatever; and not only is their dialect incomprehensible to a Singhalese, but even their communications with each other are made by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which bear little or no resemblance to distinct words or systematized language."* I can only say that I have been repeatedly among the very wildest of the race—indeed the "wretched outcasts," here so summarily deprived of the power of speech, are those whom I have been endeavouring to describe, and I never knew one of them at a loss for words sufficiently intelligible to convey his meaning, not to his fellows only, but to the Singhalese of the neighbourhood, who are all, more or less, acquainted with the Veddah patois.

775 The Veddahs have no idea of a future state of rewards and punishments; for the vague vestige of a belief in retributive justice, which I have before mentioned, cannot be said to show any faith in the punishment by a Superior Power of sinners in this world.

[681]

114 It has been most truly said that it is a matter of almost insuperable difficulty to arrive at a proper understanding of the creed of barbarous tribes through the medium of direct questioning, and that nothing can be more vague than all their statements on this most important subject.†

It is not to be wondered at that a people so barbarous as the 771 Veddahs are—without literature of any kind—who have lived in the depth of the forests in almost complete seclusion for centuries on centuries, should be incapable themselves of giving any definite or intelligent account of what they do believe. They are unable to express in language their ideas on subjects, which, even in their own minds, have never assumed any distinct form; and though they are ready enough to answer the questions put to them, it is no easy task so to frame them as to make their object intelligible to such rude and unlettered savages. The result 776 of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than for evil. Still, vague as this belief is, not even the

* Tennent, vol. ii, pt. ix, c. iii, p. 441, 2nd ed. This is stated on the authority of "a gentleman who resided long in their vicinity, G. R. Mercer, Esq., of the Civil Service, who held office at Badulla." Those who remember that gentleman's love of a practical joke, will smile at seeing this "joke" gravely recorded in the *Physical, Historical, and Topographical Account of the Island of Ceylon*, by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, K.C.S., LL.D., etc.; and my able predecessor, Mr. Mercer, must have been as much amused at seeing it there, as any one else.

† See Hodgson's "Brief Note on Indian Ethnology," Bengal Asiatic Society's *Journal*, March 1849.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

rigidly observed that we were told that a man might not assist his sister to rise from the ground if she had fallen down and injured herself. Further, it seemed that he should not see much even of the girl whom he was about to marry until she was handed over to him, though according to our Unuwatura Bubula informants it was not really bad for a man to touch any of his *naena* and he was allowed to do this in an emergency. At Sitala Wanniya it was said that adult *hura* and *naena* should not speak to each other even when it had been arranged that they should marry, and at Omuni we were told that if in the old days a man was seen speaking to an unmarried girl, her outraged relatives would seek to kill him. Children may of course come in contact with their parents to any extent and at any age. 602 [684]

Second marriages are, and always have been frequent, a man often marrying a sister of his deceased wife and a woman marrying one of her dead husband's brothers. We believe that such unions were regarded as both a privilege and a duty, though according to Handuna of Sitala Wanniya a man married his dead wife's sister principally because if he married any one else his children would not be looked after so well. If a widow does not marry one of her dead husband's brothers she may return to her parents, though it seemed that if these were no longer living she would generally stay with her late husband's group, whose duty it would then be to look after her and her children. 587

With regard to name avoidance, a man does not speak the name of his mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and they also refrain from speaking his name, relationship terms being used instead. Nor does a man commonly speak of his son-in-law or father-in-law, or his brother's wife or sister's husband, except by the appropriate relationship terms; beyond this we would only point out that, as already mentioned, neither man nor woman commonly speaks of his or her spouse by name, and there is a general tendency to avoid the use of names and where possible indicate an individual by a relationship term. In no case did we notice any hesitation in giving the name of any adult which we sought to obtain in the course of our inquiries. The objection to saying a young child's name and the reason for this is referred to on p. 103. 551 [606 607]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

836 children so they came together as they grew up. The community came to know of what had occurred, the couple were considered married, and now go about together. We were told that no resentment was felt or expressed by the girl's parents or the community, and there was no formal giving over of land or property to Kaira by his father-in-law, because, as was pointed out, the fathers of Kaira and Hudi both belonged to the same group and together moved about over the same land.

We think it may be said that among most Veddas at the present day, especially such as have come in contact with the Sinhalese, there is no violent feeling against prenuptial connection of the sort here described, but we believe that formerly public opinion was definitely and strongly against the practice, though on this point we do not attempt to dogmatise. There was no doubt as to the attitude of public opinion towards connection between people who were not allotted to each other. This was, and still is, strongly disapproved, and there is no doubt that in the old days the guilty parties risked their lives. 835 It was, however, clear that intrigues of this sort did sometimes ●684 occur, and we heard of two instances of what are regarded as incestuous unions which occurred among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas some fifty or sixty years ago. In both cases the girls cohabited with their mothers' sisters' sons, and in both instances the guilty parties were promptly killed by the outraged group. The men were set upon in the jungle, their own fathers it was said taking a prominent part in the assault, while the girls were killed in the huts in which they were living[1].

582 As already mentioned the correct marriage among the Veddas, as among the Sinhalese, is for a man to marry his

[1] The matter has been well stated by Nevill who writing more than twenty years ago says: "The Vaeddas marry young, and are strict monogamists. Consequently the husband and wife are watchfully jealous, each of the other, and love-intrigues are few and far between. Nothing short of murder would content the injured party. This strict morality extends to unmarried girls, who are protected by their guardians with the keenest sense of honour" (*Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 178). We do not, however, agree even partially with his statement as to the considerable liberty allowed to widows, we believe that among the wilder Veddas their morality was as strict as that of the maidens and it must be remembered that it was, and is, unusual for any but old women to remain widows for any length of time.

[835]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *warage* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *kangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraks* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The near relations, including sons-in-law of the dying man, would come to him when death was expected, and it was a matter of duty for the sons or other near relatives to send information of a man's dangerous illness to his sons-in-law, and the latter would be justly angry if this information were withheld from them. We were never able to determine whether a son-in-law actually benefited by being present at his father-in-law's death, we believe that his presence was only an act of pious duty, and that he derived no increased right to the dead man's property by this. Certainly the land which came to a man at his marriage from his father-in-law would not be given to anyone else by the latter on his deathbed; we have, however, some reason to think that the unmarried sons of a man's sisters might, as the result of their attendance at their potential father-in-law's death-bed, be given land which otherwise would not have come to them until their marriage, or perhaps not at all. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya thought that a sick man might sometimes give his son-in-law a lock of his hair, but unfortunately it was not possible to discover under what circumstances, if any, this occurred. That land was commonly given to sons and not to sons-in-law by a dying man was clear from the very explicit statement made by Handuna, "My sons will naturally take my stones as evidence of their right to possess my land." With regard to the division of land between a man's children, it was pointed out that most people made their wishes on this point clear during their lifetime and it must always be remembered that no landed property passed without the consent of the grown men of the group. 763 428

It seemed that the borders of each group's territory were so well known to all the members that quarrels concerning land were very rare, trespassing upon another man's domain was almost unknown, though when it did occur it was strongly resented. Knox's account of something very like a pitched battle between two parties of Veddas which has already been quoted on p. 7 shows this, and we were everywhere told that until a few years ago a man trespassing on the territory of others might have been shot without fear of this provoking reprisals. 423 685

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 422 (685)

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days. 648 685 [754]

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in gaol, he might carry back with him some little civilization to his own people. 648

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist. [301]

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pangolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, 262

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Sambu deer (*rusa Aristotelis*). [336]

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 school was founded and two other settlements fromed at
621 Oomany and Villengelavelly. However, the enterprise was soon
797 abandoned owing to the misconduct of some of the teachers. "But," continues Tennant, "the good effects of even this temporary experiment were apparent: not one of the Veddas returned to his cave and savage habits... The other colony at Oomany continues to the present day prosperous and successful, twenty-five families are resident around it, rice and other grains are produced in sufficiency and coconuts are planted near the cottages. The only desertions have been the departures of those in search of employment, who have removed to other villages in quest of it. The school was closed in 1847 owing to there being no more children at the time requiring instruction..."

177 The colony can no longer be called "prosperous and success-
62 ful." indeed, we found it in a state of semi-starvation. Before 1838, when these people were induced to settle, there can be little doubt that they were living in a somewhat similar condition to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas of the present day, but since then there has been a considerable infusion of foreign blood, for it has long been the habit of criminals and others desirous of concealment, to seek refuge with the village Veddas, who usually receive them kindly and accept them as members of their community. Since the artificial origin of this settlement is known it cannot be regarded as belonging to the village Veddas, but rather to a colony of degenerate settled Veddas.

511 Omuni. At Maha Oya three half-bred Veddas from Omuni
687 were seen who had been brought in by the Sinhalese headman to work on the road as they had not paid their "road tax." It was unnecessary for them to plead they were poor and hungry, for their miserable condition showed this all too clearly. Happily Mr. S. W. Woodhouse, the district judge, was then in Maha Oya and realising that while these men were absent from their village, their women and children would be in a worse plight than ever, he excused them their tax and sent them back to
511 Omuni. About a week later we visited Omuni and although we were met with the customary gift of honey to which were added a few berries, it was obvious that the settlement was really short of food and this in spite of a number of families having left some

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and we do not doubt that it occurred formerly, but we could hear of no recent instance in which Veddas alone officiated. 782 648

This did not surprise us for we met with no Veddas who knew these long invocations, and we believe that this practice must have ceased throughout the Vedirata at least two or three generations ago. The necessary conditions existed in those days when, as we were assured, there were communities of village Veddas with shaman of repute such as no longer exist, and we may instance the history of Lindegala given on pp. 171 and 172 as a case in point. Nevertheless the custom survives in a modified form, for Tissahami with three Veddas performed a *kolamaduwa* ceremony at Damenegama in 1903 with the object of stopping an epidemic, alleged to be dysentery, which was then raging in the neighbouring villages. [731] [755]

A very large number of spirits are invoked, but as has been indicated in Chapter IX Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, and the *yaku* of the recent dead were not of the number. This demonstrates that the ceremony as it at present exists is essentially foreign, and therefore the length and nature of the three invocations given are not surprising. The invocation to Unapane Kiriamma which recites her deeds agrees well with all we could find out about her independently, and suggests that these invocations arose among such settled village Veddas as those mentioned in the Sinhalese chronicles referred to in the first chapter. 782

The four invocations written down by Tissahami were discussed at length with him, the shaman of the Henebedda Veddas sitting with us, though as this man—a half bred—knew only parts of these invocations and greatly admired Tissahami, the translations obtained in this way only represent the opinion of Tissahami, and presumably that of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from whom he learnt them in his youth. In these circumstances it is not surprising that two of these translations differ considerably from those furnished by Mr Parker, and this difference is so great in the invocation (No. XXXIX) which should be sung while the leaves are being slashed from the *kolamaduwa* (cf. p. 269) that we have thought it best to give our field version as well as Mr Parker's translation. Some of the allusions, for instance, the reference to the shark contained in the first portion 782 539

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. YAKKURE

This be the verse you grave for me;
Here he lies where belonged to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. STEVENSON

THROUGH a lush meadow studded with fragrant wood-apple, we entered Kalukolu Eba a hamlet of some twenty huts nestling in the picturesque dishabille of a *chena* rank with maize, vegetables and chillies. Here as elsewhere in the Vanni there was much evidence of parangi (framboesia). Fully three-fourths of the people showed active or quiescent traces of the disease. A boy had a necklace of loathsome papules; a woman covered with nodes in practically every bone of her body was boiling a decoction of dry leaves as a salve; another was stewing monitor flesh in chilli-water.

The first sign of our nearness to Yakkure was a cattle-penstamped clean, where half a dozen boys were securing cows and yearlings for the night. Scratching around the stockade with the tameness of domestic fowls were a jungle cock and his dames, and from every side came the jerky cries of wild chanticleers. A cairn of tumbled stones marked the site of an old *vihare*. Blue in the distance, across a wide lagoon bordered with sedge, lotus and dead trees, stood the long rock called Gunner's Quoin, with a bare patch, high on its tree-mantled flank, pointed out to us as the Maraweethiya, a historic cave.

Yakkure itself was a negligently palisaded hamlet nestling ina grove of tamarinds, in full view of a beautiful tank. We were unfortunate in our choice of a camping place. Five days of seclusion in the forest had made us forget that the immediate proximity to a village always meant flies, smells, and embarrassing attentions from forward men and coy but curious women. There were other draw-backs too. At sunset, from a pool near by, came a low, ominous hum auguring ill for our night's rest. We lit fires, bestowed meticulous care on bed curtains, and bedaubed ourselves with mosquitol. The lapwing's desolate cry, the doleful music of water fowl, the booming of great owls, the distant trumpeting of elephants, and more than all, the baffled mosquito murmur around, soon lulled me to sleep. But my companion who had failed to stop up betimes several holes in his curtain, the inside of which was found at dawn to be plastered with a blood-sodden host, tells a different story!

Three miles from Yakkure are the well-known falls of the Mahaweli. At flood-time their thunder is heard at the village. Once in a decade the waters creep up to and submerge the huts, sending the people up trees, and their cattle into the forest to be drowned or killed by leopards. With a *hapua* (priest) for guide, for the place is held eerie, we set out to visit the falls. Skirting an ancient aqueduct (*yoda ella*) which tapped the river a mile above the falls, we came to open jungle bordering the banks, that allowed us free passage through its colonnades of giant

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

A Vedda woman, who had preserved bunches of the fruit in a pot of honey, was able to provide them; and so earned the name of her tribe. The Unapana *waruge*, like all the other *waruges*, also owed its name to a woman. She, when a king was out hunting in a parched land, supplied him with drink by squeezing out her dew-drenched cloth! Thirst apparently destroys the fastidiousness even of kings. The Rugam *waruge* derives from an incident connected with the building of the bund of Rugam tank. After its completion, this earth-work used to break down with the yearly floods despite all efforts at consolidating it. The Sinhalese king of the time had a vision one night telling him, that if a pregnant woman were built alive into the bund, it would ever after remain intact. A Vedda woman was sacrificed, and her clan received the name of the tank. The Uru *waruge* was called after a child-birth in a pig's hole; the Tala *waruge* after such an episode in a *talawa* or glade; the Nabudena, Kiribo and Embille *waruges* after similar occurrences under *nabudu*, *kiribo* and *embille* trees respectively. The Veddas being nomadic these incidents are common. Gama, as we have seen, owed his name to being born on the way (*gamana*). 614 173 [551]

Though shy and retiring by nature, Veddas are always to be found in the vicinity of Sinhalese settlements; and that, for good reasons: Ceylon being but a small island, its remotest forests are easily accessible; more so in recent years when roads and railways have spread out their tentacles everywhere claiming from Nature her wildest solitudes. Any jungles that have not yet fallen a prey to planting enterprise owe it largely to their aridity and unhealthiness. Nowhere is there a spot in Ceylon to-day that is not within ten miles of some habitation. Besides, it is to the mutual advantage of both Vedda and Sinhalese to be near each other, for if the one can supply grain in days of dearth, the other can repay tenfold with flesh and honey in season. 177 178

The Sinhalese affect an indulgent tolerance towards the Veddas, and aver them to be more of a nuisance than a help, saying the Veddas have to be kept alive when starving. The Vedda, on the other hand, will tell you that he is never in want; for the jungle, even in its worst months, is never totally devoid of food for him who knows where to find it: *kanava* and *kotha* combs are always there, and meat and yams of one sort or another. It must however be admitted, that the Veddas have a great partiality for what the unaided jungle cannot give—*kurrukhan*, maize, and tobacco. Rice is a welcome occasional meal to the Vedda, but he cannot do without *kurrukhan*; it takes much rice to fill the stomach, whereas a *kurrukhan* cake is like a stone, and even a small piece satisfies.

A Sinhalese told us that if you gave a Vedda much by way of barter he would never come near you again, but would go where the giving was more niggardly. (What a salve to the conscience!) We asked a Vedda if this was true: "Much they give us," he said; "though they are always ready enough to take all we give them—and more." [437]

In the bottom of their hearts the Veddas have a suspicion that the Sinhalese wish them no good. A Vedda, when asked how it was that their numbers had dwindled so, said, with simple faith, that it was due to the Sinhalese having killed out his people, by giving them charmed tobacco to eat, so that they died of disease or misadventure. The recent influenza epidemic fairly wiped out the last of the Veddas. 161 186 731

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 554 Uru *warage* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

shorter ceremony *ruwela*, this being an older name than *kolamaduwa*[1]. 535 751

It appeared that the invocations at present in use among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas were those used in the old man's youth, for although he had not, as he stated (truthfully we believe), been closely associated with the Veddas for many years he recognised a number of Vedda invocations which were sung to him, as identical with those sung in his youth, and named the occasions on which each was used. *Maligi* was recognised as sung when honey was taken; the invocation at the beginning of the *kirikoraha* ceremony (cf. p. 285) was promptly named, and the occasions of its use pointed out, but the charm used when driving monkeys was not recognised. A song sung for amusement by the Veddas beginning *Mamini mamini ma deyo* was immediately recognised, as were two of the invocations of the Kolamaduwa ceremony, but considering how Sinhalese in substance this ceremony is this is perhaps not of much importance. 782

At the present day the number of Veddas living their natural forest life is necessarily few, for their territory has been gradually encroached upon by the Sinhalese who are inveterate poachers. The Veddas, who were never numerous within recent historic times, are now rapidly dying out, while many have settled among the Sinhalese and so lost their identity. We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgala but among the Nuwaragala Hills. At Nilgala itself there are no Veddas at the present day, though the local peasant Sinhalese doubtless have much Vedda blood in their veins. The Henebedda and Danigala Veddas are the descendants of those recorded by Bailey in 1863, and the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are the descendants of those known and described by the old Kandyan who visited us at Bandaraduwa. 161

Hennebedda. At Hennebedda we met a number of families living together in the Bendiyagalge caves. They had come to this their largest cave, from several settlements all within a few hours' journey. The genealogies show that at least 166 563

[1] These ceremonies are described in Chapter IX.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

301 among the wilder Veddas at the present day. It therefore appears that although beads are worn as ornaments by the members of certain communities in the Bintenne there is no [184] evidence for their use as such among the Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road.

301 751 We may next consider certain facts which seem to indicate that beads may be sometimes treated as amulets, or at least as having magical power. At Bandaraduwa where there has been a great deal of Sinhalese influence, one woman wore a piece of knotted string round her throat which had been charmed and put on by a Sinhalese to cure her of some ailment. When we gave her a string of beads she was very pleased and immediately broke the old charmed string and put the beads round her neck in place of it.

At Bendiyagalge all the women were particularly anxious for us to give beads to their children and immediately put these round their necks, but those given to themselves were not usually put on in our presence. In both these cases there is only the suggestion that beads were regarded as anything more than ornaments, and this also holds good as regards the beads of bear's bone worn by Kaira of Bingoda already recorded, but in the following cases the relation of beads to the *yaku* is perfectly clear. The women of Unuwatura Bubula, though they possessed beads of the same kind as those worn by the 301 women of Omuni, were afraid to wear them, and gave them 791 to the shaman to keep and use in *yaku* ceremonies. In this village we found that women would not accept red beads as presents because "they were afraid," though they readily took the white beads offered them, and the shaman when dancing to the Alut Yakini wore cross shoulder straps of old beads, and similar beads were kept for Indigollae Yaka.

301 There is equally strong evidence of the definite association of beads with the *yaku* in other communities, though the reason 782 for this association could not be determined. At Sitala Wanniya a band of bast was placed upon the offering to the Rahu Yaku, and our informants said that they would have used beads instead of the bast had they possessed them. At the same place when preparing for the dance to Dola Yaka, who gives

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

success in honey gathering, the shaman asked us for two strings of beads. These beads he placed over betel leaves upon two arrows thrust in the centre of the dancing ground which were surrounded by betel leaves offered to the *yaka*. These beads were said to represent the rough rope of creeper with which the green twigs forming the smoker were secured and the rope by which the smoker was lowered to the comb. 301 782

When it is remembered that Veddas do not tattoo or paint themselves, and have never been seen wearing any kind of seeds as ornaments, it seems reasonable to assume that where beads are sought after by the Veddas they are valued for their supposed magical properties. 304 302 301

In conclusion we may give the only perfectly clear instance of a Vedda wearing an amulet with which we are acquainted. The shaman of Bandaraduwa wore on his wrist a small silver cylinder such as is commonly used to contain a written charm. The cylinder was empty and had never contained a charm, but the shaman told us that he wore it in order to be cured of an illness from which he had suffered formerly, and that presently he would give the cylinder to some pilgrim proceeding to Kataragam in order that he might deposit it in the temple there. 751

The Eating of Human Liver.

Every group of Veddas except the most sophisticated village Veddas believe that it was formerly the custom for a man to carry in his betel pouch a small piece of dry human liver. But the majority of our informants were not clear as to the exact reason for doing this, though they were all agreed that it had something to do with raising a man's valour and making him strong to bear trouble. It was essential that the liver should be taken from a man killed by the individual who proposed to carry a portion of the dried liver in his pouch. When a man had been killed the slayer would open his belly and take out a small portion of his liver which he would dry in the sun in a secret place. This custom appears to have ceased about three generations ago, but the following instance, said to have occurred about fifty years ago, was given us at Bandaraduwa. 789 266

5: Spittal D-5 (oa.1929) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

some unfortunate who had trodden on a wriggling thing. We learnt too late that we had over-shot the game *talawas* of Wavinna by four miles. There was nothing for it, but to plough back through the mud at five the following morning, and to return at ten with a fine buck greatly to the joy of our dispirited company.

Veddas were my quest. Wherever I went, whomever I met, my one question was, "Are there any Veddas hereabout?" So far I had no luck.

A tall slouching man, obliging to obsequiousness, was the *aratchi* of Paragahakelle. He it was who first told me, as he escorted us the next morning, that good Veddas were to be found up north at Galmede. Years ago an illness took him there in search of a famous *vedarala** who one day said to him, "Let us go and see the Veddas." He found them in caves, clothed in leaf and beaten bark, grinding *hurrukhan* and maize with fragments of stone. They stank superbly, and averred that if they poured water on their heads they would surely die. But that was twenty years ago. Would we find them so to-day? The Veddas of Galmede became an obsession and a hope.

Reaching Hinimidurawa that evening the *aratchi* also told us that across the field were people who called themselves Veddas. Even as he spoke one of these joined us. Shifting his gaze from our guns to the fresh spoor of an elephant, he said, "That brute will certainly kill us one day; we cannot escape him. All last night he had me up that tree in the *chena*. A few weeks ago he pulled down one of our huts killing a man and his son." He suggested we might hunt the beast.

"Where is he now?" I asked.

"I drove him that way last night," he said, indicating the direction of our proposed camp. This was not reassuring; the ravages of the animal were in evidence everywhere.

We settled down for the night by a stream that intersected the path. Large fires were lit and the men asked leave to sing, for it was not safe to be voiceless in the feeding grounds of so notorious a 'rogue'. Even as the forest echoed to lewd snatches, we heard the challenge. Having arranged for an all-night watch we were soon asleep. I was roused at midnight by a blowing sound quite close to me. The fires had died out and no one was awake! Groping in the dark I tugged at the first human leg I touched, but it was quite a while before its owner awoke, yawned—and grasped the situation. Then for ten minutes the forest rang to an uproar that might have scared a demon. The next morning, traces in the sand revealed the story. Lying as we were full in the path of the elephant, it had come to within ten yards of us on its nightly visit to the *chena*; then, suddenly changing its mind, it had turned away. It was well I woke when I did.

Heenbanda, a Vedda of Hinimidurawa, illustrated, from personal experience, the potency of a charm he gave us: Coming suddenly on a she-bear with cubs, he had shouted his charm as she rushed at him. The animal was hurled back, spread-eagled, as if struck. Recovering, she advanced again, and this time clasped the unfortunate man by the neck with her fore legs, while with her hind paws she ripped his abdomen; marks of which encounter he still carried. Heenbanda's brother who

*Native physician.

5: Spitzel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 751 accompanied him, now struck the bear with his axe and, when she turned on him, killed her. So much for charms; excellent things—provided a weapon is in your hands. "Trust in God," says the Arabic proverb, "but fasten thy camel securely."

G 361 Uhana was a surprise; the place gave every promise of being in a few years a flourishing settlement, thanks to Government grants of land, cattle and grain on easy terms. Luck at last! Near Uhana was a gipsy camp. Wadinagala gave us first promise of these people; but like a mirage they had faded from stage to stage of our journey, leaving only their camp refuse to mock us. Now, here they were, within two miles of us. We stayed over the next morning that we might visit them. As we neared their encampment we met a man who told us that he had passed them on their way to another camp. They who had been here for weeks must needs pack and begone within an hour of our visit! They were bound, the man said, for a place a mile and a half away. We followed, but did not find them there; instead, was another tantalizer who assured us that we would find them on a knoll by a stream a mile and a half beyond. We proceeded, painfully aware that every step of our way must be retraced in the broiling sun before we could earn our lunch. Disappointment again! Almost tearful with frustration and fatigue, we had thrown ourselves down, when a kindly individual came to our aid.

"Rest here," he said. "I shall go forward and see. Come if you hear me 'hoo.' I can tell of their presence some distance away by the crowing of their cocks and the clatter of their camp." We waited and were rewarded.

G [492] [231] [343] On an undulant opening, reminiscent of Somerset pastures, we found the gipsies. They had just unloaded their pack-bulls and were setting up camp under the blazing sky of noon, disdainful of the shelter of the cool environing jungle—the very antithesis of Vedda ways. Cattle and fowls flecked the glade; boys led goats into the forest. Women, graceful as Dianas, were erecting talipot shelters over collected household goods and communal stacks of grain. Tall men, lithe and sinewy as greyhounds, with mongrels at their heels, carried naked babes. Children, reading favour in our faces, essayed shrill nasal choruses clapping arms to chest. The chief, a quietly curious, grizzled man, with a care-free air bred of the freedom and independence of his life, held in play a vicious cobra just captured. He summed the gipsy life in a sentiment savouring of Borrow: "What are we?" he said. "Children of the open ways, bronzed by the sun, soaked by the rain, born on the trail, buried on the trail. That is our life." They had a sambur spear among them, and apparently only one man adept in its use; but that spear, their little dogs and their own untiring sinews were match enough for any sambur once started.

G 622 G 411 224

V 361 From Uhane to Kotelinda by way of hill-girdled Bokkebedda in the drenching rain. Here, at a glance, we noticed crude little Vedda huts amidst those of the Sinhalese villagers. We were now among the hills of Madana long famed for Veddas; but to-day their caves are only tenanted by bears. Up to now we had traversed a stretch of country designated on the maps Maha-Veddi-Ratta (Great Vedda Country)—an empty name of about as much significance at the present time as the term Cinnamon Gardens applied to Colombo. Kotelinda lies in the centre of a region that is to-day the last stronghold of the Veddas—that

V 103 V 131

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the 252
caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of
fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip 262
and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, 251
or smoked and put by for future use.

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is 262
the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment
by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I
asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them,"
he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry
'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire."

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This 251
is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to
this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as
the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more
meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well inter-
mingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole.

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped 752
in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes
a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good
sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas*
can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil!

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes 777
made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a
bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair;
only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard,
he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal
is more frightened of us than we of him."

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred 773
miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow
the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything;
in yonder Balagala rock he lived.

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or 764
deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the
pigs away.

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of 515
dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If
she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my
axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came
to me."

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, 583
having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later,
it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his
bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the 585
feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out
his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given
him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually 591
throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl
away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents
may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take
our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild
and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one.

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

267 There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
224 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

257 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his
[482] shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent
824 to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251 little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle
252] like meat.

222 Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galsembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *harambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *kahuala*, *hirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261 various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galsembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *halawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up
752 with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapotho, anguluo, lulo, katukanao, hanupatho, antho* (eels), *maguro, hungo, heheliyo, pethy, walihondo, ssthalu, badapathalo, walihairiyo, piniwaliyo, kovalayo, galpandurue.*

† *Kuhurumang-gedde, hala-mul, thimbiri-gedde, dhamba-pothu, pussal-mul.*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kokomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *kansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *wesagalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-kadurugedde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *kirinthea*.

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *kansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat.

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams.

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho,*" he shouts. "*Kiribala, haria, haria, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho.*" A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them.

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It should be mentioned that no fire was lit near the corpse or water left by it when the living deserted the cave. Among the majority, including the two wildest groups of Veddas, there is no avoidance of any of the property of the dead man, and the contents of his betel bag would be eaten directly after his death, but among the members of another group of Veddas (Henebedda), who must be regarded as pure-blooded although their system of magic shows Sinhalese influence, the betel bag, unless it were a very good one, would be left with the corpse, and in any case its contents would not be eaten, but left near the dead man. The areca nut cutter and lime box, which during life were always carried in the bag, would not be left with the corpse, but before they were used by the living, measures were taken of which the avowed design was to render these objects harmless. Thus the old headman of the Henebedda Veddas exposed his father's lime box and areca cutters under a bush for a period which was certainly longer than ten but probably less than thirty days. It was necessary to do this, since if these objects had been used immediately, the individuals using them would probably have contracted the same illness as that from which the dead man suffered, and on further questioning the old man explained that the *yaka* producing the illness from which his father had died would for some time, and in some way which he could not define, remain connected with the chewing apparatus which the dead man had used constantly during his last illness.

At Bandaraduwa we were able to ascertain what was done after the death of a man named Tuta which had occurred in a neighbouring settlement two days before our arrival. The grave was dug by two of the man's brothers who carried the body to it; nothing was buried in the grave, not even the dead man's

were always ready to show us the place in which...they had buried. When we proceeded to dig up the skeleton they for the most part looked on with interest and without showing the least sign of excitement, and when it was necessary to pick all the small hand and feet bones out of the sandy soil they were perfectly ready to assist. We were always told willingly who was buried in a particular spot. The place of burial was always shown us by the relatives of the deceased...thus in Mudugala near Ommi a father showed us the grave of his daughter and in the Nilgala district a son led us to the grave of his father." *Op. cit.* p. 494.

715 Besides the important part in the Vedda cult of the dead played by the propitiation of the *Nae Yaku*, and of the *yaku* of certain other Veddas such as Kande Wanniya who as *yaku* have attained to special importance (approaching that of culture heroes in other forms of belief), there is a certain feeling of reverence for a host of unnamed *yaku*. Little attention is paid to these but, since it is stated that they too were once men, the suggestion may be hazarded that they represent the *yaku* of the forgotten dead. These *yaku*, although all around in the jungle, are in some instances thought of as vaguely attached to special localities, especially to glades in the forest, unusually large trees, and above all large rocks and rocky hilltops. The *yaku* of rocks and hilltops, indeed, tend to become named, taking the name of the hill they inhabit; even among the less civilised Veddas they are sometimes identified with the *yaku* of Vedda headmen who have lived on or near the hills. On the other hand among the more sophisticated Veddas these *yaku* tend to become less and less the spirits of dead Veddas, and finally, under Tamil influence, are thought of as dangerous spirits, immigrants from beyond the Ocean, each of whom with a female of his own species haunts the hilltops and sends disease. Somewhat akin to these *yaku* in their less dangerous forms are the *kiriamma* (literally milk mothers, i.e. grandmothers), the *yaku* of Vedda women, generally the wives of Vedda headmen or chiefs, many of whom are thought of as haunting the sides and tops of hills where there are rocks and springs. They are sometimes jealous of people gathering honey—indeed there is a [222 tendency to avoid rocky mountain tops on their account—but 769] may be placated by a charm, though occasionally a little honey is left for them with a muttered *kapau kiriammala*—Eat O [153] Kiriammaa. Although they retain the fondness for children which they felt in their lifetime they not infrequently send sickness, at least among the more sophisticated Veddas.

A few *kiriamma* have become rather important *yaku*, notably an old woman of the Unapane clan now known as Unapane Kiriammaa, but such *kiriamma* do not appear to be especially associated with rocky or hilly sites.

769 We are now in a position to discuss the possible evolution of
782

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The dwellers of certain spirits frequenting certain hills and
776 rocks were known; they were said not to be worshipped, although
[753] they were looked upon with awe and respect as they were
believed to cause sickness.

These spirits are the Maha Yakini who are especially associated with the hills Nuwaragala, Walimbagala and a rock called Kalumal Ela. The chief of the Maha Yakini is the Maha Kiriamma, and the other Maha Yakini are her attendants. Although associated with rocks and hill-tops they are not invoked before taking honey in these places. It was stated that the Maha Yakini were formerly living people—old women—and that they were especially fond of children and might even steal them. It is for this reason that infants are protected by an arrow struck in the ground, and it is clear that something of their character as old Vedda women still survives in spite of their generally more or less unfriendly attributes.

Concerning the Maha Kiriamma nothing definite could be learnt: our informant had heard it said that she had been invoked in the old days, but knew nothing of this himself. Handuna said that what little knowledge they had of the Maha Kiriamma had travelled to them from the Bintenne Veddas near Horaborawewa[1].

771 In the Sitala Wanniya community, therefore, the second stratum is well developed and the third is indicated. The second and third strata, though probably not recently introduced, are, however, entirely subsidiary to the primitive cult of the friendly dead.

The Bandaraduwa community is one in which the second
771 stratum is so highly developed that at first sight it appears domi-
769 nant, for after a death offerings are made to the Buddhist priest, but this is only done as an additional means of propitiation of the *Nae Yaku* who are still considered of the first importance, to whom an offering is made on the seventh day after death. Further,
771 Kande Yaka is still closely associated with the *Nae Yaku* and
776 is invoked with them, but he is no longer formally regarded as
777 the Lord of the Dead, that function has been usurped by Kanda Swami or Skanda known to these Veddas as "the Kataragam

[1] An invocation to the Maha Kiriamma (No. XXXIII), a fragment of a much longer formula (No. XXXIX), unknown to our informants, is given in Chapter X.

114 p. 135, but it may be noted that Bailey clearly did not know of the existence of shamanistic ceremonies and we have little doubt that the information given him, which he took to refer to dreams, in fact described the experiences of possession. The "few sticks...with a branch thrown over them" are clearly remains of the *mesas* upon which the offerings are placed.

775 The *Maha Yakino* are the spirits of old Vedda women, the chief of whom is the Maha Kiriamma, who, as Bailey pointed out 753 in 1863, is more feared than loved, and in many cases is supposed to send sickness. It was said that her name was Anami and that she lived at Okegala near Alutnuwara, dying of old age; but in spite of these circumstantial details, which are perhaps due to the teachings of Tissahami, neither the name nor the memory of her husband has survived.

775 Unapane Kiriamma is another important *Maha Yakini* who lived near Unapane[1].

Unapane Kiriamma also gives luck in honey getting, and it is thought that she in some way causes bees to build good combs, in fact, all the *Maha Yakino* are associated with rock honey from the belief that they especially affect the rocky crests of hills[2].

Although the *Maha Yakino* are looked upon as the spirits of old Vedda women and are reputed to show their fondness for children by kidnapping them, they are regarded with considerable awe, for they are considered to send disease, and it is necessary to make an offering to them in order that this may be removed. This is generally done at the *kolamadurus* ceremony described on p. 268. With the exception of the

[1] She is known to the jungle Sinhalese of the Vedirata, who state that with her husband Unapane Kaira Waaniya she made the Unapane paddy fields. She is [842] particularly invoked by barren women, and those who have brought forth still-born children, for increase of cattle and milk, to prevent cattle being taken by leopards or damaging the crops and to give good harvests.

[2] Offerings of honey made to the *Maha Yakino* are described elsewhere. The belief that the *Maha Yakino* are especially associated with hills is also found among the Sinhalese of the Vedda country, who especially associate these spirits with hills [823] on which springs are found or on which streams arise. One such hill near Nilgala, which at the end of the rains has many small streams running down its face, is known as Yakini Ela and is especially associated by the neighbouring Sinhalese with the *Maha Yakino*, who they say can be heard moving about the crest at night.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yaku, while at nearly all the village Vedda communities Indigollae Yaka was said to bring the *Nae Yaku*. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all: perhaps Gale Yaka had become Lord of the Dead as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony; Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate ceremony. No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both to bring evil upon man and to help them to get game was, however, volunteered and, as already mentioned, some old, specially valuable beads were kept to be offered to him.

Gale Yaka was also invoked to give success when gathering honey; he appeared to be associated with a certain rock near Mahaella, and we were told that beads were worn during the ceremony.

The Maha Kiriamma was said to be one of the most powerful of the *Maha Yakino*, a class of female spirits who were said to send sickness[1]. Unapane Yakini (Unapane Kiriamma) was another *yakini* of the same class who was thought to live at Omunigala. Here as among many other groups of Veddas the *Maha Yakino* were associated with hill tops, and it was the custom for people collecting the honey of the rock bee to leave a piece of the comb *in situ*, saying, "Eat, O Kiriamma[2]."

When the *Maha Yakino* are invoked to cure sickness a basket is used in which are put a bead necklace and bangles and the leaves of a *na* tree. The shaman becomes possessed and raises the basket above the patient's head and prophesies recovery. The leaves are subsequently thrown away, but the beads and bangles are preserved for the *Yakino*. Presumably this is the origin of the similar or identical use of these objects in the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which, however, appears to be of Sinhalese origin.

[1] Nothing was ever said to cause us to suspect that she was connected with Gale Yaka or Indigollae Yaka.

[2] Kiriamma is in the plural in the Sinhalese, showing that all the *Maha Yakino* in the neighbourhood were invoked to partake.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

being eaten by the community. A man becomes a *yaka* directly he is dead, nothing is buried with him and the contents of his betel pouch are used in the ordinary way. The *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some days after death, one, or according to another informant two, *aude* being used.

At Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle neither Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka was known, and these two *yaku* were also unknown at Dambani where, however, the Belligala Arachi said that Kande Yaka gives luck in hunting. This has been confirmed by Mr Hartshorne's notes, so that although our informants at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle stated that they did not know this *yaka*, too much stress must not be laid upon this.

The other two classes of *yaku* invoked at Dambani are tree and rock *yaku*. Both send sickness and are invoked with dancing and offerings to remove it, the stone magic described on p. 143 being used to determine which *yaka* is responsible for the disease. The most important rock *yaku* are Mawaragala Yaka, Rerangala Yaka, Barutugala Yaka, and Mehaluku Yakini. The latter is associated with a rock Batugala near Alutnuwara, the others with the peaks whose names they bear.

Two tree *yaku* were mentioned, each having a number of attendants. These tree *yaku* are named Na Gaha Yaka (Na tree Yaka) and Bo Gaha Yaka (Bo tree Yaka), that is to say they are called after the trees with which they are associated, and the Arachi pointed out that tree *yaku* habitually lived in trees of the species after which they are named. We could not discover any facts suggesting that these tree *yaku* were considered to represent the life of the tree.

HORABORAWEWA.

The surroundings and physical characters of the Veddas of Horaborawewa have been described on p. 53. The shaman is the local Sinhalese headman, who stated that the same *yaku* are invoked by Veddas and Sinhalese alike. Seren (Riri) Yaka is the most important *yaka*, Wiloya Yaka and Kalu Yaka are also known, and it was stated that the latter spirit was also called Wangata Yaka. Our informant had not heard of Kande Yaka or Bilindi Yaka, and it was certain that the worshipped *yaku*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[762] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

776 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

a piece of flesh is offered to the *Nae Yaku* who are called by name, and then the Veddas eat it themselves.

Vihara Deyo is considered to send sickness, and he is invoked to make men whole again. Rice is cooked with milk usually obtained from the Tamil village of Horawila, and this with betel and areca nut is put upon a *maesa*. Only the shaman dances, and after the ceremony the offering is eaten by the whole community, including the sick man. Our informant did not know how the *yaka* or *deyo* causing the sickness was discovered, that being left to the shaman.

YAKURE.

The important spiritual agencies are:—Gange Bandar Deyo, Genikandia Deyo, Palugamman Deyo, Vihara Deyo, Mangara Deyo. Our informants knew of Indigollae Yaka but did not know if he ever was a man or had always been a spirit. Nothing was known of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka. Dead shamans are thought to become *yaku*, and it is the spirits of these people who are the *Nae Yaku*: the fate of the spirits of ordinary folk is uncertain, but they do not become *Nae Yaku*. The *Nae Yaku* are danced to and invoked with the other *yaku* in order to cure sickness, but apparently they are not considered particularly important. A *maesa* is made and a cloth put over it, and on it are laid flowers of many kinds, betel leaves and areca nuts. Incense is burned before these offerings, in front of which the shaman dances facing the east. In some instances the *maesa* is built inside the temple, the shaman holds a cloth in his hand and a pot of rice cooked in milk is placed by the *maesa* on a rice pounder[1]. This is not tasted during the dance, but is eaten afterwards by the shaman and the sick man and other individuals of the community[2].

Kataragam Deyo is invoked especially to protect the chena, and at harvest an offering is made which is afterwards eaten as at Elakotaliya.

[1] It must be remembered that Yakure is a great cattle breeding centre.

[2] This is an interesting contrast to the practice which Mr Parker informs us prevails in the south of the island, where food given to spirits is not eaten at all but is exposed in the jungle or some deserted place. The fact that at Yakure food offered to spirits, many of whom are of Sinhalese or Tamil origin, is eaten, is clearly a remnant of the Vedda belief that the spirits invoked are in the main beneficent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered. 776 755

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding. 231 776 769

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *aude* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo. 778 346

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams, 776 753 776 224 776 775 787

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

prevalence among the Sinhalese of magic having for its object the production of disease and death. Even the Henebedda Veddas, who have adopted a number of Sinhalese charms against animals, do not believe in this form of magic. The presence of a woman with wasting of both legs and contracture, the result of a long-standing ulcerative process of obscure origin which developed spontaneously, enabled this to be tested.

Although we discussed this woman's condition with a number of Veddas it was only once suggested, and then very doubtfully, that it might have been due to Sinhalese *kuniyam* magic[1], and it was clear that to the community generally this woman's disease was simply an accident, the origin of which they did not understand and did not trouble about.

Though Veddas, and especially Vedda women, are extremely shy there is no belief in the evil eye, or in the danger of being "overlooked."

Charms protective against Animals.

The bear is the only animal that the Veddas really fear, and there is no doubt that a number of Veddas and jungle-dwelling Sinhalese are mauled each year, indeed, at least one man in each community that we visited bore the marks of the bear's paws. Bear's flesh is not eaten and we doubt if Veddas ever voluntarily attack a bear, though there is no doubt that they sometimes kill one that has attacked them. Hence, the bear is called the "enemy" and his name is seldom mentioned nor is he represented among the rock paintings at Pihilegodagalge although the leopard, who steals the Vedda dogs and is hated in consequence, is represented. When questioned on the subject our male informants said nothing, but a number of women looked surprised and one said quite decidedly that no one would paint a bear. The words used in speaking of the bear are of

[1] That the *kuniyam* idea was foreign to the one Vedda who suggested it, was proved by the results of further questioning, when our informant gave an outline of one of the commonest Sinhalese beliefs as to the method of preparation and action of *kuniyam* charms. The reference to *kuniyam* in one of the "Vedda charms" published by Mr De Zoysa (*Journal Ceylon Branch R. A. S.*, Vol. VII, 1881, p. 103), cannot be taken to invalidate our conclusions, for many of these charms show undoubted Sinhalese influence.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

forest near the hunter to make him believe that the game he is following has run away. 796

Bedi Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who breaks sticks and causes dead branches to fall and so frighten game away. 782 773

Kili Mas Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who cut up the animal whose flesh and blood were used at the first *avana*.

Polu Mas Vedda, who smoked part of the meat of this animal.

Melihi Vedda, the *yaka* who blinds hunters so that they cannot track the wounded game.

Ahuru Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first snapped his fingers to call his dogs.

Ihurun Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first whistled to his dogs to come hunting.

These eleven *yaku* are considered strong enough to kill folk and to send sickness; it appeared to us that the individuals of this group were not carefully differentiated but rather regarded as one power. [753]

The Korala of Bakiella who has already been mentioned said that a leaf cone (*goṭuwa*) containing blood was placed on a heap of leaves with flesh from the throat, tongue and ears of the kill and the whole offered to the 64,000 Maralu Yaku and 64,000 Kadawara Yaku. The leaf cone is a distinctly Sinhalese feature and the ceremony described by the Korala had become entirely Sinhalese in character. This is borne out by the invocation which was written down for us by the Korala. 796 782 177 539

Atu avanē lē dena mantraya Kaḍawara Rīri Yakaṭa Yakinniṭa.

Vītāla niuwara sīnāpoti bisawun wahansēge hradaya palā bihi unu Kaḍawēra Riri Yakshayā Yakshiniṭa atu awanak aetun koṭu awanak aetun, amu mas amu riri aetun.

Adat mama anḍagasā kaepa kera dennē. Mama yana issaraṭa rubera ax munayak genādiṇ, ellē pāḍu kera dīlā, veḍī munē is(sara)ṭa kera dīla, amaren giyat (a) mareṇ piṭat wilā, marana pathera dīlā, waessī langaṭa mīden ennā wāgē, kambe kanuweṭa magul aetek baenda palikera wāge, ella pāḍu (ka) ra denḍa Kaḍawera Riri Yakshayā Yakshīgen warami.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

us in danger, sickness etc.' When we enquired whether their dead lived on as spirits he replied, they did not consider whether the departed were living or dead, they were just spirits, in Tamil *sami* or *dewi*, in Sinhalese *yako*; all spirits were alike, neither good nor bad. Another coast Vedda named Patiniya told us that their religion was that of the Tamils. In memory of their dead, whom they called *yako*, they cooked rice and ate it; they invoked the *yako* in sickness, etc.[1]"

Just as Kapalpei sent sickness, so death was also attributed to him, but perhaps not epidemics, for it appeared to be generally considered that a single death would satisfy him for the time, so that it would be days or weeks before he would be expected to send sickness or death again.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 498.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

wildest Veddahs are without an "instinct of worship." They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread. 776

Such appears to be the form which the superstitions of every savage tribe naturally assume,—the necessity for a belief in something more than human, imparting to the commonest objects a supernatural character. But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every near relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their "néhya yakoon," kindred spirits. They describe them as "ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting." In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, "bilindoo yakkoon," or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke.* 776 775 769

It is a pretty belief, and contrasts favourably with the superstitions of the Kandyans, who have spirits enough in their system, but almost all thoroughly malignant, and needing constant propitiation. But the Veddah spirit-world is singularly free from evil. I can find only one *absolutely* malignant spirit in it whom they really fear;† though, like all savages, they have an undefined awe of the nameless spirits whom they believe to haunt the darkness. The shades of their ancestors and of their children seem to be purely benevolent. The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following. An arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm. 769 776 782

"Mâ miya, mâ miy, mâ deyâ'
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâ'h!" [539]

* They also speak of them as "witera yakkoon," "child-spirits." They seem to prefer their great-grandmother (maha kiri amma) to the rest of their defunct ancestors; but I cannot ascertain any cause for their preference for the old lady. I may, however, be wrong in describing it as a preference. It may be the reverse, for she is invoked chiefly in cases of sickness, when the patient is supposed to be suffering from the malignity of a spirit. [753]

† Awiramada Yakko, who especially injures women, lying wait for them in the forest.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
593 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

● 753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

I remarked that while walking through the jungle, though 481
provided with a knife, Dissan Hamy rarely used it to cut away any intercepting branch or creeper, these being invariably bent to one side by the hand.

I observed this custom many years ago when travelling through a distant village called Uda Wellawey at the foot of the Haldummulla hills, and I understand it is to prevent persons from finding a hunter's trail.

I made inquiry, in addition to direct observation while 164
exploring the Vedda country, as to the prevailing diseases among the inhabitants, and what was done as regards remedies. The result of my investigation led me to conclude that the commonest disease among adults was fever, but I could get no statistics on which I could rely to form an opinion as to the percentage this particular disease afforded as compared with others.

It was, however, difficult to discriminate in what proportion of fevers typhoid was to be regarded, as I found in many cases the people did not know the difference. Dysentery appears to be well known, and is locally called "Le-pachchane," but I was told that it was not nearly so common as fever. Fever is not common as compared with the prevalence of that disease in the Tamankaduwa District.

Venereal, I am told, is unknown, and probably for reasons I gave earlier in this Paper. It occurs, however, more in the neighbourhood of civilized centres. I did not see a single instance of goitre, or of elephantiasis, though I cannot suppose the latter is unknown. I found numerous cases of sores on the feet and legs of both adults and children, but these were explained as being in all cases due to accidental injuries. Bronchitis, however, is common, more especially in children, who also appear to be commonly troubled with anæmia, which may or may not be directly due to intestinal parasites.

As regards treatment, I found that the remedy was invari- 753
ably based on the theory that diseases may be divided into 757
two great classes—heating or inflammatory, and the opposite —therefore the cure was to be found in those specifics which were opposed to these two heads of causation. For example, if a man had a violent cold, the "milk" of the coconut could

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

●753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Munronia pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
824 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VIII

MAGIC

789 In the chapters upon religion we have described those ceremonies and observances of the Veddas which depend for their efficacy upon the successful appeal to some extra-human personal influence. In this section we shall discuss a number of actions which we consider magical, that is, actions which are expected to produce the required result automatically by virtue of their own intrinsic qualities.

One of the first things we noted during our stay in the Vedda country was the very slight part which magic played in the life of the Veddas. The more we saw of the people the more convinced we became of this. It seems to us that among the uncontaminated Veddas of two or three generations ago magical practices were almost entirely absent, and even at the present day the few remaining Veddas who have not been much exposed to foreign influence have scarcely any customs that are truly magical.

789 266 We include in this chapter the custom which formerly existed of eating a small piece of human liver in times of great stress, for even if this custom be not considered magical in the strict sense, it is clearly based on principles which lie at the root of many magical beliefs.

789 Since it is important to make thoroughly clear the absence of many forms of magic, we shall consider the condition of the different communities with regard to some of the most commonly occurring forms.

Magic directed against the Individual.

754 This is completely absent except among the village Veddas, which is all the more surprising in view of the extraordinary

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

prevalence among the Sinhalese of magic having for its object the production of disease and death. Even the Henebedda Veddas, who have adopted a number of Sinhalese charms against animals, do not believe in this form of magic. The presence of a woman with wasting of both legs and contracture, the result of a long-standing ulcerative process of obscure origin which developed spontaneously, enabled this to be tested.

Although we discussed this woman's condition with a number of Veddas it was only once suggested, and then very doubtfully, that it might have been due to Sinhalese *huniyam* magic[1], and it was clear that to the community generally this woman's disease was simply an accident, the origin of which they did not understand and did not trouble about.

Though Veddas, and especially Vedda women, are extremely shy there is no belief in the evil eye, or in the danger of being "overlooked."

Charms protective against Animals.

The bear is the only animal that the Veddas really fear, and there is no doubt that a number of Veddas and jungle-dwelling Sinhalese are mauled each year, indeed, at least one man in each community that we visited bore the marks of the bear's paws. Bear's flesh is not eaten and we doubt if Veddas ever voluntarily attack a bear, though there is no doubt that they sometimes kill one that has attacked them. Hence, the bear is called the "enemy" and his name is seldom mentioned nor is he represented among the rock paintings at Pihilegodagalge although the leopard, who steals the Vedda dogs and is hated in consequence, is represented. When questioned on the subject our male informants said nothing, but a number of women looked surprised and one said quite decidedly that no one would paint a bear. The words used in speaking of the bear are of

[1] That the *huniyam* idea was foreign to the one Vedda who suggested it, was proved by the results of further questioning, when our informant gave an outline of one of the commonest Sinhalese beliefs as to the method of preparation and action of *huniyam* charms. The reference to *huniyam* in one of the "Vedda charms" published by Mr De Zoysa (*Journal Ceylon Branch R. A. S.*, Vol. VII, 1881, p. 103), cannot be taken to invalidate our conclusions, for many of these charms show undoubted Sinhalese influence.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

But dogs are still prized by the Veddah. Of all his possessions, he values most his bow, which is placed under his head when he sleeps; and next in his estimation is the dog who guards it, sleeping always at his master's head. "What would you do," I asked a Veddah once, "if your bow were stolen?" "No one could steal it," he replied; "the dog would not let him." "But if any one killed your dog." His answer was significant. He clutched his axe, and made a motion as though he would cut down the man who did so. 231 422 [685]

And this was no idle threat. In 1849, a Bintenne Veddah deliberately knocked a man's brains out, for having, as he believed, killed two of his dogs by magic.* He never attempted to deny what he had done. "It is true," he said at the coroner's inquest, "I killed him, and I did so because he had killed, by witchcraft, the two dogs I had reared and hunted with for my support." He added, as quite a secondary justification, that the murdered man had also practised his magic arts on himself. He detailed, with great minuteness, how he lay wait for him, and how, while he, with his wife and child, was resting in the shade, he watched his opportunity, and felled him with a club: and—strong evidence of the proverbial truthfulness of the Veddahs—he described how, by his influence (he was the head man of one of the small tribes), he intimidated the widow and father of his victim, and so kept the murder secret for some days. 648 685 [754]

None but the woman saw the deed; and had falsehood been the normal characteristic of the Veddahs, as I fear it is with too many of their more civilized compatriots, he would probably have escaped punishment. He was tried and convicted of murder, but the sentence of death was commuted to several years imprisonment. It was hoped that, having received some instructions in goal, he might carry back with him some little civilization to his own people. 648

But imprisonment was to him a greater punishment than death. He pined away in confinement, and was released to save his life. I have often seen him in Bintenne. Civilization has not done much for him. He differs from his brethren only in having acquired a taste for jewelry, for he wears with apparent pride, a tawdry brass chain round his waist. [301]

The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk,† deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguano, and pengolin—all flesh, indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, 262

* The murdered man was not a Veddah, but a low-country vagrant; several of whom have, of late years, taken up their abode near the Bintenne Veddahs, to their great annoyance.

† What is commonly termed an elk in Ceylon, is the Samba deer (*rusa Aristotelis*). [136]

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

it is only because, after repeated and careful inquiry, I cannot establish the fact of such a marriage now actually existing, that I am inclined to consider that it is becoming obsolete. But I should be almost justified as describing it as an existing custom, for many of the young men are the offspring of such connections. The practice is spoken of by them in the present tense, and alluded to as a matter of course, without the smallest repugnance.* 582 835

Amongst the Bintenne Veddahs, then, it may be said to have been, for perhaps two generations or so, extinct. Amongst those of Nilgala it is, at most, only becoming so. And it has, undoubtedly, been the custom among both from time immemorial. Utterly revolting as it is to us, we must remember that with them it was a custom sanctioned by the practice of ages. It is not the consequence of a "poor community," nor the growth of mere barbarism. If it were, the elder sister would be equally sought after; if it were, polygamy in all its forms would be found among them. There would, in fact, be no restraint.†

I have before described the short stature of the Veddahs—their weak and vacant expression, their striking resemblance to each other, characteristics much more marked upon the Veddahs of Nilgala than those of Bintenne. The practice I have just noticed is quite sufficient to account for these. 142 143

It might naturally be supposed that such marriages would produce, besides a stunted growth, insanity, idiocy, and epilepsy. But I find few traces of these maladies. Madness rarely occurs, idiocy still less frequently; though dogged stupidity is not at all uncommon amongst them.‡ But in other respects the injurious effects of this custom would seem to be plainly discernible. The 143 158 000

* I am not surprised that Tennent should be ignorant of this custom. It is a most difficult task to obtain intelligible answers to the commonest questions from these ignorant creatures; and unless a clue to some subject is accidentally found, the inquirer would learn little. There are practices as revolting, though not so peculiar, among some of the Indian tribes.

† It is curious that the only trace I can find of anything approaching to a belief in retributive justice is a tradition of a man, whose name even has been preserved, and whose family still exists, who, they say, was eaten by worms for having exceeded the authorized limit, and formed connections with his elder sisters and aunts. By whom this punishment was inflicted they do not pretend to say; but the painful death they regard as the direct consequence of his incest.

‡ Madness is by no means common among them. They believe if one man curse another, the man who is cursed becomes mad. This is evidently the same superstition as is common among the Singhalese, and known as the "Kata waha," "the evil mouth," or "poison of the mouth," equivalent to the prevalent faith in the "Ess waha," "the evil eye," or "poison of the eye." Burton, in his *El Medinah Mecca*, says, "the national type has been preserved by systematic intermarriages. No evil results are anticipated from the union of first cousins; and the experience of ages and of a nation may be trusted." 754

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION (CONTINUED)

114
771

WE have now described the fundamental ideas of the Vedda cult of the dead, but superposed upon these there are two other strata of belief both of which have influenced the religion of certain groups of Veddas to a greater or less extent. Before discussing these we may briefly indicate the views of the more thorough of previous investigators. In this as in other matters Knox was better informed than many of his successors when he said of the Veddas, "The *tamer* do build Temples, the wild only bring their sacrifice under Trees, and while it is offering dance round it, both men and women[1]." Tennant's account adds little to this; Bailey's account, undoubtedly the most complete and trustworthy that has been given to date, is not quoted here because it will be found almost in full on pp. 160 and 161 where the religious beliefs of the Nilgala Veddas are discussed. Tennant writes, "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state...in short, no instinct of worship, except...when sick, they send for devil dancers to drive away the evil spirit, who is believed to inflict the disease. The dance is executed in front of an offering of something eatable, placed on a tripod of sticks, the dancer having his head and girdle decorated with green leaves. At first he shuffles with his feet to a plaintive air, and by degrees he works himself into a state of great excitement and action, accompanied by moans and screams, and during this paroxysm, he professes to be inspired with instruction for the cure of the patient[2]."

114
771
755

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 63.
[2] Tennant, *op. cit.* pp. 441 and 442.

[p. 146]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yaku, while at nearly all the village Vedda communities Indigollae Yaka was said to bring the *Nae Yaku*. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all: perhaps Gale Yaka had become Lord of the Dead as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony; Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate ceremony. No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both to bring evil upon man and to help them to get game was, however, volunteered and, as already mentioned, some old, specially valuable beads were kept to be offered to him.

Gale Yaka was also invoked to give success when gathering honey; he appeared to be associated with a certain rock near Mahaella, and we were told that beads were worn during the ceremony.

The Maha Kiriamma was said to be one of the most powerful of the *Maha Yakino*, a class of female spirits who were said to send sickness[1]. Unapane Yakini (Unapane Kiriamma) was another *yakini* of the same class who was thought to live at Omunigala. Here as among many other groups of Veddas the *Maha Yakino* were associated with hill tops, and it was the custom for people collecting the honey of the rock bee to leave a piece of the comb *in situ*, saying, "Eat, O Kiriamma[2]."

When the *Maha Yakino* are invoked to cure sickness a basket is used in which are put a bead necklace and bangles and the leaves of a *na* tree. The shaman becomes possessed and raises the basket above the patient's head and prophesies recovery. The leaves are subsequently thrown away, but the beads and bangles are preserved for the *Yakino*. Presumably this is the origin of the similar or identical use of these objects in the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which, however, appears to be of Sinhalese origin.

[1] Nothing was ever said to cause us to suspect that she was connected with Gale Yaka or Indigollae Yaka.

[2] Kiriamma is in the plural in the Sinhalese, showing that all the *Maha Yakino* in the neighbourhood were invoked to partake.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Gange Bandar, unknown among the wilder Veddas but worshipped by all village Veddas, was known at Unuwatura Bubula. 784

OMUNI.

The history of this settlement dating back to the first half of the last century has been given on pp. 45 and 46. The Omuni folk believe there are spirits (*yaku*) everywhere in the jungle, but none have seen them; further, there are many *yaku* of each kind or species such as the Indigollae Yaku, the Dadayan Yaku and many others including the Gale Yaku called the Jungle Yaku, who do not, however, frequent the jungle around Omuni. It was said that Ganga Bandar Deyo who lives in rocks in the river is greater than any of these. Omuni was one of the first Vedda settlements we visited, and as the importance of Sinhalese and Tamil gods and demons was not then appreciated no questions concerning these were asked. It is, however, reasonable to suppose that the Kataragam God and other mighty *deviyo* are worshipped. The spirits of the dead (*Nae Yaku*) are believed to be associated with rocks; on the whole they are kindly spirits, but it is necessary to invoke and propitiate them. 775

A *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some little time after a death has taken place, at which the shaman dances with an *aude* before a *maesa* on which is placed an offering of cooked yams and other food, and the *maesa* is decorated with special clothes kept for that purpose. The *aude* is held in the smoke arising from gum-resin thrown on glowing charcoal, and then pressed on the head of all the male members of the community. If this were not done little game would be killed. 769 782

We have an account of another ceremony performed to cure sickness and when the chena had been reaped, but it is not clear what spirits were invoked at this; presumably the most important of these were certain of the *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*, though the *Nae Yaku* may have played a subordinate part. A shed or very rough house is built and hung with special clothes reserved for this purpose, those shown to us being rather old and worn pieces of linen woven at Batticaloa. A roughly made shelf forming a sort of altar is built in the shed on which 755

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

755 the offering is placed. The dance is held at night and continues until morning when the whole community eat the offering, though only the men dance. We were shown a pot in a small cave near the settlement which was said to be kept there purposely, and which it was stated was used for boiling rice for the ceremony.

771 177 We may now consider the religious beliefs of certain communities in which the third stratum of belief already alluded to is dominant. Such communities are the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne and those of the Eastern Province and Tamankaduwa, among all of whom the *Nae Yaku* were known and reverenced, but the great Vedda heroes have all disappeared, their place having been taken by numerous Sinhalese gods and demons. Some of the village Veddas even build temples, rough bark or [346] mud huts like their own habitations in which the various symbols of the *deviyo* and *yaku* are kept and in which the shamans dances.

Such a temple was seen at Yakure dedicated to Gangi Bandar Deyo, here also were two rough stones leaning against [778] a tree on the *bund* of Yakurewaewa which were held sacred to Gane Deyo (Ganesa).

At a place called Nadena, where there were said to be Veddas until a few years ago, on the road running inland from Patrippu in the Eastern Province, there is a temple containing an image of Ganesa and this is looked upon as a Vedda shrine. Other temples or shrines in the Eastern Province are traditionally associated with Veddas though none survive at the present day, except, we believe, at Portiv near Patrippu and at Mandu.

VILLAGE VEDDAS OF THE BINTENNE.

775 115 At Dambani and the neighbouring settlements of Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the *Nae Yaku* are held to be of great importance. Reference has already been made on p. 5 to the difficulty of working with these village Veddas, and our information concerning the religious beliefs of the Dambani folk was obtained from the Arachi of Belligala; with regard to Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the little information we possess was obtained at first hand and carefully checked, and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

KALUKALAEBA.

The most important spiritual agencies are the following:— Gange Bandar Deyo, Kataragam Deyo, Indigollae Yaka, Rerang Yaka, Riri Yaka (Sinhalese), Maruiu Yaka, Rahu Yaka, and Elle Yakini. 776

In spite of the fact that the people of Kalukalaeba keep cattle and are predominantly agriculturalists Gange Bandar Deyo, who lives on the hill Yangala beyond Hemberewa and gives luck in hunting and honey gathering, was said to be especially important. He is invoked when game is scarce, but it is the Kataragam God who gives increase of yams and vegetable food. They do not dance to him but make offerings of cooked brinjal and pumpkins, which are left for half-a-day on a rude altar and then eaten. Chena are also under the protection of the Kataragam God to whom offerings are made after the produce has been reaped, some of every kind of fruit being cooked and exposed in the chena for some hours before it is eaten by the people. 776 782

At Kalukalaeba Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Bambura Yaka were unknown. The spirits of the dead are recognised as the *Nae Yaku*, but they are certainly thought of as far less important than a number of other spiritual beings to be immediately considered. They are however invoked, but it seemed that this was not done habitually immediately after a death, but at quite uncertain intervals to remove sickness. The father of 775 755

and Bistenne, and Nilgala, alike agree that he was a great and powerful prince. They speak of him often, and call him Barangala Kimbul-Herat mudiyanse Rajapat Wanniwache. From the name Herat it is manifest he headed some great political movement.... Raja-pat probably means king-maker, and the whole title may be translated as 'His Excellency the General Kimbul-Otbe of Barangala, the king-maker Lord-of-the-Marches,' or else the 'King-made Lord-of-the-Marches,' wanni, literally a forest or waste, being used exactly as we use the term 'marches,' of Wales or Scotland. The respect of the Sinhalese, and this elaborate title of highest honour, show that this great Vaedda Chieftain headed an army that replaced one of the Sinhalese kings upon the throne of his ancestors. I think it is more probable he figured in a comparatively modern war than in a very ancient one....It is perfectly likely that Kimbul-Otbe was a prince of the Sinhala royal family, who married a Vaedda....

"The supposition that Kimbul-Otbe was a Sinhala, and that he married either a Bandara or an Unapana lady, would thus account for the otherwise unexplained fact that the Sinhalese say some of their oldest and best families also descended from Kimbul-Otbe, though they did not know whether he was really a Vaedda or was claimed by the Vaeddas in mistake, having been their prince." *Op. cit.* Vol. 1, p. 176.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[762] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

776 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

a piece of flesh is offered to the *Nae Yaku* who are called by name, and then the Veddas eat it themselves.

Vihara Deyo is considered to send sickness, and he is invoked to make men whole again. Rice is cooked with milk usually obtained from the Tamil village of Horawila, and this with betel and areca nut is put upon a *maesa*. Only the shaman dances, and after the ceremony the offering is eaten by the whole community, including the sick man. Our informant did not know how the *yaka* or *deyo* causing the sickness was discovered, that being left to the shaman.

YAKURE.

The important spiritual agencies are:—Gange Bandar Deyo, Genikandia Deyo, Palugamman Deyo, Vihara Deyo, Mangara Deyo. Our informants knew of Indigollae Yaka but did not know if he ever was a man or had always been a spirit. Nothing was known of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka. Dead shamans are thought to become *yaku*, and it is the spirits of these people who are the *Nae Yaku*: the fate of the spirits of ordinary folk is uncertain, but they do not become *Nae Yaku*. The *Nae Yaku* are danced to and invoked with the other *yaku* in order to cure sickness, but apparently they are not considered particularly important. A *maesa* is made and a cloth put over it, and on it are laid flowers of many kinds, betel leaves and areca nuts. Incense is burned before these offerings, in front of which the shaman dances facing the east. In some instances the *maesa* is built inside the temple, the shaman holds a cloth in his hand and a pot of rice cooked in milk is placed by the *maesa* on a rice pounder[1]. This is not tasted during the dance, but is eaten afterwards by the shaman and the sick man and other individuals of the community[2].

Kataragam Deyo is invoked especially to protect the chena, and at harvest an offering is made which is afterwards eaten as at Elakotaliya.

[1] It must be remembered that Yakure is a great cattle breeding centre.

[2] This is an interesting contrast to the practice which Mr Parker informs us prevails in the south of the island, where food given to spirits is not eaten at all but is exposed in the jungle or some deserted place. The fact that at Yakure food offered to spirits, many of whom are of Sinhalese or Tamil origin, is eaten, is clearly a remnant of the Vedda belief that the spirits invoked are in the main beneficent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered.

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding.

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *aude* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo.

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

drinking after the kill. After a little more dancing the shaman fell back into the arms of his supporter and the spirit left him. 796 535 787

The Kirikoraha at Unuwatura Bubula. When dancing to Kande Yaka at Unuwatura Bubula the Veddas made a *bulatyahana* (Plate XXXV); this, we were told, would be built when invoking many *yaka*, but the *kirikoraha* would never be danced without it. The *bulatyahana* seemed to be an elaborated *maesa* with the framework carried up to form a back and slanting roof over which a cloth, specially kept for this purpose, was hung and fastened down. On the shelf of the *bulatyahana* two *aude* and a trident of the ordinary Hindu pattern were placed together with betel leaves and areca nut. The *kirikoraha* containing coconut milk and betel leaves stood on a rice-mortar beside it and a pot of cooked rice was put on the ground.

The shaman danced in front of the *bulatyahana* holding in his hands a new piece of cloth (a coloured handkerchief which we gave him) specially obtained for the purpose. He swayed his body and raised the cloth to his head while lifting his feet and patting the ground alternately with his right and left foot, but not moving from the front of the *bulatyahana*, that is to say confining his dancing to a space three or four feet long. He exchanged the handkerchief for the trident and placing a betel leaf on the point he danced with this and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka. Putting his hands into the *kirikoraha*, he examined the milk and expressed his satisfaction by shouting and clapping his hands. Again he danced to and fro in front of the *bulatyahana* with the trident in his hand. The *kirikoraha* was taken off the rice-mortar and put on the *bulatyahana*, and the pot of cooked rice was put in its place on the rice-mortar.

The dancer then approached a sick shaman who, as mentioned on p. 263, had coughed up a considerable amount of blood at the end of the *alutyakagama* ceremony performed previously, and fed him with some rice which he brought to him in a betel leaf. In this way Kande Yaka showed his benevolence towards the sick man, for it was considered that the *yaka* food would cure him. Returning to the *bulatyahana* the shaman quivered and shook his head and examined the [755]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 returning to Nila and giving him their *kaduwa* to hold. This
535 they did because they wanted to put them down, and they con-
786 sidered them too sacred and dangerous to be put on the ground, or even to be held by anyone who was not a grown man who had frequent intercourse with the spirits.

796 Handuna took the necklace from the *wilkoraha* and showed
535 it to one of us (B. Z. S.), to whom he gave it, asking for a real necklace instead of the bast one. Kaira followed Handuna and gave to each of us betel leaves from the *wilkoraha* as a sign of favour from the youngest of the Rahu Yaku. Then both went to the *maesa*, looked at the offering, and then fell back into their supporters' arms. We were told that the *yaka* was well pleased with the offering and was about to depart from them, but Nila sang the invocation and soon the two dancers began to tremble and shake their heads, then shouting hah! hah! they sprang forward and danced again. They picked up their *kaduwa* from the *wilkoraha*, where they had been put for safety, this being considered a sufficiently sacred spot. Using the leaves which formed the hilts of their swords, they scooped out the coconut milk from the *wilkoraha* and scattered it about, and those on whom it happened to fall considered themselves lucky. Then the *yaka* spoke to Nila saying that he wished to go, and Nila answered "It is well." But before the *yaka* left Handuna and Kaira, the two men danced toward that side of the cleared spot where the women and children were grouped together, raising their *kaduwa* and pointing at the group. One woman was
[755] carrying a baby suffering from yaws, and Handuna held his *kaduwa* over the child's head and promised that its sores should be cured. Then Handuna and Kaira gave their *kaduwa* to Nila; both bent their heads over the *maesa* and the *yaka* left them.

796 The necklace was replaced on the *wilkoraha* which was put with the *kaduwa* on the *maesa*. Handuna and Kaira repeated a charm over them and all were removed from the *maesa*. Handuna picked a few leafy twigs, put them under a tree, then took the leaves from the *kaduwa* and placed them on the freshly picked leaves, so that the hallowed leaves might not touch the ground; he then poured the remains of the coconut milk from the *wilkoraha* over them.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5. (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 535 786 Yakini, who live on a hill called Milalanegala. This Vedda danced in very much the same way as Wannaku had danced, and the few differences noted, such as his less energetic steps, were doubtless due to personal idiosyncrasy. However, he did not bury his head in the leaves tied to the central post on becoming possessed, but shook the leaves which he held in his right hand in his own face, having previously struck these against those pendant from the *ruwala*. After dancing for a short time he staggered up to Wannaku and spoke, the spirits possessing him asking why they were called and whether there was sickness amongst the people. To this Wannaku answered "No," telling the spirits that he had called them at the request of the white man who wished to know them. After this the celebrant again danced in and out of and round the *ruwala*, striking at the pendant leaves. Soon he buried his head in the leaves tied to the central post, his whole body quivering, then he quickly jumped away from the pole and made his way to the Ratemahatmaya of the district, who was an onlooker, and shook the leaves in his right hand against the latter's chest, telling him he would be successful in the business he was about to undertake. This was in answer to a question that the Ratemahatmaya had shouted a short time previously. There was more dancing round the central pole, the performer striking it with the leaves which he held in his hand; after a few minutes he approached Wannaku, and striking him with the leaves said something, and again danced round the central pole which he seized in his hand and shook four times, once facing each of the cardinal points of the compass, shouting loudly as he did so. This was the means adopted by the *yaku* to test the solidity of the structure. We were told that this dance was generally performed in order to cure sickness, and if the pole fell or the structure came to pieces the patient for whose benefit it took place would die or others would become ill. At last with many quiverings and clutchings at the central post the *yaku* took their departure.

[955 787

796 535 A similar dance lasting a shorter time, during which the dancer was possessed by Moranegala Yaka, then took place, after which Wannaku, who appeared to have quite recovered

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from his previous fatigue, invoked Walimabagala Yaka and Yakini. The dancing of these *yaku* exactly resembled that described at the beginning of the ceremony, and is therefore not further recorded.

THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

It seems very doubtful whether the *kolamaduwa* as it exists at the present day should be described as a Vedda ceremony at all, though as it was danced by the Henebedda Veddas at Bendiyagalge it merits a description. It is in any case certain that the *kolamaduwa* is not often performed, as the amount of food and other properties necessary could scarcely have been found by one small Vedda community[1]; also its main objects, the curing of disease in cattle and epidemic sickness among men, would not appeal greatly to small communities of hunters dwelling in healthy surroundings. At the present day the Henebedda Veddas make rough chena and herd cattle for the Sinhalese, but the cattle have not yet become an important factor in their lives, and the people themselves do not suffer from epidemics. Further, at Bandaraduwa, on the borders of the Eastern Province, the only other place where this dance was known among Veddas, we were told that they would perform it for the Sinhalese, and that each dancer would be paid Rs. 5 for his trouble besides being given his food. Our aged Sinhalese informant, mentioned on p. 31, told us that the *kolamaduwa* was not danced by these Veddas when he was a boy, and that he considered it had arisen as an elaboration of the *ruwala* ceremony which used to be performed in those days. The *ruwala*—already described in this chapter—itself shows signs of having been introduced from the Tamils of the east coast, though probably at a comparatively remote period. Great numbers of *yaku* and *yakini* should be invoked at the *kolamaduwa*; some,

[1] According to Tissahami all the following offerings were necessary for a full ceremony. Eight measures of rice and two large pots in which to cook it, 10 coconuts, 5 bundles of yams, 30 plantains, 2 sugar canes, 200 betel leaves, 12 candles, 1 lb. sandal wood, 100 balls of jaggery, ½ lb. turmeric, 1 lb. of resin, 4 coloured cloths, 5 yards of white cloth, 4 necklets of beads, 8 small baskets and 8 cloths to cover them, 4 pairs of metal bangles, 1 bottle of ghee and flowers of various kinds.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

755 the spirits of people who frankly were not Veddas, such as
535 Peradeniya Bandar; others, spirits of men like Panikki Vedda
177 already referred to, famous for catching elephants and buffaloes, who were Veddas in little more than name. Others, if Veddas in name, yet behaved like Kandyan chiefs, if we may judge from their deeds quoted in the invocations, such as building dagabas and bringing paddy fields under cultivation. Some of the Maha Yakini are regarded as the wives of such chiefs, and Unapane Kiriamma is in this community regarded as the wife of Unapane Wanniya, the chief who first brought the paddy fields at Unapane under cultivation.

THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY AT BENDIYAGALGE.

796 This was admittedly not a full ceremony. Although the
535 bower was built the correct offerings were not made nor were
778 all the *yaku* invoked, and a disturbance which took place the next evening was said to be due to the anger of the *yaku* on account of the lack of offerings (see p. 125). Plate LIII, fig. 1 shows the *kolamaduwa* with bunches of leaves hanging from the horizontal bars of the framework and a circle of leaves called *kolavegena* suspended from the centre, that is, the crossing of the horizontal bars. The shaman, Sita Wanniya, Randu Wanniya and Kaira, holding bunches of leaves in their hands, walked round the circle within the upright posts while they sang an invocation to the *yaku* to come to the leaves of the *kolamaduwa*. Soon they began to dance (Plate LIII, fig. 2) with the usual step, gently at first, but gradually swaying and bending more and more they brushed the leaves of the *kolamaduwa* with those they held in their hands at each step.

A basket covered with a cloth had been placed on a tripod in one corner of the bower, and this should have contained various offerings for the *yakini*, including flowers and beads;
796 not having either to offer, a few leaves had been put in it.
535 Sita Wanniya seized this basket called *pakudama*, and danced with it in both hands, then after a short time he shouted "Ah, ah!" and became possessed by the Maha Yakini. When the Sita

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and we do not doubt that it occurred formerly, but we could hear of no recent instance in which Veddas alone officiated. 782 648

This did not surprise us for we met with no Veddas who knew these long invocations, and we believe that this practice must have ceased throughout the Vedirata at least two or three generations ago. The necessary conditions existed in those days when, as we were assured, there were communities of village Veddas with shaman of repute such as no longer exist, and we may instance the history of Lindegala given on pp. 171 and 172 as a case in point. Nevertheless the custom survives in a modified form, for Tissahami with three Veddas performed a *kolamaduwa* ceremony at Damenegama in 1903 with the object of stopping an epidemic, alleged to be dysentery, which was then raging in the neighbouring villages. [731] [755]

A very large number of spirits are invoked, but as has been indicated in Chapter IX Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, and the *yaku* of the recent dead were not of the number. This demonstrates that the ceremony as it at present exists is essentially foreign, and therefore the length and nature of the three invocations given are not surprising. The invocation to Unapane Kiriamma which recites her deeds agrees well with all we could find out about her independently, and suggests that these invocations arose among such settled village Veddas as those mentioned in the Sinhalese chronicles referred to in the first chapter. 782

The four invocations written down by Tissahami were discussed at length with him, the shaman of the Henebedda Veddas sitting with us, though as this man—a half bred—knew only parts of these invocations and greatly admired Tissahami, the translations obtained in this way only represent the opinion of Tissahami, and presumably that of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from whom he learnt them in his youth. In these circumstances it is not surprising that two of these translations differ considerably from those furnished by Mr Parker, and this difference is so great in the invocation (No. XXXIX) which should be sung while the leaves are being slashed from the *kolamaduwa* (cf. p. 269) that we have thought it best to give our field version as well as Mr Parker's translation. Some of the allusions, for instance, the reference to the shark contained in the first portion 782 539

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1].

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe.

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated.

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*.

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarale*.

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

differ from the Singhalese, and those which, though Singhalese, are, in the sense here used, peculiar to the Veddahs. It has been suggested to me that some of the former are derived directly from the Sanskrit, but as I am incompetent to judge of the accuracy of these suggestions, I do not venture to give the conjectural derivations which I have received. 197

I have, myself, noted down, and caused to be noted down from dictation, several Veddah charms, which are not, I am informed, known to the Singhalese, though in some there is a certain resemblance to charms in use by the latter. Whether corrupted during the many ages in which they have been unintelligently repeated, or whether they are in a form of Singhalese now obsolete, or both, they are not easily translated. They are charms used in illness, and for protection against elephants, leopards, bears, and wild boars. 789 [755]

The Veddahs are at present chiefly known by names similar to those in use among the neighbouring Singhalese, and it is curious to observe how oddly they are jumbled together. In one family are to be found names which would only be appropriate to Kandyans of the highest caste, and names which could only be borne by the lowest. Some of their names, too, belong to Hindoos, and not to Singhalese. Some are not proper names at all; while, most strange of all, others, though utterly unknown in Ceylon, either to Tamils or Singhalese, are in common use in Bengal, and refer directly to Hindoo deities, or personages mentioned in the Puránas. 551 171

The names of the preceding generation appear to have differed in a very marked manner from the Singhalese names by which the Veddahs now are for the most part known; and those in the list appended to this paper are chiefly the names of the fathers and mothers of the present Veddahs. Most of these I was able, by the kindness of Colonel Vincent Eyre, C.B., R.A., to submit to the inspection of Professor Lees, of Bengal, and they are pronounced by him to have a decided Sanskrit affinity. [197]

It is a singular and significant fact, that not only are many of their names unknown in Ceylon, but their meaning is utterly unintelligible to the Veddahs themselves, among whom they were family designations which have descended to them from father to son for ages.

It is strange that so many have written of the Veddahs, and have been contented with information at once scanty and inaccurate. Davy believed that they had no names.* Tennent affirms that they have no charms—no "instinct of worship"—and doubts 114

* Davy, *Account of the Veddahs*, p. 115 of his work.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings. 782 796 [346]

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medicine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, so universal amongst Buddhists. 755 769 [775]

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded. 771 174

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡ [821]

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Weldo-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapāna-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapāna-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddirates, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon, 789

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Munronia pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
824 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Gypsies E15
Ceylon

V 535 with muscular grace, performed the flower dance to the Peradeniya god for the favour of crops.

V 562 The women of Kadiniyaya slunk into their hovels at sight of us. A 302 man sat scraping the hair off a girl's scalp with a blunt knife; another 755 was muttering a spell over some lime juice for a fevered wretch. Swarming blue-bottles and a most unholy odour led to the discovery, in a 252 covered hole, of putrid sambur entrails awaiting the pot; like civilised epicures they apparently fancied their game high!

V 103 Wadinagala, the southern Friar's Hood (the mountain that rose to Buddha's bidding), towered before us as we lay encamped in the G picturesque little village of Landegama. Here we learnt that a company 101 of gipsies, some fifty strong, had preceded us. These forest gangs, unlike 105 those of the road, are nomadic shepherds, pasturing their herds in the jungle plains. They hunt the sambur with dogs and javelin. Approaching coastal towns from time to time they barter their cattle, and are on the whole fairly prosperous. But a gipsy is a gipsy the world over, faithful to traditions of snake-craft and beggary, and these are no exception, plying their trade among the poor villagers with an eye to a handful of grain or vegetables. Sooner or later we hoped to meet them, but for the present all the evidence we had of them were abandoned hearths and a helpless pup they had heartlessly abandoned.

V 539 At Landegama was a hunter who entertained us far into the night with jungle tales. He described to us how leopards caught monkeys. The animal climbs a tree in the line of feeding langurs, and waits concealed. When one of them comes near enough he springs on it and both fall to the ground. Should the attempt fail, the leopard gives forth a series of fearful growls and rushes hither and thither making great commotion; then suddenly becomes quiet and hides. Inquisitiveness is the monkeys' undoing; at first, uttering their cries of rage and terror, the 'ah-he-hik' so familiar to hunters, they look for him from secure heights; but not seeing him they become bolder and bolder and come down lower and lower; until eventually, one pays the price of his foolhardiness.

V 342 Wadinagala village, singularly enough, lies farther from the rock of 361 that name than Landegama which nestles at its foot. Here was a medley of huts well illustrating the various types prevalent in the *Vanni*. The roofs of all were *illuk*-thatched; but the walls were various: a few were made of mud, some of wattle and bast, others of wattle and maize sheaths or of leafy twigs; while most had two or more of these combined.

ooo V [132] A sudden shower, that caught us as we rested on the banks of the Palang Oya, proved the harbinger of many wet days to come. That evening we entered Kokunahare in the pelting rain, our clothes, bedding and food deplorably drenched. Rushing into the first hut we found we ousted its occupants with gentle persuasion. Cooking was out of the question; but our ever-ready lunch basket provided a menu of tongue, fruit salad, biscuits and cheese, and a thermos-flaskful of hot tea. What shifts the shivering carriers made for food or sleep we had not the courage to inquire.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

I remarked that while walking through the jungle, though provided with a knife, Dissan Hamy rarely used it to cut away any intercepting branch or creeper, these being invariably bent to one side by the hand. 481

I observed this custom many years ago when travelling through a distant village called Uda Wellawey at the foot of the Haldummulla hills, and I understand it is to prevent persons from finding a hunter's trail.

I made inquiry, in addition to direct observation while exploring the Vedda country, as to the prevailing diseases among the inhabitants, and what was done as regards remedies. The result of my investigation led me to conclude that the commonest disease among adults was fever, but I could get no statistics on which I could rely to form an opinion as to the percentage this particular disease afforded as compared with others. 164

It was, however, difficult to discriminate in what proportion of fevers typhoid was to be regarded, as I found in many cases the people did not know the difference. Dysentery appears to be well known, and is locally called "Le-pachchane," but I was told that it was not nearly so common as fever. Fever is not common as compared with the prevalence of that disease in the Tamankaduwa District.

Venereal, I am told, is unknown, and probably for reasons I gave earlier in this Paper. It occurs, however, more in the neighbourhood of civilized centres. I did not see a single instance of goitre, or of elephantiasis, though I cannot suppose the latter is unknown. I found numerous cases of sores on the feet and legs of both adults and children, but these were explained as being in all cases due to accidental injuries. Bronchitis, however, is common, more especially in children, who also appear to be commonly troubled with anæmia, which may or may not be directly due to intestinal parasites.

As regards treatment, I found that the remedy was invariably based on the theory that diseases may be divided into two great classes—heating or inflammatory, and the opposite—therefore the cure was to be found in those specifics which were opposed to these two heads of causation. For example, if a man had a violent cold, the "milk" of the cocoanut could 753 757

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Munronia pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
824 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as *na* leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [825] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in 222 families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 252 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 757 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 262 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all 164 were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This [757] his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: 000 those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo
267 (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike
224 its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

252 One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five
[482] minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter
262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with
824 poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a
[251 252] little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle like meat.

222 Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galseembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *katuala*, *hirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the
[261] various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galseembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which
752 they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapotho*, *anguluo*, *lulo*, *kaluhanao*, *kanupatho*, *antho* (eels), *maguro*, *hungo*, *keheliyo*, *pethy*, *walihondo*, *sethalu*, *badapathalo*, *walihairiyo*, *piniweliyo*, *kovalayo*, *galpandurao*.

† *Kuhurumang-gedde*, *hala-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kohomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *kansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *neeagalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-hadurugedde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *kirinthea*. 757 752 832 276 824

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *kansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat. 276

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams. 832 539

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*," he shouts. "*Kiribala, haria, haria, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho*." A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them. 342 [178] [574]

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

us in danger, sickness etc.' When we enquired whether their dead lived on as spirits he replied, they did not consider whether the departed were living or dead, they were just spirits, in Tamil *sami* or *dewi*, in Sinhalese *yako*; all spirits were alike, neither good nor bad. Another coast Vedda named Patiniya told us that their religion was that of the Tamils. In memory of their dead, whom they called *yako*, they cooked rice and ate it; they invoked the *yaka* in sickness, etc.[1]"

Just as Kapalpei sent sickness, so death was also attributed to him, but perhaps not epidemics, for it appeared to be generally considered that a single death would satisfy him for the time, so that it would be days or weeks before he would be expected to send sickness or death again.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 498.

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).* 776

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred. 761 [763]

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakka*).† 769 771

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *audes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells. 776 796

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Ravathath*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees*, *Peti-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*). 776

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad. 787

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakka* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakka* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakka* ancestral spirit. *Hetha* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanniya* is another word synonymous with *yakka* and *hetha*. [196]

†The Veddas, by Seligmann: page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

837 whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was very careful in my inquiries on this subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Sinhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it[1]."

The only case of suicide of which we heard took place in
762 connection with a breach of the common rule of conjugal fidelity.
837 Tissahami, the husband of Kumi, younger sister of the headman of the Bandaraduwa Veddas, carried on an intrigue with his *naena*, an unmarried girl named Kirimenike. When his wife who was not one of his *naena* discovered the intrigue, she scolded her husband most unmercifully, "Why go to another woman while I live?—better to have gone to your mother than her." Although his intrigue with Kirimenike was of old standing, Tissahami was so upset with the disgrace of publicity that he killed himself in the compound outside his own hut early one morning. He had a gun, and holding the muzzle to the suprasternal notch, he pulled the trigger with his toe. The dead man's
[626] relatives were very angry with Kumi for driving him to desperation but they did not threaten her, nor in any way molest her. Kumi and Kirimenike belonged to the same *waruge* (Morane) but were unrelated. Kirimenike subsequently married a Vedda, and went to live at Syringawala where she remained until she died.

562 (In every respect the women seem to be treated as the equals
609 of the men,) they eat the same food; indeed, when we gave presents of food the men seemed usually to give the women and children their share first; the same applies to areca nut and other chewing stuffs. The women are jealously guarded by the men, who do not allow traders or other strangers to see them, and those at Sitala Wanniya were too shy to visit our camp, though they welcomed us to their cave, and the dances performed for our benefit took place in the dense jungle so that the women might be present and partake of the food offered to the *yaku*. We had offered to clear a space by our camp where the light would have been better for photography; however, the

[1] J. Bailey, "Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon," 1863, *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* Vol. II, p. 291.

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *kanava* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyande*
[283 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded
824] to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
● 762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to
515 name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The near relations, including sons-in-law of the dying man, would come to him when death was expected, and it was a matter of duty for the sons or other near relatives to send information of a man's dangerous illness to his sons-in-law, and the latter would be justly angry if this information were withheld from them. We were never able to determine whether a son-in-law actually benefited by being present at his father-in-law's death, we believe that his presence was only an act of pious duty, and that he derived no increased right to the dead man's property by this. Certainly the land which came to a man at his marriage from his father-in-law would not be given to anyone else by the latter on his deathbed; we have, however, some reason to think that the unmarried sons of a man's sisters might, as the result of their attendance at their potential father-in-law's death-bed, be given land which otherwise would not have come to them until their marriage, or perhaps not at all. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya thought that a sick man might sometimes give his son-in-law a lock of his hair, but unfortunately it was not possible to discover under what circumstances, if any, this occurred. That land was commonly given to sons and not to sons-in-law by a dying man was clear from the very explicit statement made by Handuna, "My sons will naturally take my stones as evidence of their right to possess my land." With regard to the division of land between a man's children, it was pointed out that most people made their wishes on this point clear during their lifetime and it must always be remembered that no landed property passed without the consent of the grown men of the group.

It seemed that the borders of each group's territory were so well known to all the members that quarrels concerning land were very rare, trespassing upon another man's domain was almost unknown, though when it did occur it was strongly resented. Knox's account of something very like a pitched battle between two parties of Veddas which has already been quoted on p. 7 shows this, and we were everywhere told that until a few years ago a man trespassing on the territory of others might have been shot without fear of this provoking reprisals.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

202
177

With regard to the existence of message sticks mentioned in the last paragraph, very careful inquiries were made of Veddas, Sinhalese peasants and Sinhalese headmen, including Mr Bibile, Ratemahatmaya. There seemed no doubt that among the peasant Sinhalese messages were traditionally transmitted by the conveyance of certain objects. We are unable to say whether this system was ever well developed and applied to many of the emergencies of life, but it seemed to be the general impression among our informants that the practice was formerly more common than at present. We were able, however, to hear of two messages habitually sent in this way among the more backward jungle Sinhalese at the present day. The first of these was the transmission of a piece of creeper with one, two, or three knots tied in it. This was sent wrapped in a fragment of cloth and was a call to the recipient to come to the sender, the urgency of the latter's need being indicated by the number of knots. We consider the use of this message object thoroughly established as a Sinhalese custom, it was in use in the neighbourhood of Bibile until recently and is still used in remoter jungle districts.

[142]

A lock of hair usually cut from the head of the dead man and twisted round a small stick and wrapped in a leaf or fragment of cloth was sent as a sign that a death had occurred. Our impression is that at the present day this is essentially a Sinhalese custom, for the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde told us that among the jungle Sinhalese when a man died away from his home, his people might be informed of his death in this way. We could not hear of this custom among the least sophisticated of the Veddas we met, though it was said to exist at Henebedda, where however, if it really occurred, it may have been due to Sinhalese influence. With regard to its existence among the Veddas apart from Sinhalese influence, it seemed to us that the importance of a lock of hair as evidence of land transfer (described on p. 114) renders it unlikely that hair would be sent as evidence of death. The care that the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde took when bringing me his "seisin" to photograph, of which a lock of hair was an important part, was very noticeable[1].

[1] On the other hand the custom may have been derived from the Vedda practice,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *warugs* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *kangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION

764 WHEN a man or woman dies from sickness the body is left in the cave or rock-shelter in which death took place. The body is not washed, dressed or ornamented in any way but is generally allowed to lie in the natural supine position and is covered with leaves and branches.

This was formerly the universal custom and still persists among the less sophisticated Veddas, who sometimes in addition place a large stone upon the chest of the dead man. This old custom, for which no reason could be given, is still observed at Sitala Wanniya where the body is still covered with branches and left where death has occurred. As soon as these matters
768 are attended to, and it seemed that they are carried through as quickly as possible after death, the small community leaves the cave or place in which the death has occurred and avoids it for a long time. It was sometimes stated that its members would never return, but we know of at least two cases in which sons returned to the cave in which their fathers died after many years, and we have no doubt that this statement means no more than that no one approached the cave for a long time. It was always difficult to obtain even a crude estimate of the lapse of time between events, but there was some reason to believe that in one of the two instances the shelter in which death occurred was untenanted for about twelve years. In any event it is certain that Veddas did return to caves in which a death had occurred, and that if any bones were left, no difficulty was made about picking these up and casting them into the jungle[1].

[764] [1] This accords with the experience of the Drs Sarasin who say:—"We never found the least difficulty when collecting skeletons of Veddas. They [the Veddas]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It should be mentioned that no fire was lit near the corpse or water left by it when the living deserted the cave. Among the majority, including the two wildest groups of Veddas, there is no avoidance of any of the property of the dead man, and the contents of his betel bag would be eaten directly after his death, but among the members of another group of Veddas (Henebedda), who must be regarded as pure-blooded although their system of magic shows Sinhalese influence, the betel bag, unless it were a very good one, would be left with the corpse, and in any case its contents would not be eaten, but left near the dead man. The areca nut cutter and lime box, which during life were always carried in the bag, would not be left with the corpse, but before they were used by the living, measures were taken of which the avowed design was to render these objects harmless. Thus the old headman of the Henebedda Veddas exposed his father's lime box and areca cutters under a bush for a period which was certainly longer than ten but probably less than thirty days. It was necessary to do this, since if these objects had been used immediately, the individuals using them would probably have contracted the same illness as that from which the dead man suffered, and on further questioning the old man explained that the *yaka* producing the illness from which his father had died would for some time, and in some way which he could not define, remain connected with the chewing apparatus which the dead man had used constantly during his last illness.

At Bandaraduwa we were able to ascertain what was done after the death of a man named Tuta which had occurred in a neighbouring settlement two days before our arrival. The grave was dug by two of the man's brothers who carried the body to it; nothing was buried in the grave, not even the dead man's

were always ready to show us the place in which...they had buried. When we proceeded to dig up the skeleton they for the most part looked on with interest and without showing the least sign of excitement, and when it was necessary to pick all the small hand and feet bones out of the sandy soil they were perfectly ready to assist. We were always told willingly who was buried in a particular spot. The place of burial was always shown us by the relatives of the deceased...thus in Mudugala near Ommi a father showed us the grave of his daughter and in the Nilgala district a son led us to the grave of his father." *Op. cit.* p. 494.)

1;Seligmana & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

764 betel pouch, although he had lain with it supporting his head during his last illness which was by no means short, but on the contrary it was kept in the house and its contents were immediately used. No water was left on the grave nor was a fire lit, nor could we discover that the two men who carried the body to the grave washed or in any way purified themselves.

Among the village Veddas of Omuni who have much Sinhalese blood, though culturally they appear to owe more to the Tamils of the east coast than to the Sinhalese, it was stated that the betel pouch and its contents would be buried beneath the head of the dead man and a coconut shell of water placed by his side. These people, who settled some seventy years ago, as Tennant records[1], knew only of leaving the body in the cave as a custom practised long ago by their ancestors, and there is no doubt that the adults of the present generation have seen nothing except burial in graves probably conducted in much the same manner as that practised by the surrounding Sinhalese.

The Omuni Veddas mentioned two interesting points with regard to burial. It should not take place in the immediate neighbourhood of any of their scanty and primitive chena cultivations, and the grave should be at least as far from the village as it was possible to hear a "Hoo" cry.

An even more advanced stage of care for the dead has been described by the Sarasins in the case of a "Culture Vedda" whose grave they opened. Unfortunately it is not said in what part of the country this grave was situated, though from the description given it is clear that the burial was recent. "A small structure (*gerust*) was built over one such grave upon which a coconut leaf was laid, and at each corner of the erection was tied the inflorescence of a coconut palm. At the head of the grave lay three open coconuts and a small heap of wood, at the foot an opened and an untouched coconut. Three cacti were planted on the grave, one at the head, one in the middle and one at the foot. The grave was three or four feet deep....The body which was that of a woman was wrapped in much cloth and had on it a necklace of glass beads...."

The authorities quoted further note that bows, arrows, axes,

[1] *Ceylon*, London 1859, Vol. II, pp. 446 and 447.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

betel bags and strike-a-lights may all be buried in the graves of male "Culture Veddas," and in one such grave they even found bullets[1]. 764

When an attempt is made to discover the nature of the noxious influence felt in the place of death, the usual answer given is to the effect that "if we stayed where the death had occurred we should be pelted with stones." Further questions made it clear that in many instances there was no definite idea that some part of the dead man was the active agent in the stone-throwing; on the other hand some Veddas, and these as far as we could judge some of the least contaminated, definitely believed that it was the spirit or *yaka* of the dead man who would cause stones to rain on anybody staying near the corpse. And in this instance it was admittedly fear of the spirit of the dead individual that caused them to hurry from the site of death. Stone-throwing is the usual method by which the *yaku* show their displeasure, using *yaku* in the broadest sense, and by no means limiting this term to the spirits of the recent dead. It was clear that during certain disturbances described as "stone-throwing" no actual rocks or stones were moved or fell, and this was recognised by the Veddas who, however, continued to speak of the upheaval as "stone-throwing," which they ascribed to annoyance felt by the *yaku*. In one instance it was possible to say that the aggrieved *yaku* were not those of the recent dead. While camping within a couple of hundred yards of the Bendiyagalge caves in that part of the Uva jungle known as Henebedda we were startled between eleven and twelve one night by a deep groaning sound of considerable volume which was immediately followed by an outcry from the caves. Men shouted, women and children cried out, and every dog in the settlement howled its loudest. The noise which alarmed the cave occurred only once, and can hardly have lasted for more than ten seconds, but the chatter of people and the howling of dogs must have continued for about a quarter of an hour. We are entirely unable to state the cause of the noise, but suppose that it was due to one rock slipping upon another, or to the splitting of a mass of rock below the surface of the 769 775

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 494.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Even Nevill missed the essentials of the Vedda cult of the dead, though he shows that he knew something of what actually occurred. "The Vaedda religion seems to have been such that the spirit alone was recognised as human, and the flesh, when the spirit has left it, receives neither veneration nor superstitious reverence. Where the life left the body, there the body was left....Two or five days after the death, however, the relations were invited to the scene of funeral and a feast was held...to satisfy relations there had been no foul play....

"The Vaeddas of Bintenne, however, having assembled relations and neighbours, procure rice, or other grain, and decorate the pot in which it is cooked with sprays of the liniya tree[1], a shrub with leaves like our hazel, but with bright scarlet flowers. If no flowers can be got, bits of red cotton or other cloth should be used. The celebrant then dances round the pot of food, with an arrow in his hand, singing any chant he knows, and making obeisance to the food by a wave of the arrow. The food is then distributed....

"It is evident this custom cannot apply to those who formerly did not eat grain. These, however, were few. Roasted game would probably with such take the place of grain, and the latter seems only used as the best and most unusual food procurable, much as our poor try to provide cake, and not bread and cheese, etc. at weddings....

"Bodies were never buried until the English Government endeavoured to enforce burial. The Vaeddas have not the least objection to the corpse being buried, but object greatly to being forced to dig the grave...[2]."

Although the Sarasins underestimated the importance of the Vedda cult of the dead, and failed to discover that even "Nature" Veddas make offerings to the spirits of their departed, their opinions and conclusions are necessarily given at some length on account of the undoubted importance of their work. "The Veddas of Dewilane told us that after death they became spirits or yakas, but as to whether these persisted (*lebten*) or not they never thought; they did not pray to them nor honour them. The 'Nature' Veddas from Danigala...told us in 1885

[1] *Helicteres isora*, L. [2] *Taprobanian*, Vol. I, p. 179.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

motions, once more put their arms round them, soon after which the dancers fell limply into their arms. The leader of the dance seemed especially excited at this stage and, trembling and quivering all over, stood back to the pole and wildly waved his scarf in the air. Soon his movements became less vigorous, his head nodded on his shoulders and hung down on his chest as he addressed the other dancers in a harsh and broken voice (Plate LXXI). In view of the Vedda ceremonies which we subsequently saw we have no doubt that he prophesied good fortune. It appeared to us that this old man really presented the ordinary characteristics of Vedda "possession," i.e. the dance, though only a rehearsal, had produced the customary effects associated with it, and certainly this old man's muscles continued to quiver irregularly for some time after the dance was over. As for the remaining dancers we have no doubt that the dance remained for them as it had begun, simply a rehearsal and an amusing piece of acting.

Such dances are held only to cure sickness or in return for good crops, and it was emphatically denied that anything similar took place after childbirth or death.

Very little was elicited concerning death and mourning ceremonies. The corpse is washed, and it seemed that although this is usually done by a barber or *dhobie* (professional washerman) it might be done by one or more of the relatives of the dead man. The grave must be at some distance from the habitations of the living and also from their cultivation patches. No fire is lit on the grave. A feast is held a few days after burial, which appears to be called *bati bane*, and the food for this, especially rice, is provided by the near relatives of the dead man and distributed. A *kudaram* is built upon which the food is placed for "a short time" as an offering to Kapalpei, after which it is eaten by the assembled people.

This account agrees with that given by the Sarasins, who record that a coast Vedda, Pereman, when asked about his religion "laughed and said they had that of the Tamils, they honoured their dead by cooking rice in front of their house, folding their hands, saying a few words and then eating the rice. As they did this they spoke the name of the deceased and said: 'Help

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

The
162 race is rapidly becoming extinct; large families are all but un-
163 known, and longevity is very rare. I have been at some pains to obtain reliable data to elucidate these points. Out of seventy-two Veddahs in Nilgala, fifty were adults, twenty-two children. In one small sept, or family, there were nine adults and one child; in another, one child and eight adults; and so on. In Bintenne, out of three hundred and eight Veddahs, a hundred and seventy-five were adults, a hundred and thirty-three children. Here the disproportion is not so marked; but in one of the smaller tribes, more isolated than the rest, there were twenty adults and but four children.

The paucity of children, I think, must be ascribed to the degeneracy produced by such close intermarriages, for I have never heard a suspicion of infanticide existing among them.* Out of
[847] fifty adults in Nilgala, only one appeared to have numbered seventy years, and but eight to have exceeded fifty. In Bintenne, of a hundred and seventy-five adults, two only seemed to have reached their seventieth, and but fourteen to have exceeded their fiftieth years. Such statistics seem to show the practical results of such connections. The Nilgala Veddahs, who still maintain an almost total isolation from other people, are rapidly disappearing.† The Veddahs of Bintenne, who have abandoned the pernicious custom which I have described, and still intermarry among themselves, are becoming extinct, though more gradually.

[852] The Veddahs have no ceremonies at the birth of a child, nor
164 when the name is given; and though, in Bintenne, they have long buried and mourned their dead, those of Nilgala have only commenced, in this generation, to do either.

Till very recently the dead man was left where he died. The survivors covered the body with leaves, put a heavy stone upon its chest, and sought some other cave, leaving that in which the death occurred to the spirit of the deceased. They still desert the scene of the death, and the bones, constantly found in good preservation in the caves of Nilgala, prove how recently the practice of leaving the body unburied has been abandoned.

000 Tennent says, truly, that they have "no system of caste among

* It certainly was practised among the Kandyans, but never, I think, to any great extent. I have, however, seen two persons who, when infants, were buried alive by their mothers, and rescued.

† Knox speaks, page 62, of Veddahs, "who lived about Hourly, the remotest of the king's dominions," who were "pretty tame," and used "to come and buy and sell among the people," who resented "being pressed to serve the king" in some expedition, and so "removed further into the woods and would be seen no more." "Hourly" is evidently the village of "Oara-oela," on the furthest boundary of the Nilgala district, which, though, as tradition has it, it was once peopled by Veddahs, is now exclusively inhabited by Singhalese.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *warige* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Adoption is not practised, for the custom of a near relative looking after children who have lost their parents cannot be called by this name. 597 768

Dances play no part in the domestic life of the Veddas, for, although Veddas may perform a few steps of a dance as a sign of pleasure, their dances are mostly if not entirely ceremonial. 535

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION

764 When a man or woman dies from sickness the body is left in the cave or rock-shelter in which death took place. The body is not washed, dressed or ornamented in any way but is generally allowed to lie in the natural supine position and is covered with leaves and branches.

This was formerly the universal custom and still persists among the less sophisticated Veddas, who sometimes in addition place a large stone upon the chest of the dead man. This old custom, for which no reason could be given, is still observed at Sitala Wanniya where the body is still covered with branches and left where death has occurred. As soon as these matters are attended to, and it seemed that they are carried through as 768 quickly as possible after death, the small community leaves the cave or place in which the death has occurred and avoids it for a long time. It was sometimes stated that its members would never return, but we know of at least two cases in which sons returned to the cave in which their fathers died after many years, and we have no doubt that this statement means no more than that no one approached the cave for a long time. It was always difficult to obtain even a crude estimate of the lapse of time between events, but there was some reason to believe that in one of the two instances the shelter in which death occurred was untenanted for about twelve years. In any event it is certain that Veddas did return to caves in which a death had occurred, and that if any bones were left, no difficulty was made about picking these up and casting them into the jungle[1].

[1] This accords with the experience of the Des Sarnin who say:—"We never found the least difficulty when collecting skeletons of Veddas. They [the Vedda]

[p. 122]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It should be mentioned that no fire was lit near the corpse or water left by it when the living deserted the cave. Among the majority, including the two wildest groups of Veddas, there is no avoidance of any of the property of the dead man, and the contents of his betel bag would be eaten directly after his death, but among the members of another group of Veddas (Henebedda), who must be regarded as pure-blooded although their system of magic shows Sinhalese influence, the betel bag, unless it were a very good one, would be left with the corpse, and in any case its contents would not be eaten, but left near the dead man. The areca nut cutter and lime box, which during life were always carried in the bag, would not be left with the corpse, but before they were used by the living, measures were taken of which the avowed design was to render these objects harmless. Thus the old headman of the Henebedda Veddas exposed his father's lime box and areca cutters under a bush for a period which was certainly longer than ten but probably less than thirty days. It was necessary to do this, since if these objects had been used immediately, the individuals using them would probably have contracted the same illness as that from which the dead man suffered, and on further questioning the old man explained that the *yaka* producing the illness from which his father had died would for some time, and in some way which he could not define, remain connected with the chewing apparatus which the dead man had used constantly during his last illness.

At Bandaraduwa we were able to ascertain what was done after the death of a man named Tuta which had occurred in a neighbouring settlement two days before our arrival. The grave was dug by two of the man's brothers who carried the body to it; nothing was buried in the grave, not even the dead man's

were always ready to show us the place in which...they had buried. When we proceeded to dig up the skeleton they for the most part looked on with interest and without showing the least sign of excitement, and when it was necessary to pick all the small hand and feet bones out of the sandy soil they were perfectly ready to assist. We were always told willingly who was buried in a particular spot. The place of burial was always shown us by the relatives of the deceased...thus in Mudugala near Ommi a father showed us the grave of his daughter and in the Nilgala district a son led us to the grave of his father." *Op. cit.* p. 494.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).* 776

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred. 761 [763]

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakka*).† 769 771

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *audes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells. 776 796

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Ravathath*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees*, *Peti-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*). 776

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad. 787

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakka* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakka* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakka* ancestral spirit. *Hetha* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanniya* is another word synonymous with *yakka* and *hetha*. [196]

†The Veddas, by Seligmann: page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

115 account intelligible we must anticipate certain later chapters to the extent of defining the terms *waruge* and *yaka*, that is we must refer briefly to the essential features of the Vedda social system and religion.

614 Every Vedda belongs to a *waruge* or clan, as the term may be translated, and among a large number of the Vedda communities still existing, exogamy is the absolute rule. Further, with exogamy is associated descent in the maternal line, so that the fundamentals of the social system of the Veddas may, perhaps, be summed up as a clan organization with female descent. There is no evidence, as far as we can determine, of any dual organization of the clans, but perhaps they had originally a territorial distribution. Ignoring for a moment such debatable matters, the Vedda clans are:—

(1) Morane *waruge*.
(2) Unapane *waruge*.
(3) Namadewa or Nabudan *waruge*.
(4) Aembela *waruge*.
(5) Uru *waruge*.
(6) Tala *waruge*.
(7) A number of other so-called *waruge* of minor strength and importance, which perhaps may be local groups that have forgotten their origin and have assumed a name (sometimes obviously a place-name) as a convenience.

769 Turning now to the Vedda religion the word *yaka* (feminine *yakini*, plural *yaku*) is used to denote the spirits of the dead, and since the Vedda religion is essentially a cult of the dead, it is not surprising that the propitiation of the spirits of dead relatives, called the Nae Yaku, is at once its most obvious and important feature. With this is associated the cult of the spirits of certain long dead Veddas who may be regarded as legendary heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka, the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya, a celebrated hunter who lived many generations ago and whose assistance is invoked for good hunting. Kande Yaka especially helps in the tracking of sambur and spotted deer, and with him is often associated Bilindi Yaka, the *yaka* of his younger brother Bilindi. When a deer has been killed the head is set aside, and with rice and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

coconut milk (when procurable) dedicated to Kande Yaka, after which it is eaten with the rice. An essentially similar ceremony often spoken of by the same name (*kirikoraha*), but in which no meat is offered, is held after a death in order to propitiate the spirit of the dead man. The majority of Veddas believe that the Nae Yaku go to Kande Yaka, and become in some sense his attendants, and Kande Yaka, sometimes accompanied by Bilindi Yaka, is generally invoked at the beginning of the Nae Yaku ceremony. It was stated more than once that the Nae Yaku could not come to the offering unless accompanied by Kande Yaka, who was even spoken of as bringing the Nae Yaku. Some of our informants also said that the spirit of the deceased resorted to Kande Yaka and obtained his permission to accept offerings from his living relatives, in return for which the Nae Yaka would assist or injure them according to their behaviour, so that Kande Yaka, besides being of the greatest assistance in hunting, has also become the Lord of the Dead.

769

The Kandyan already mentioned, whose full title is Karagahavella Adenayaka Mudiyanselage Tissahami, visited us at Bandaraduwa; he lived at Bakiyella some ten miles from our camp. Mr Bibile, who was distantly related to the old man, told us that he must be nearly a hundred years old, since he had been brought to the wild country of the Eastern Province by his mother during the rebellion of 1818, his father having fallen in the fighting. His hair, of which he retained a fair quantity, was absolutely white and worn short, his complexion was pale with age, he had a slight unilateral facial paralysis and he walked with the aid of a stick, his back being bowed and both knees somewhat flexed; but he was withal an extraordinarily active old man, extremely intelligent and with an excellent memory, the play of the muscles of his face showing how well he realised the import of the questions addressed to him and how much they interested him. Further, his frank replies when he did not understand a question and the emphatic manner in which he delivered his answers carried conviction of the value of his evidence, and we believe that no one who listened to the old man would have considered him other than a good witness.

115
145

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *waruge* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

betel bags and strike-a-lights may all be buried in the graves of male "Culture Veddas," and in one such grave they even found bullets[1]. 764

When an attempt is made to discover the nature of the noxious influence felt in the place of death, the usual answer given is to the effect that "if we stayed where the death had occurred we should be pelted with stones." Further questions made it clear that in many instances there was no definite idea that some part of the dead man was the active agent in the stone-throwing; on the other hand some Veddas, and these as far as we could judge some of the least contaminated, definitely believed that it was the spirit or *yaka* of the dead man who would cause stones to rain on anybody staying near the corpse. And in this instance it was admittedly fear of the spirit of the dead individual that caused them to hurry from the site of death. Stone-throwing is the usual method by which the *yaku* show their displeasure, using *yaku* in the broadest sense, and by no means limiting this term to the spirits of the recent dead. It was clear that during certain disturbances described as "stone-throwing" no actual rocks or stones were moved or fell, and this was recognised by the Veddas who, however, continued to speak of the upheaval as "stone-throwing," which they ascribed to annoyance felt by the *yaku*. In one instance it was possible to say that the aggrieved *yaku* were not those of the recent dead. While camping within a couple of hundred yards of the Bendiyagalge caves in that part of the Uva jungle known as Henebedda we were startled between eleven and twelve one night by a deep groaning sound of considerable volume which was immediately followed by an outcry from the caves. Men shouted, women and children cried out, and every dog in the settlement howled its loudest. The noise which alarmed the cave occurred only once, and can hardly have lasted for more than ten seconds, but the chatter of people and the howling of dogs must have continued for about a quarter of an hour. We are entirely unable to state the cause of the noise, but suppose that it was due to one rock slipping upon another, or to the splitting of a mass of rock below the surface of the 769 775

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 494.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 ground, but no freshly exposed rock surfaces or any displacement of the soil was to be seen next morning in the neighbour-
775 hood of the caves or the country immediately round them. The Veddas, however, had no doubt as to the cause of the noise and described it as "stone-throwing," stating that a number of *yaku* must have been annoyed with their proceedings on the previous day, when, after going through the *kirikoraha* ceremony over a fine buck which one of them had shot the night before, they were tempted to show us some part of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony without providing the proper gifts for the *yaku* invoked on that occasion. They pointed out that it was the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had manifested their displeasure by stone-throwing, though they all admitted that no one had seen the stones thrown or could show the stones with which the alleged bombardment had been effected. This, combined with the fact that a minority of Veddas frankly admit that the cause of leaving the site where death has occurred is fear of the *yaka*, seems to point to the whole process of desertion being due to fear of the spirit of the deceased, which for a short but indefinite time seems to be thought of as existing near the body it has left, though it was never possible to discover that this was a clearly formulated belief.

The matter may indeed be said to have been put beyond doubt by a discovery made by Mr Parker. The words *mal pasunae wanna* occur in a number of invocations to the Nae Yaku. We could obtain no translation for these words in the field, though it was said that they alluded to the dead man, but by comparing a number of invocations to the Nae Yaku Mr Parker ascertained that *mal* is used as the equivalent of both "flowers" and "Veddas," so that this expression, which is undoubtedly a term of address to the dead man's spirit, is to be translated "driver away of Veddas."

775 Although the fear of the dead (as expressed by leaving the site of death) occurs among all the wilder Veddas, we met with a few old men, notably Poromala (Walaha) of Henebedda, and Handuna of Godatalawa, who were by no means confident that all men on their death became *yaku*. Although they were sure that all important and influential men, as well as those who

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

during life had the power of calling and becoming possessed by the *yaku*, became *yaku* after death, they considered that it was by no means certain that any part of quite ordinary individuals survived death. At Godatalawa such doubts in the case of particular dead individuals might be settled by calling upon the deceased at a Nae Yaku ceremony when the following invocation was used: 775 775 769

Lord! New Driver away of Vaeddas, if it is true that there are miracles, killing one wild monitor lizard in the jungle while coming I must meet with a sambar deer. (Be pleased) to drink, Driver away of Vaeddas, this young coconut[1].

If much game was killed after this ceremony the deceased was considered to have become a *yaka* ready and willing to help his friends and relatives.

To ascertain the actual condition of the spirits of the departed for the first few days after death is a matter of some difficulty, for although certain communities have perfectly definite views on this point, others have not; hence it will be convenient to leave this matter for the present and to return to it when the attitude of the Veddas towards their dead has been further defined. 775

As each Vedda community consists of a small number of families who, since cousin marriage prevails, are usually related both by blood and marriage, the *yaku* of the recent dead, called collectively Nae Yaku, are supposed to stand towards the surviving members of the group in the light of friends and relatives, who if well treated will continue to show lovingkindness to their survivors, and only if neglected will show disgust and anger by withdrawing their assistance, or becoming even actively hostile. Hence it is generally considered necessary to present an offering to the newly dead within a week or two of their decease; but this is not invariably the case, for a few Veddas said that they would not hold a Nae Yaku ceremony until they specially required the help of the *yaku* or until misfortune threatened or had overtaken them. 775 769

Among most Veddas the offering must consist of cooked rice and coconut milk, the food that every Vedda esteems above all

[1] The transliteration of this invocation will be found in Chapter X, p. 377.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 other, but betel leaves and areca nut are often added and the oldest survivor of a small group of comparatively unsophisticated Veddas seen at Godatalawa stated that in the old days this offering would have consisted of yams and water, if, as was often the case, coconuts and rice—which were only to be secured with difficulty and by barter—could not be obtained. In each 775 community there is one man called *kapurale* or *dugganawa*, who 769 has the power and knowledge requisite to call the *yaku*, and in 791 the ceremony of presenting the offering called *Nae Yaku Natanawa* (literally the dancing of the *Nae Yaku*), this man calls upon the *yaka* of the recently dead man to come and take the offering. It was stated that *dugganawa* was an older word than *kapurale* and was in fact a Vedda word, though it was soon obvious that only a minority of Veddas knew it. The *dugganawa*[1], who throughout this book will be spoken of as the shaman, becomes possessed by the *yaka* of the dead man who speaks through the mouth of the shaman in hoarse guttural accents, declaring that he approves the offering, that he will assist his kinsfolk in hunting, and often stating the direction in which the next hunting party should go.

791 Each shaman trains his successor, usually taking as his pupil his own son or his sister's son (i.e. his actual or potential son-in-law). Handuna of Sitala Wanniya learnt from his father. At Henebedda we were told that a special hut was built in which the shaman and his pupil slept, and from which women were excluded. It seems probable that this is only done among Veddas who have come under Sinhalese influence, as among them, but not among the wilder Veddas, women are considered unclean, and there was no isolation of the shaman and his pupil at Sitala Wanniya.

Sella Wanniya of Unuwatura Bubula was instructed by his father, and during his apprenticeship he resided with him in a hut into which his mother was not allowed to come.

The pupil learns to repeat the invocations used at the various ceremonies, but no food is offered to the *yaku*. At Sitala Wanniya we were told that the shaman recited the following [539] formula, explaining to the *yaku* that he is teaching his pupil:

(1 See footnote, p. 16.)

791 he was ready to suffer this inconvenience. Of course under
826 these conditions we did not take a lock of his hair.

His son-in-law Kaira, although he assisted Handuna in dancing, offered no objection to our collecting a sample of his hair, nor did any of the other members of the community.

769 Besides the shaman one or more of the near relatives of the
791 dead man may become possessed, but this though common is not invariable. The yaka leaves the shaman soon after he has promised his favour and success in hunting, the shaman often collapsing as the spirit departs and in any case appearing in an exceedingly exhausted state for a few minutes. However, he soon comes round when he and all present, constituting the men, women and children of the group, eat the offering, usually on the spot on which the invocation took place, though this is not absolutely necessary, for on one occasion at Sitala Wanniya when a rain squall threatened, the food was quickly carried to the cave a few hundred yards distant from the dancing ground.

769 It was clear that this eating of the food which had been offered to the yaku was an act of communion, and an essential part of the ceremony which was thought to bring health and good fortune, for some communities even anointed the heads of their dogs with the milk of the offering, explaining that this was done because of their value. This was the case at Henebedda, while the patriarch of the Godatalawa Veddas explained that some of the offering was always given to their dogs to eat, for the reason that they depended upon them in hunting. In one Nae Yaku ceremony (Bandaraduwa) the shaman fed the nearest relatives of the dead man immediately after the yaku left him, holding the bowl containing the offering to their mouths, while among the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, not only did the shaman, while still possessed, feed the children of the group from the bowl and smear its contents over their faces, but a number of members of the group, including the grandchildren of the dead man whose yaka possessed the shaman at the time, place a small portion of the offering in the shaman's mouth. The strength of the desire for the companionship and communion with the spirits of the kindly dead was very strong, and it was generally felt that shamans, and those frequently possessed by

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the *yaku*, might expect to have especially good luck on account of their close association with the spirits. Many instances occurred which showed how strong was the feeling of good fellowship which the living had for the spirits of their dead. Thus at Sitala Wanniya, on the occasion of the performance of a *Nae Yaku* ceremony got up at our request, Handuna, the shaman and leading man in the small community, volunteered the statement that he and his people were delighted to hold the ceremony, since it was seldom that they were able to offer their *yaku* such food as that provided by us. After his own father had been invoked and had expressed his unqualified pleasure at the good things provided for him, there was some discussion as to further dancing, because the dancer really felt exhausted, but all urged the continuation of the ceremony, since there were other *yaku* who might well be invoked on an occasion when an unusually plenteous supply of food was provided for them. Again, in the ceremony which insured the safe taking of rock honey, it was explained that every male member of the little community must perform the dance, since only thus could they certainly expect to share in the benefits to be reaped from the goodwill of the *yaku*. But perhaps the best example of the feeling of affectionate regard and of kindly good-fellowship existing between the living and the dead is afforded by the end of the invocation on the occasion of the *Nae Yaku* ceremony at Sitala Wanniya, for surely there could be no closer communion between the quick and the dead than that implied in the invocation, which is fully carried into effect by every member of the community sharing in the food that has been offered to the *yaku*.

"Salutation! Salutation! Part [of our] relatives having called [you] in time (i.e. at the right time) [we] give you white rice. [You] eat [and] drink. Do not think any wrong (i.e. do not form an unfavourable opinion of us). We also eat and drink [the same food]."

The above account is an outline of the simplest form of death ceremony such as was described to us at Godatalawa, but usually the matter is complicated by the invocation of certain *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*. Many generations ago there lived a Vedda called Kande Wanniya, a mighty hunter, who at his death became Kande Yaka, and under this name is constantly

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 invoked to give success in hunting. With Kande Yaka is also associated the *yaka* of his younger brother Bilindi, who is commonly believed to have been killed by Kande Wanniya in a fit of temper and who according to another version is not the brother but the brother-in-law of Kande Yaka. It is usual to invoke Kande Yaka and also Bilindi Yaka at the beginning of a *Nae Yaku* ceremony, and it was pointed out at different times by a number of our informants that the *Nae Yaku* could not come to the offerings unless accompanied by Kande Yaka, who was even spoken of as bringing the *Nae Yaku* with him. In fact, many Veddas stated that the *Nae Yaku* go to Kande Yaka and become his attendants; this point of view was illustrated by the fact that in two death dances seen (one held for a man who had died seven days previously, the other a rehearsal performed for our benefit), Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked, and possessed the shaman and gave signs of their favour to the group of Veddas present, before the shaman became possessed by the *Nae Yaku*. Further, many of our informants, especially the less sophisticated, pointed out that soon after death the spirit of the deceased resorted to Kande Yaka in order to obtain his permission to accept offerings from their living relatives, and to obtain power from him to assist them in return for their offerings, or to injure them in the event of their bad behaviour. Thus Kande Yaka, who is of especial assistance in hunting, becomes Lord of the Dead. We have, however, little doubt that to the majority of Veddas Kande Yaka is especially the *yaka* who gives success in hunting, and that his relation to the dead does not leap to their minds on the mention of his name as does the idea of his helpfulness in hunting, for Kande Yaka was essentially a friendly and helpful *yaka*, who, unlike many other *yaku* usually beneficent, never sent sickness; in fact, Kande Yaka the spirit scarcely differs as patron of hunters from Kande Wanniya the mighty hunter, still living and showing kindness and helpfulness towards the people among whom he dwelt.

770 It is now possible to consider the condition of the spirit of the deceased for a few days after death, according to those Veddas who state that a definite period elapses before the spirit

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

becomes a *yaka*, for it appears that properly speaking the word *yaka* should not be applied to the spirit of the dead for the first few days after it has left the body. During this short period the word *prana karaya* (living one) should be used for the spirit of the deceased, for it has not yet attained the condition implied by the term *yaka*. Among the Henebedda Veddas it was thought that the *prana karaya* resorted to Kande Yaka a few days, perhaps three or five, after death, and then obtained permission from him to accept offerings from the living, and thus become numbered among his attendants, the *Nae Yaku*; but beyond a vague idea that the spirit might perhaps exist for a short time at the site where death had occurred, these folk had no knowledge of its state before it reached Kande Yaka. The Bandaraduwa Veddas, who had come more under Sinhalese and Tamil influence, asserted that the spirit of the deceased spent some days in the neighbourhood of the death scene, which it only left to seek the Kataragam God and obtain his permission to become a *yaka* and pass into the train of attendants on Kande Yaka, and so become a *Nae Yaku* capable of accepting offerings from the living and in return helping or injuring them.

The method of invocation of the *yaku* is essentially the same in all Vedda ceremonies; an invocation is sung by the shaman and often by the onlookers, while the shaman slowly dances, usually round the offering that has been prepared for the *yaku*. Sometimes the invocations are quite appropriate and either consist of straightforward appeals to the *yaka* invoked for help, or recite the deeds and prowess of the *yaka* when he too was a man, as when Kande Yaka is addressed as "continuing to go from hill to hill [who] follows up the traces from footprint to footprint of excellent sambar deer." But at other times the charms seem singularly inappropriate; probably in many of these instances they are the remains of old Sinhalese charms that have not only been displaced from their proper position and function, but have been mangled in the process, and have in the course of time become incomprehensible. As the charm is recited over and over again the shaman dances more and more quickly, his voice becomes hoarse and he soon becomes possessed by the *yaka*, and, although he does not lose consciousness and can coordinate

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

his movements, he nevertheless does not retain any clear recollection of what he says, and only a general idea of the movements he has performed. Although there is doubtless a certain element of humbug about some of the performances, we believe that this is only intentional among the tamer Veddas accustomed to show off before visitors, and that among the less sophisticated Veddas the singing and movements of the dance soon produce a more or less automatic condition, in which the mind of the shaman, being dominated by his belief in the reality of the *yaku*, and of his coming possession, really acts without being in a condition of complete volitional consciousness. Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that although they never entirely lost consciousness, they nearly did so at times, and that they never fully appreciated what they said when possessed, while at both the beginning and end of possession they experienced a sensation of nausea and vertigo and the ground seemed to rock and sway beneath their feet.

Some men, including Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, whom we consider one of the most trustworthy of our informants, said that they were aware that they shivered and trembled when they became possessed, and Handuna heard booming noises in his ears as the spirit left him and full consciousness returned. He said this usually happened after he had ceased to dance. We could not hear of any shaman who saw visions while possessed or experienced any olfactory or visual hallucinations before, during, or after possession. The Veddas recognise that women may become possessed, but we only saw one instance of (alleged) possession in a woman, which occurred at a rehearsal of a dance got up for our benefit on our first visit to Bendiyagalge, during which we are confident that none of the dancers were really possessed. Although we did not see the beginning of this woman's seizure we have little doubt that there was a large element of conscious deception in her actions, for when we became aware of her she was sitting bolt upright with her eyes shut and the lids quivering, apparently from the muscular effort of keeping them tightly closed, while opposite her was Tissahami the Vedda Arachi muttering spells over a coconut shell half full of water with which he dabbed her eyes and face.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

775 Besides the important part in the Vedda cult of the dead played by the propitiation of the *Nae Yaku*, and of the *yaku* of certain other Veddas such as Kande Wanniya who as *yaku* have attained to special importance (approaching that of culture heroes in other forms of belief), there is a certain feeling of reverence for a host of unnamed *yaku*. Little attention is paid to these but, since it is stated that they too were once men, the suggestion may be hazarded that they represent the *yaku* of the forgotten dead. These *yaku*, although all around in the jungle, are in some instances thought of as vaguely attached to special localities, especially to glades in the forest, unusually large trees, and above all large rocks and rocky hilltops. The *yaku* of rocks and hilltops, indeed, tend to become named, taking the name of the hill they inhabit; even among the less civilised Veddas they are sometimes identified with the *yaku* of Vedda headmen who have lived on or near the hills. On the other hand among the more sophisticated Veddas these *yaku* tend to become less and less the spirits of dead Veddas, and finally, under Tamil influence, are thought of as dangerous spirits, immigrants from beyond the Ocean, each of whom with a female of his own species haunts the hilltops and sends disease. Somewhat akin to these *yaku* in their less dangerous forms are the *kiriamma* (literally milk mothers, i.e. grandmothers), the *yaku* of Vedda women, generally the wives of Vedda headmen or chiefs, many of whom are thought of as haunting the sides and tops of hills where there are rocks and springs. They are sometimes jealous of people gathering honey—indeed there is a [202 tendency to avoid rocky mountain tops on their account—but 769 may be placated by a charm, though occasionally a little honey is left for them with a muttered *kapau kiriammala*—Eat O [153 Kiriamma. Although they retain the fondness for children which they felt in their lifetime they not infrequently send sickness, at least among the more sophisticated Veddas.

A few *kiriamma* have become rather important *yaku*, notably an old woman of the Unapane clan now known as Unapane Kiriamma, but such *kiriamma* do not appear to be especially associated with rocky or hilly sites.

769 We are now in a position to discuss the possible evolution of
782

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

such specially important *yaku* as Kande Yaka and Bambura Yaka who may without exaggeration be said to have attained the position of heroes. It has been stated on p. 126 that according to certain Veddas not all the dead become *yaku* but only the spirits of specially important men or those who during life have the power of summoning the *yaku* to them. Further, the general impression we gathered was that the stronger the personality of the dead man, the more powerful and important was his *yaka*, and it may well be that the *yaka* of a particularly strong or skilled individual may be remembered by name and continue to receive offerings, even after the death of those near relatives to whom the spirit is one of the most important of the Nae Yaku on account of the blood bond between them. This appears to have happened in the case of Panikkia Yaka invoked at the present day by the Henebedda Veddas, and we shall now attempt to trace the history of this spirit.

It was stated in the first chapter that a number of the Veddas were politically organized in the 16th century and that one of the most important of their chiefs, described in a contemporary manuscript as Panikki the Vedda, was appointed to the high office of Bandara Mudiyanse. Further, it is recorded that Panikki the Vedda caught elephants and took them to the king. Now at Henebedda at the present day Panikki Yaka is invoked in the Kolomaduwa ceremony to avert sickness alike from man and cattle, and to confer prosperity on villages and cattle-folds. Those Veddas, a minority, who know anything of this *yaka*, state that he is the spirit of a long dead Vedda who was especially skilled in capturing buffalo, and who on account of his great knowledge of jungle craft is still able to confer safety and jungle favour on those invoking him.

In Chapter 1 we have mentioned that the Vedda cult of the dead has infiltrated the beliefs of the Sinhalese, and we will now give some details of the Bandar cult to which we there alluded. Concerning this Mr Parker writes: "It is a common practice of the Kandian Sinhalese of that part of the country to make offerings to the spirits of the deceased chiefs and important ancestors.....

"They are all classed as Yakas by the Sinhalese and are

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775
769

generally hurtful; but some have certain protective functions, and protect cattle and coconut trees and crops.

"The offerings are kept up everywhere in that part of the island to the present day at the Dewalas, and elsewhere. Luckily, it is a branch of their religion to which I devoted special attention...and although my lists are doubtless incomplete I have the names of considerably more than 100 of them.

"Some were included in the lists as important ancestors; others, the majority, because of their power, others because of their cruelty, or their sudden violent death.

"Panikki Vaedda occurs among them, and there are a few other names which may be those of Vaeddas,—such as Yapa, Hiti, Hapu etc....

"I have been informed that every one for whom a *dana* or funéral feast is not offered (at which the spirit is supposed to be present) remains in the form of a homeless spirit (*preta*) or *yaka*. These commonly disappear in time and are forgotten. Some of them remain about their old abodes, and uncanny noises heard during the night in the houses are caused by these ghosts, as in Europe....

"The Sinhalese demonology is very intricate, and it is extremely difficult to understand. There are many classes of *yaku*; but I believe that this Bandar worship is the only indigenous portion of it. I have traced practically all the other demons to Southern India, although the *kapurala* claim that a few others, in addition to the Bandaras, are of local origin. They themselves admit that all the rest were imported from India.

"The twelve Vaedi Yaku are, I believe, an entirely different set of evil spirits....

"The Vaeddas told me that they are extremely malignant. Besides these, they said that the whole forest is full of local nameless Yaku, who make strange noises in the night and frighten people in various ways. This also is a firmly rooted Sinhalese belief; their estimate of the number is two millions."

The resemblance between this *Bandara* cult and the Vedda worship of the Nae Yaku is obvious and is still further shown by

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775
769

the canonization as a Bandar of one Godegedara, an influential Ratemahatmaya, first of Wellasse and then of Badulla who died in 1872 and whose spirit now prevents disease among cattle, increases their milk, protects man and animals from beasts of prey, helps hunters and prevents their meeting wild beasts suddenly in the jungle and in fact gives success in all things[1]. About three months after his death certain unusual happenings suggested that one of the dead was trying to attract the attention of the living. An elephant appeared at Damenegama in Uva and in the neighbourhood, and although repeatedly shot at continued to come to the villages and tear the roofs off the houses, but did no other damage. This unusual behaviour led to the suspicion that one of the dead had sent the elephant, and accordingly the turning stone (*paena balanawa*) was consulted as to whether one of the old or recent dead was responsible. When it was ascertained that it was the latter, a ceremony *kamba kanuwa natanawa* was undertaken to discover whose was the spirit. The *kapurale* became possessed, when the spirit within him announced that he, Godegedara, had sent the elephant and that he desired to be honoured and invoked to help men. It was explained that the spirits of the dead always approach the living for the first time through animals, or signify their desire for offerings by making a man sick. The rank of the deceased is roughly estimated by the animal sent, in which, however, the spirit of the deceased is not immanent. The lion is said to be highest, then comes the elephant; the leopard indicates the spirit of a rather less exalted person.

It appears that the dead have no power to interfere in human affairs and take offerings until permission has been obtained from one or more high gods, of whom the chief is the Kataragam God. How the spirit obtains this permission was not clear, but the early signs of the power of the deceased were always in some way connected with the Kataragam God. Thus Godegedera caused the elephant of the Kataragam God to go mad at the *perahera* ceremony, and when Kosgama became a Bandar a leopard sent by him rode round the Kataragam temple on the

[1] A translation of the invocation used when calling upon Godegedera is given in the addendum to this chapter.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 back of one of the God's bulls, i.e., one of the *tavalam* bulls, bringing provisions and salt to the temple.

775 Kosgama Bandar is associated with Kosgama, where he lived in the 18th century or earlier. He refused to pay tribute to the king and from his invocation given elsewhere[1] it may be gathered that he rebelled and was betrayed by an adherent whom he trusted. He was captured, tied to a tree and shot to death with arrows. Kosgama Bandar was said to be especially helpful in litigation and in recovering lost cattle, but in fact he is of assistance in all ways.

We may now return to Panikki Yaka, who Mr Parker agrees with us may safely be identified as the spirit of the 16th century "Vedda" chief, Panikki the Vedda. In the same manner as this *yaka* has been remembered and has developed the characters of a Vedda hero, so we believe Kande Yaka and other hero Yaku of the wilder Veddas have arisen, for it is as a mighty Vedda of the old days that the Veddas revere Kande Yaka.

We need only assume that such heroes were unusually successful hunters, stronger personalities than their neighbours, so that their names were held in honour among a people more numerous than their immediate family circle, to see clearly how after their death their names would be continued in memory and their spirits be invoked by those who had admired and feared them, and by their children and children's children. It is entirely in harmony with this view that Kande Yaka should have become the Lord of the Dead, to whom the lesser spirits resort to obtain permission to accept offerings and to aid their still living relatives and former companions.

821 No reverence is paid to the heavenly bodies, and our old Kandyan informant knew nothing of any worship of the sun or moon. He nevertheless agreed that in his youth as at the present day the Veddas would call the moon Hande Deyo or Sande Deyo and the sun Ira Deyo respectively[2].

[1] "Note on the Bandar Cult of the Kandyan Sinhalese," *Man*, 1909, p. 77.

[2] We found Deyo to be commonly used for "god," the proper word for which is *deviyā*, pl. *deviyō*; but as explained to us by Mr Parker these words are often altered to *deyiya* and *deyiyo* and the Sinhalese "always say 'Kataragama Deyiya' or 'Deyiyo.' The plural forms are used honorifically with a singular meaning."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Even Nevill missed the essentials of the Vedda cult of the dead, though he shows that he knew something of what actually occurred. "The Vaedda religion seems to have been such that the spirit alone was recognised as human, and the flesh, when the spirit has left it, receives neither veneration nor superstitious reverence. Where the life left the body, there the body was left....Two or five days after the death, however, the relations were invited to the scene of funeral and a feast was held...to satisfy relations there had been no foul play....

"The Vaeddas of Bintenne, however, having assembled relations and neighbours, procure rice, or other grain, and decorate the pot in which it is cooked with sprays of the liniya tree[1], a shrub with leaves like our hazel, but with bright scarlet flowers. If no flowers can be got, bits of red cotton or other cloth should be used. The celebrant then dances round the pot of food, with an arrow in his hand, singing any chant he knows, and making obeisance to the food by a wave of the arrow. The food is then distributed....

"It is evident this custom cannot apply to those who formerly did not eat grain. These, however, were few. Roasted game would probably with such take the place of grain, and the latter seems only used as the best and most unusual food procurable, much as our poor try to provide cake, and not bread and cheese, etc. at weddings....

"Bodies were never buried until the English Government endeavoured to enforce burial. The Vaeddas have not the least objection to the corpse being buried, but object greatly to being forced to dig the grave...[2]."

Although the Sarasins underestimated the importance of the Vedda cult of the dead, and failed to discover that even "Nature" Veddas make offerings to the spirits of their departed, their opinions and conclusions are necessarily given at some length on account of the undoubted importance of their work. "The Veddas of Dewilane told us that after death they became spirits or yakas, but as to whether these persisted (*lebten*) or not they never thought; they did not pray to them nor honour them. The 'Nature' Veddas from Danigala...told us in 1885

[1] *Helicteres isora*, L. [2] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 179.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

that they worshipped neither their ancestors, nor a devil nor a god. Five years later the Veddas settled at Henebedda in the Nilgala district told us that they believed that the dead became spirits or yakas; but they did not make offerings to them. At Wewatte they likewise believe that the dead become yakas and there they invoke them in cases of sickness...gods they have none. A Vedda from the neighbourhood of Kalodai (Pallegama district) named Manikrala informed us that they worshipped children, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother—in short their dead relatives. In remembrance of the death of such relatives they gave a present to the first Buddhist priest whom they met. We therefore asked this 'Culture' Vedda whether his relatives continued to live as spirits after death, but he replied that he did not know; the present of rice was simply in remembrance of the deceased man. In answer to the further question whether they had a definite religion or worshipped a god, he replied that he had never thought about it, and he gave us the impression that this question and the idea it suggested were new to him.

"We found the idea of the existence of the departed as spirits further developed in an old 'Culture' Vedda of Mudagala near Mahaoya, named Sella. He said they had no gods besides their departed. Every year at the full moon they consumed yams and other food at the burying place. On this occasion they hold a dance in honour of the departed, invoke the dead by name and pray them to help them. At Omuni the corpses were buried in Sinhalese fashion and provided with burial presents; but two Veddas when we questioned them about their religion could tell us nothing on this point, and said that the departed were not honoured as gods[1]."

From these data the Sarasins conclude that "genuine 'Nature' Veddas either lack, or at the most have a quite uncertain idea of the persistence of the souls of the dead at the site of death, and that they make no offerings to their manes[2]." Further, they state "that among 'Culture' Veddas this idea has developed but little, for they either answered that they did not know whether they persisted as souls after death, or that they

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 497 and 498. [2] *Loc. cit.*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had never thought the matter over. Nevertheless they honour the names which like the Sinhalese they call Yakas with food, dances or offerings. Any monotheistic idea of God is absent both in 'Nature' and in 'Culture' Veddas[1]."

The three strata of belief to which we referred at the beginning of this chapter and which exist among the Veddas of the present day, have not fused so thoroughly that there is any great difficulty in isolating them. We believe they may be tabulated as follows:

I. The Cult of the dead, including the cult of the spirits of recent ancestors, i.e. of the Nae Yaku and the *yaku* of certain Veddas who have been long dead and may well be regarded as heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka.

II. The Cult of foreign spirits, who have become naturalised and have taken the friendly protective nature of the Vedda *yaku*.

III. The Cult of foreign spirits who, though not often regarded as such, have retained their foreign nature and are in the main terrible or even hostile.

Another feature of the last stratum of thought is the endowment of true Vedda *yaku* with foreign attributes[2]. When the history of the island is considered, it is not surprising that the first condition, which may be considered the primitive religion of the Veddas, should nowhere be found standing alone at the present day. It is impossible to say how much the Indian invaders influenced the aboriginal inhabitants of Lanka (Ceylon) when they took possession of the island under Vijeyo about 500 B.C., for the few references made to Veddas in the ancient chronicles of the country throw no light on this subject.

Knox mentions that Veddas paid a tribute of game and honey to the Sinhalese, and in his day there were "wild and tame" Veddas, and it is certain that from the middle ages onwards there was a considerable amount of intercourse between at least the tamer Veddas and the Sinhalese. Therefore it is natural that foreign beliefs should have gradually infiltrated the native Vedda cult.

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] The invocation (No. xli) to Ambarapoti Kiriamma given on p. 316 is an excellent example of this. Bilindi Yaka is here treated as if he were a Sinhalese or Tamil deity.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

presented to Kande Yaka the hunters would expect bad luck in future, and might even be bitten by snakes or attacked by bears. 776 782

The *Nae Yaku* are the spirits of the dead, they must report themselves to Kande Yaka as the chief of all the *yaku* and from him obtain permission to help the living and accept their offerings. Kande Yaka comes to the *Nae Yaku* ceremonies since the spirits of the dead could not be present without him. It was definitely stated that the spirits of the dead did not become *yaku* until the fifth day after death, but my informant knew nothing of the state of the spirits during this period though it was surmised that at least part of the time would be passed in seeking Kande Yaka or in his company, though there was no idea as to where Kande Yaka had his being. It was however stated, that the spirits of the dead were in hills, caves and rocks. The *Nae Yaku* including the spirit of the dead man are invoked on the fifth day after death. An offering is made of coconut milk and rice, if these are obtainable, but if not one consisting of yams and water is substituted. The shaman dances, holding in his hand a big ceremonial arrow for which no special name could be elicited, while the remainder of the community gather round. The shaman invokes the *Nae Yaku* and also Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka. The shaman becomes possessed and is supported lest he fall while the spirit of the deceased promises that yams, honey, and game shall be plentiful. He then sprinkles coconut milk or water from the offering on the relatives of the deceased as a sign of the spirit's favour. One or more of the relatives of the dead man may also become possessed. The shaman gives the relatives water and yams, putting their food into their mouths himself while he is possessed, and it appeared that this might cause the relatives to become possessed. At the end of the ceremony he asks the *Nae Yaku* to depart to where they came from and the spirits leave the offering. 775 782 769

Nothing was known concerning the Kataragam God or the *kolamadua* ceremony, though our informants said that they had heard of other Veddas performing this ceremony. Gale Yaka was not known, nor yet Wanagata Yaka. 796 796

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 773 At Sitala Wanniya the principal *yaku* are Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, Bambura Yaka and the *Nae Yaku*. According to these people Kande Wanniya killed his younger brother Bilindi when the latter was only an infant. The story is that their parents were out hunting when Bilindi, feeling hungry, began to cry and would not desist in spite of the endearments lavished upon him by Kande. At last Kande threw the child on the ground in despair and so killed him.

776 It appeared that as a hunting hero Bambura Yaka is on the whole as important as Kande Yaka, though he is certainly not looked upon as so benevolent nor so loved as the latter, who helps men to kill deer and never sends sickness. Bambura Yaka is a somewhat grim spirit who although he gives yams and helps men to kill pig, also sends sickness and must be invoked to remove it, and he is also invoked when dogs are lost or taken by leopards. Because of his giving yams he is sometimes known as Ale (yam) Yaka, and yams are offered to him together with other vegetable food when this can be obtained.

224 776 782 The *kirikoraha* ceremony is performed to obtain game, in gratitude for which the head and a portion of the flesh from the breast of every deer killed is cooked as an offering to Kande Yaka and is afterwards eaten by the community. If this were not done Kande Yaka would be angry and little game would be killed.

The *kirikoraha* seen at Sitala Wanniya is described on pp. 223 to 226, and the ceremony at which Bambura Yaka is invoked on pp. 237 to 245.

775 782 769 The spirits of the dead become the *Nae Yaku* and with Kande Yaka are invoked for success in hunting; a description of this ceremony will be found on pp. 230 to 233. A few days after a death the dead man is invoked for assistance in hunting, being addressed as *mal paenae wanna*, and when the relatives or the group leave the cave to look for game they repeat the invocation as they move along. After this, if they are successful, they know that the spirit of the dead man has become powerful as a *Nae Yaku* and invoke him at the *kirikoraha* among the *Nae Yaku* called upon. The *Nae Yaku* must obtain permission

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nat Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas.

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaka* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death.

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*kaduwa*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness.

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 256), had been naturalised and were said to represent *ande*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and
776 rocks were known; they were said not to be worshipped, although
[753] they were looked upon with awe and respect as they were believed to cause sickness.

These spirits are the Maha Yakini who are especially associated with the hills Nuwaragala, Walimbagala and a rock called Kalumal Ela. The chief of the Maha Yakini is the Maha Kiriamma, and the other Maha Yakini are her attendants. Although associated with rocks and hill-tops they are not invoked before taking honey in these places. It was stated that the Maha Yakini were formerly living people—old women—and that they were especially fond of children and might even steal them. It is for this reason that infants are protected by an arrow struck in the ground, and it is clear that something of their character as old Vedda women still survives in spite of their generally more or less unfriendly attributes.

Concerning the Maha Kiriamma nothing definite could be learnt: our informant had heard it said that she had been invoked in the old days, but knew nothing of this himself. Handuna said that what little knowledge they had of the Maha Kiriamma had travelled to them from the Bintenne Veddas near Horaborawewa[1].

771 In the Sitala Wanniya community, therefore, the second stratum is well developed and the third is indicated. The second and third strata, though probably not recently introduced, are, however, entirely subsidiary to the primitive cult of the friendly dead.

The Bandaraduwa community is one in which the second
771 stratum is so highly developed that at first sight it appears domi-
769 nant, for after a death offerings are made to the Buddhist priest, but this is only done as an additional means of propitiation of the *Nae Yaku* who are still considered of the first importance, to whom an offering is made on the seventh day after death. Further,
771 Kande Yaka is still closely associated with the *Nae Yaku* and
776 is invoked with them, but he is no longer formally regarded as
777 the Lord of the Dead, that function has been usurped by Kanda Swami or Skanda known to these Veddas as "the Kataragam

[1] An invocation to the Maha Kiriamma (No. XXXIII), a fragment of a much longer formula (No. XXXIX), unknown to our informants, is given in Chapter X.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God is almost, if not quite, thought of as their brother-in-law. In fact the divinity of the God and of his consort has not among the Veddas reached the proportions it has among the Sinhalese and Tamils. It has already been stated that among the Sinhalese the spirits of the dead who desire to become *Baṇḍāra* present themselves to the Kataragam God, and from him obtain permission to receive offerings of cooked food (*adukku*) in return for benefits to be conferred, or to smite men with sickness and other disasters, and we were told that the Kataragam God would not refuse any spirit who approached him with this request[1].

Further, these Veddas hold that the man may become possessed by the Kataragam God in the same way as by the *Nae Yaku*, and the god is worshipped at certain shrines in the Kovil Vanamai district which are traditionally associated with Veddas and are said to be of Vedda origin. One of these at a place called Kokkadichchola is said to have arisen as follows.

A Vedda and his wife were cutting the trunk of a tree for honey when the tree began to bleed and they found in it not a bee's nest but an infant. The Vedda became possessed and while this condition lasted the God within him announced that he was the Kataragam God and that a temple must be built to him there. When the Vedda returned to his senses the child could not be found, but in its place was an image of the God.

Returning to the beliefs held by the Bandaraduwa people concerning the *Nae Yaku*, these can be best illustrated and explained by considering the events following the death of a Kovil Vanamai man called Tuta.

The day after our arrival at Bandaraduwa a Vedda called Kaira came to our camp sobbing and shaking and protesting that he could not stay long with us as his brother was dead. He seemed deeply affected, though another brother, Kaurale, who was with him appeared quite calm, which led us to suspect that his uncontrollable agitation was due to something more than mere affection for the dead man, and we soon discovered

[1] This belief in spirits of the dead obtaining license from the Kataragam God is also held by some rural Sinhalese.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

that this brother had lived with him and died in his hut, and that it was his duty to make an offering to the nearest Buddhist priest and to provide the necessities for a dance to the *Nae Yaku*, and that he had not the wherewithal to do these things. If these duties were neglected the spirit of the dead man would be angry, and after seven days when the spirit had become a *yaku* would cause misfortune and sickness and perhaps kill him. His manifest relief when we offered him the money needed to purchase the offerings showed that his sorrow for the loss of his brother was the least of his troubles, and he was quite gay when he started on his twenty mile walk to the nearest boutique with Rs. 3·50 in his betel pouch, and readily assented to our condition that he must return with his purchases so that the *Nae Yaku* ceremony might be performed near our camp. The local shaman, who was Vidane of the Vedda settlement, was perfectly ready to agree to this, indeed it suited him well, for it saved him the trouble of walking some eight miles to the scene of the death, and as he pointed out, the *Nae Yaku* could be invoked as well in one place as in another. It was important that the *Nae Yaku* dance should be held on the seventh day after death, since it was thought that the spirit of the dead man, which became a *yaku* on the third day after death, resorted to the Kataragam God and on the seventh day obtained authority from him to accept offerings and to help or molest the living according to the way in which he was treated by them. We were assured that whatever the intentions of the relations might be with regard to the spirit of the dead man, no danger was to be apprehended until the seventh day when the *Nae Yaku* ceremony should be performed, though this could not be done unless alms had previously been given to a Buddhist priest. The offerings which must be given to the priest are worth nearly three rupees and consist of the following foods and other objects. The numbers in parentheses after each object show the price in cents at the nearest boutique, some fifteen or twenty miles from Bandaraduwa. Rice 3 measures (60), 2 coconuts (20), 50 balls of jaggery sugar (15), 25 areca nuts (6), 5 tobacco leaves (12), 100 betel leaves (18), 1 plate (30), 1 cup (25), 1 mat (25), 1 handkerchief (36), half a bottle of coconut oil (50), the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

total amounting to 2 Rs. 97 cents. The offering made to the *Nae Yaku* cost only 40 cents and consisted of a coconut, 50 betel leaves and a measure of rice. 775 769

The actual ceremony at which the spirit of the dead man was invoked and offerings made to it is described in Chapter IX, pp. 233 to 237.

Certain of the invocations used by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas, for instance, in invocation (No. XXXIV) to Indigollae Kiriamma for success in hunting and the invocations sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony, especially that to Unapane Kiriamma (No. XXXVIII), show how greatly foreign influence has altered the character of spiritual beings who existed in the original Vedda religion.

The Veddas of Uniche form a community in much the same stage of belief as the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. A few days after death the spirit of the deceased obtains permission from a "chief" to accept offerings and assist or harm the living. Our informants could not tell us who this chief was, but appeared to think that he had lived in comparatively recent times, and were confident that he was not Kande or Bilindi Yaka. 771 775

The *Nae Yaku*, including the spirit of the dead man, are invoked a few, perhaps five, days after a death has taken place. A pot of coconut milk with betel leaves in it is placed upon a rice pounder, and the shaman, holding a ceremonial arrow in each hand, dances round this, invoking the spirits, including that of the dead man. When possessed, the shaman sprinkles some of the coconut milk on the relatives and places betel leaves on their chests; the shaman also feeds the relatives from the bowl of coconut milk. The object of this dance is said to be to enable the *prana karaya* to become a *Nae Yaka*. It is clear that this is simply a condensed account of the ceremony we witnessed at Bandaraduwa, described on pp. 233 to 237. 775 769

The conditions prevailing at Henebedda, which at first were most puzzling, were found to be largely due to the influence of Tissahami "the Vedda Arachi," whose strong personality has been already referred to on p. 41. This man had taught the present Henebedda shaman much of his lore, and the latter 776 775

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776
775

was but too anxious to assimilate and practise all that the Arachi would teach him. The knowledge he thus acquired spread to the younger members of the tribe, such as Sita Wanniya, who obviously took more interest in the ceremonial observances of his religion than any other of the younger men we met, and it was said that he would probably be the next shaman. The older men, on the other hand, appeared to know little of the developments introduced by the Arachi. To them Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* were not only the most important spiritual powers, but appeared to be the only ones who were at all well known; the simplicity of the eschatological beliefs of these older men has already been referred to on p. 186 and agrees wonderfully well with those described by Bailey in 1863. "The result of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than evil. ...They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread....But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their 'nehya yakoon,' kindred spirits. They describe them as 'ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting.' In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, 'bilindoo yakkoon,' or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke....

775
769
539

"The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following: an arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm:

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ПЛ5
769
[539]

'Mâ miya, mâ miya, mâ deyâ,
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâh!'

'My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?'

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions, when the intervention of the guardian spirit is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.

"Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

"Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. 'Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come! wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!' and they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.

"They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. 'Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!' was the only reply I received to repeated questions. They have no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings[1]."

ПЛ

Although in essentials this account is accurate, certain corrections and suggestions must be made. The "bilindoo yakkoon" are not "infant spirits" but obviously represent Bilindi Yaka who became a *yaka* while still a child. The arrow dance is clearly described and agrees with the dance we saw and photographed near Bendiyagalge, figures of which are given in Plate XXVI.

ПЛ5
114

With regard to the spirits of the dead appearing in dreams and stating where game will be found, this, which is quite contradictory to our experience, has already been referred to on

114

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* pp. 100—101.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Gange Bandar, unknown among the wilder Veddas but worshipped by all village Veddas, was known at Unuwatura Bubula. 776 [184]

OMUNI.

The history of this settlement dating back to the first half of the last century has been given on pp. 45 and 46. The Omuni folk believe there are spirits (*yaku*) everywhere in the jungle, but none have seen them; further, there are many *yaku* of each kind or species such as the Indigollae Yaku, the Dadayan Yaku and many others including the Gale Yaku called the Jungle Yaku, who do not, however, frequent the jungle around Omuni. It was said that Ganga Bandar Deyo who lives in rocks in the river is greater than any of these. Omuni was one of the first Vedda settlements we visited, and as the importance of Sinhalese and Tamil gods and demons was not then appreciated no questions concerning these were asked. It is, however, reasonable to suppose that the Kataragam God and other mighty *deviyo* are worshipped. The spirits of the dead (*Nae Yaku*) are believed to be associated with rocks; on the whole they are kindly spirits, but it is necessary to invoke and propitiate them. [775]

A *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some little time after a death has taken place, at which the shaman dances with an *aude* before a *maesa* on which is placed an offering of cooked yams and other food, and the *maesa* is decorated with special clothes kept for that purpose. The *aude* is held in the smoke arising from gum-resin thrown on glowing charcoal, and then pressed on the head of all the male members of the community. If this were not done little game would be killed. 769 782

We have an account of another ceremony performed to cure sickness and when the chena had been reaped, but it is not clear what spirits were invoked at this; presumably the most important of these were certain of the *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*, though the *Nae Yaku* may have played a subordinate part. A shed or very rough house is built and hung with special clothes reserved for this purpose, those shown to us being rather old and worn pieces of linen woven at Batticaloa. A roughly made shelf forming a sort of altar is built in the shed on which 755

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka is known. The *Nae Yaku* are of the company of Indigollae Yaka, and with the latter are invoked after a death, but the *Nae Yaku* are not asked for good luck in hunting. The *Nae Yaku* are invoked after every death; coconut, jaggery (palm sugar), and rice are placed on a *maesa*, offered to the *yaku* and afterwards eaten by the shaman and other members of the community. While invoking the spirits the shaman holds a cloth in his hands but no *aude*.

ULPOTA.

The Kataragam God, Gane Deyo and Vihara Deyo, are worshipped, as probably are many others. These spirits are all considered more important than the *Nae Yaku*, and it is to their aid that success in hunting and in honey getting is largely attributed, nevertheless it was clear that the *Nae Yaku* were thought of as helpful in these activities. Our informant stated that they had never heard of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka, nor had they heard of the gods of the coast Veddas Kapalpe or Kadupe.

The spirits of the dead become *Nae Yaku*, and it is customary for a ceremony to be held eight days after a death, at which the spirits of all the recent dead are invoked. It was said that these spirits of the deceased joined the other *Nae Yaku* without asking permission from any other spiritual being and that the *Nae Yaku* came when they were invoked unaccompanied by any other spirit. The shaman does not hold an *aude* in his hand when invoking the *Nae Yaku*, but some rice and cooked pumpkin are put upon a *maesa* before which he dances. At the side of this is a pot of rice covered with a cloth supported on a rice pounder. The shaman faces the east whilst dancing, and appeals to all remembered *Nae Yaku* by name. It was said to be rare for any but the shaman to become possessed.

The *Nae Yaku* give honey and luck in hunting, and it is in order to obtain their favour that they are invoked, for if they were not they would give bad luck. When collecting tree honey the name of a dead man is called and he is requested to accept a little honey which is left at the foot of the tree for a short time, after which it is eaten by the honey gatherers. After killing game

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

a piece of flesh is offered to the *Nae Yaku* who are called by name, and then the Veddas eat it themselves.

Vihara Deyo is considered to send sickness, and he is invoked to make men whole again. Rice is cooked with milk usually obtained from the Tamil village of Horawila, and this with betel and areca nut is put upon a *maesa*. Only the shaman dances, and after the ceremony the offering is eaten by the whole community, including the sick man. Our informant did not know how the *yaka* or *deyo* causing the sickness was discovered, that being left to the shaman.

YAKURE.

The important spiritual agencies are:—Gange Bandar Deyo, Genikandia Deyo, Palugamman Deyo, Vihara Deyo, Mangara Deyo. Our informants knew of Indigollae Yaka but did not know if he ever was a man or had always been a spirit. Nothing was known of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka. Dead shamans are thought to become *yaku*, and it is the spirits of these people who are the *Nae Yaku*: the fate of the spirits of ordinary folk is uncertain, but they do not become *Nae Yaku*. The *Nae Yaku* are danced to and invoked with the other *yaku* in order to cure sickness, but apparently they are not considered particularly important. A *maesa* is made and a cloth put over it, and on it are laid flowers of many kinds, betel leaves and areca nuts. Incense is burned before these offerings, in front of which the shaman dances facing the east. In some instances the *maesa* is built inside the temple, the shaman holds a cloth in his hand and a pot of rice cooked in milk is placed by the *maesa* on a rice pounder[1]. This is not tasted during the dance, but is eaten afterwards by the shaman and the sick man and other individuals of the community[2].

Kataragam Deyo is invoked especially to protect the chena and at harvest an offering is made which is afterwards eaten at Elakotaliya.

[1] It must be remembered that Yakure is a great cattle breeding centre.

[2] This is an interesting contrast to the practice which Mr Parker informs us prevails in the south of the island, where food given to spirits is not eaten at all but is exposed in the jungle or some deserted place. The fact that at Yakure food offered to spirits, many of whom are of Sinhalese or Tamil origin, is eaten, is clearly a remnant of the Vedda belief that the spirits invoked are in the main beneficent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered. 776 755

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding. 231 776 769

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *aude* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo. 778 346

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams, 776 753 776 224 776 775 787

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

rice, then he came to us and in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaku* said that he had come because we had asked for him. After some more dancing a little longer in front of the *bulatyahana* and after much bending and shaking over it and the rice pot the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya left the shaman and the ceremony ended.

Nae Yaku Ceremonies.

769
535

The large part the *Nae Yaku* play in the life of the Veddas and the great deference paid to them have been treated in the chapters on religion. We witnessed two *Nae Yaku* ceremonies which took place at Sitala Wanniya and Bandaraduwa respectively. The Bandaraduwa ceremony was performed on the seventh day after the death of the individual whose spirit was invoked, and we were allowed to prepare a dancing ground in the jungle, where it seemed that a tolerably good series of photographs might be obtained. However, the Veddas were obviously apprehensive of the spirit of the deceased until the ceremony had taken place, and insisted on performing it early in the morning with the result that the photographs obtained were all underexposed. We have however thought it best to publish a number of these without retouching them, an exception being made in the case of the two photographs reproduced in Plates XXXVI, fig. 2, and XXXVIII, fig. 1, the value of which do not depend on the facial expression of the performers while they were so underexposed that all detail would have been lost in a reproduction.

The ceremony performed at Sitala Wanniya was danced expressly because we wished to see it, but Handuna, the most important man in this community, was delighted when we suggested that they should dance to the *Nae Yaku*, because he said it would please the *yaku*, for when alone the community could seldom provide such good things to offer them as we promised to give.

Nae Yaku Ceremony at Sitala Wanniya. Although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas told us that the *Nae Yaku* could not come without Kande Yaka, Kande Yaka was not invoked at

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535

the *Nat Yaku* ceremony that they performed for our benefit; the spirits of certain named relatives being called upon immediately. This may have been an omission caused by the ceremony having been begun in the spirit of a rehearsal (though it was certainly continued in earnest), but it seems more probable to us that this was not a mistake, as it was clearly stated that when a *Nat Yaka* is invoked for the first time after a death Kande Yaka is called upon at the beginning of the ceremony to bring the new *yaka*. The two *yaku* invoked at this ceremony were remembered by the community as influential men, and had probably been invoked frequently, and thus though still looked upon as attendants of Kande Yaka in a general way, they had probably gained a certain independence. Two pots of rice were cooked with coconut milk and placed on the *maesa* which was already in existence, having been built for one of the other dances, and an earthenware bowl of coconut milk was supported on a stake driven into the ground in the centre of the dancing plot. This bowl, the *kirikoraha*, was filled with coconut milk, and betel leaves were put in it. Kaira put on a hangalla, and held a piece of cloth in his hands. It was decided that the father-in-law of Handuna should be called, therefore an invocation was sung to him, and Kaira danced with the piece of cloth in his hand holding it at times over his head, and soon began to shout and leap showing that he was possessed. He went to Handuna, shouted and waved his cloth before him, and he too fell back and became possessed. There seemed to be no doubt that both Handuna and Kaira were considered to be possessed by the same *yaka*, i.e. by the spirit of the former's father-in-law Tuta Gamarale. Both bent their heads low over the *kirikoraha* and inspected the milk, then examined the offering of cooked rice, and returned to the *kirikoraha* quivering and gasping, and scattered some of the milk as a sign of pleasure. Then Kaira spoke to Vela in the low gasping voice of the *yaka* and stretched his arms towards Vela's child, who was suffering from yaws, and covered both the child and its mother with his cloth. He treated the other children in the same way, and also sprinkled coconut milk on their heads, and in the hurried *yaka* manner of one possessed smeared their faces with the milk, and we were told

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535

that this was the manner in which the *yaka* of Tuta Gamarale usually showed favour to his grandchildren. Handuna and Kaira both returned to the *kirikoraha*, and shivering and quaking they bent their heads over it, shaking their hair over their faces, then both danced wildly (Handuna with an arrow in his hand), scattering the milk about, in this way showing their satisfaction with the offerings prepared for them. Both Handuna and Kaira went to several of the Vedda onlookers, and waving their cloths promised luck in hunting or favour of some kind. Then coming to each of us, they said while shuffling their feet and shaking their cloths "My grandchildren called me to help them, now you are here too, do you help them also." After feeding some of the small children with coconut milk they both returned to the *kirikoraha* and bent their heads low over it, crying, "Oh," and fell back, and the *yaka* of Tuta Gamarale left them.

A good deal of discussion followed among the Veddas, as many considered that the father of Handuna should be invoked, but all declared they were too tired to dance. At last Handuna prevailed upon his son-in-law Kaira to dance, explaining to us that they seldom had such good food as that which they were able to offer to-day and it pleased the *yaku* greatly, so his father should be called to share it.

So Kaira took the handkerchief and danced again, soon becoming possessed by Huda the father of Handuna. After showing favour to the progeny of Huda as before by holding the cloth over their heads he fell supine into the arms of Vela and it seemed as if the *yaka* was about to depart. Some of the men and boys began immediately to repeat the invocation to prevent this from happening, and after some seconds of immobility Kaira began to tremble slightly, and raised his right hand limply, let it fall again, and once more became inert. Then all joined vigorously in the invocation, and the wife of Kaira smeared his face with coconut milk, and with the aid of a leaf-cone fed him with the milk, that is to say, she managed to convey a few drops into his mouth, but still he remained unmoved. As this was ineffectual several of the grandchildren of the man whose spirit possessed Kaira fed the latter in the same way;

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela did so also, with the result that Kaira dropped his head forward, shook violently and nodded his head sideways in a clumsy drunken fashion, and in a few seconds, still supported, jerked his limbs forwards and moved to the offering, after which he came back to where the women were standing and fell again into the arms of Vela. His chin was thrown back and his whole body trembled, while he gasped a word or two occasionally and fanned himself with his cloth vigorously. He held the cloth over the child suffering from yaws and promised to cure him, then putting both hands on Handuna he let his head fall on the latter's chest, and while trembling and shuffling his feet asked how Handuna fared. Handuna replied that game was scarce, and Kaira then spoke to the wife of Handuna and again to Handuna, and promised help. Then leaving Handuna he danced with wild leaping steps round the *kirikoraha* and gasped that now he must go and so leapt to the *maesa*, bent his head over the offering, and fell back exhausted. But he soon began to dance again, twirling the arrow blade between his fingers, till after a short time he returned to the *maesa*, and again bent his head over the offering; then with a great shout he took the pot of rice in both hands and spun it on the ground, and as he did so the *yaka* left him and he fell back. 769 535

Spinning the pot had the same significance here as at Henebedda, the direction towards which the pot dipped showing where game would be found. In this instance the pot was so full of rice that it did not dip at all, but this was considered a good omen as game might be expected on all sides. 769 787

After all was over Handuna took an arrow, and standing by the *maesa* pointed the arrow to the pots, and called upon all the *Nae Yaku* to feed. The pots were soon removed, the rice they contained was eaten, and the betel leaves from the *kirikoraha* chewed, but the milk in the *kirikoraha* was poured over a heap of twigs laid on the ground, being thus devoted to the *yaku*. 769

Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa. Some account has already been given in Chapter II of the abnormal conditions prevailing at Bandaraduwa, so it will only be necessary to touch lightly upon this subject here. Some twenty years back these Kovil Vanamai Veddas, of whom the Bandaraduwa Veddas 177 769

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 are the remains, lived much the same life as the Henebedda Veddas now live, and like them were in transition between 769 a purely hunting, honey-collecting life and the settled condition of the village Veddas who are mainly dependent on their chena produce. When we visited Bandaraduwa the Veddas were in a sorry condition and had settled down among the Sinhalese. It is true they dwelt in separate huts, but they were built on the same chena which had been allotted by the Government to them all, and like the Sinhalese they were paying taxes[1]. Naturally living in such close contact with the Sinhalese they have been influenced by them, and intermarriage has taken place, so that in many cases the Vedda identity has been lost. However, those of them who still considered themselves Veddas have retained a number of their old songs and many of their old customs, as comparison with the uncontaminated Sitala Wanniya Veddas showed. But even these customs, though Vedda at root, had been largely coloured and often overlaid by Sinhalese beliefs, so that when a death occurred not only was it necessary to make offering to the new Nae Yaka but it was equally important to propitiate the nearest Buddhist priest.

769 A *kirikoraha* was prepared in the usual way, and betel leaves put in it as well as the coconut milk. The shaman 535 Tissahami, wearing a *hangala*, placed two *aude* on the *kirikoraha* and salaamed to the bowl. (Plate XXXVI, fig. 1.) Then he began to dance in the usual manner to the accompaniment of a drum played by a Vedda lad, first holding one *aude* and then one in each hand, that in the right hand being for Kande Yaka and that in the left for the *yaka* of the deceased Tuta. The use of the drum, which was of Sinhalese manufacture, must be regarded as an innovation, for although these people used them, and the Bendiyagalge people said they would if they had them, [177] the Sitala Wanniya Veddas declared that true Veddas never possessed or used a drum[2].

[1] It must be remembered that about sixty years ago Bailey, a Government official, encouraged the Veddas of Nilgala to make chena and since then the custom has spread. Sixty years ago these Veddas, and in fact all except the long established coast and village Veddas, must have lived a life very little different from that of the Sitala Wanniya group of to-day.

[2] The readiness with which this community accepted an innovation was demonstrated

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman salaams to the offering (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman pretends to stab the offering (Bandaraduwa)*

[facing p. 234a]

769
535

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed falls into the arms of a supporter (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman sprinkles milk from the offering on the brothers of the deceased (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 234 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535

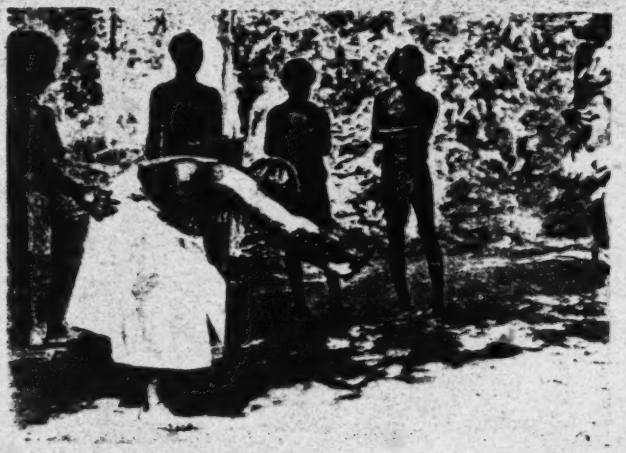


Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka tracks the sambar (Bandaraduwa)*

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the brother of the deceased falls back possessed (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 234 c]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535
787

At the same time an invocation was sung, presumably to Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaka*, but our notes are not quite clear about this; it was however certain that Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nae Yaka* all came, indeed that the last was unable to come without Kande Yaka, but it was not clear when each *yaka* came and went, and it seemed quite possible for the shaman to be possessed by several *yaku* at once.

As the shaman danced he stabbed at the *kirikoraha* with both the *aude* (Plate XXXVI, fig. 2), in this way the *Nae Yaka* by whom he was possessed was pleased to show his power. Sometimes as Tissahami made the usual half turn on his heels he held the *aude* against his hips pointed end outwards. Soon he began to quiver and bend his head forward, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers, into whose arms he fell back (Plate XXXVII, fig. 1). After lying still for a few seconds he revived and began to dance wildly, stabbing the *aude* in the air; this was in order to frighten people, for although the feeling of the *Nae Yaka* towards his living relatives was friendly, provided always that he had been well treated by them and had been offered sufficient rice, coconut milk and betel leaves, the *yaka* was not averse to showing his newly acquired power. After this, in order to show his favour to his relatives the shaman went to both the brothers of the dead man in turn and sprinkled them with coconut milk from the *kirikoraha* (Plate XXXVII, fig. 2), he put his arms on their shoulders and promised them luck in hunting, and taking two betel leaves from the *kirikoraha* he put one on the chest of each man, and the leaves being wet with the milk stayed where they were placed for a short time. Suddenly leaping away the shaman, now apparently possessed by Kande Yaka and probably with the spirit of the *Nae Yaka* still within him, tracked an imaginary sambar round the dancing ground, holding the two *aude* crosswise to represent a bow and arrow. This is shown in Plate XXXVIII, fig. 1, which also shows the betel leaves on the chest

by the shaman who wanted to wear Sinhalese leggings with bells, although he said these had not been worn before in a Vedda ceremony. The leglets, which he greatly admired, had been worn by a peasant Sinhalese at a devil ceremony which had been held two days before at a village a few miles distant.

[177]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535
787

of each of the two brothers of the deceased. The shaman made no feint to shoot but soon put the *aude* on the *kirikoraha*, and taking a pot of rice which had been prepared twirled it vigorously in his hands, and though this may have represented Kande Wanniya spinning the rice pot for prophecy, the shaman put the pot down without actually spinning it. Supported by one of the Veddas he again danced round the *kirikoraha* and swayed his body violently; at times he would spring suddenly to one side stabbing fiercely at the air, after which (bending over the *kirikoraha*) he fell back and remained perfectly still with rapt expression and head slightly bent, one hand resting on the edge of the milk pot. It seemed as though the Yaka was about to leave the shaman, but as the relatives did not desire this (perhaps because the Yaka had not yet fed them as a sign of greater favour) they all sang the invocation together. The Yaka heard them, for suddenly the shaman began to tremble, the trembling grew to a vigorous shaking, and he sprang forward and again bent his head over the *kirikoraha*; then with body bent and head drooping he moved a little way, taking short leaping steps, and again fell back exhausted. But he soon revived and took the *aude* and approached the dead man's brothers in turn, who both became possessed by the *Nat Yaka* and fell back. Then the shaman smeared their bodies with coconut milk, throwing some into their mouths, and they soon showed signs of life again. Plate XXXVIII, fig. 2, and Plate XXXIX, fig. 1, show the two brothers of the deceased possessed by the *Nat Yaka*; in the latter figure the body of the unconscious man has been smeared with the contents of the *kirikoraha*, while the remains of that with which he had been fed hangs about his mouth and chin. It will be observed that in both these figures the supporters are Sinhalese; this was because there were not enough grown Vedda men in the community to support the men possessed by Yaku. All this time the invocation was being repeated by one of the youngest Veddas present, who we were told was the dead man's sister's son, that is the dead man's potential son-in-law. The shaman now fed the dead man's brothers with rice from the offering, and then fell exhausted to the ground. One of the onlookers immediately came

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535
787

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the other brother of the deceased is also possessed (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Nae Yaka embraces the brothers of the deceased (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 236 a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XL

769
535
787

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the Nae Yaka shows his power (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman feeds the members of the community (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 236b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to his assistance when he began to quiver and sway, then moved and put both arms round one of the dead man's brothers as a sign of kindness from the deceased. (Plate XXXIX, fig. 2.) The brothers said: "It was good of you to come. See we have given you food, now do not come back again," and the *yaka* agreed. The shaman then took the *aude* and transfixed a betel leaf with each and danced and again showed favour to the relatives by giving them each another betel leaf, after which one of the relatives danced, but the shaman threatened to stab with the *aude* the men who were not relatives of the dead man. (Plate XL, fig. 1.) Soon both the shaman and the two brothers fell back and the Yaka departed from them. When the shaman revived, he bent his head over the *kirikoraha* as a sign of respect; then holding both hands over the rice pot he repeated a silent charm, asking any of the other *yaku* who might have come to the ceremony to depart peacefully. After this he fed each relative of the dead man, holding the *kirikoraha* to their mouths, as is shown in Plate XL, fig. 2. 769 535 787

The Invocation of Bambura Yaka.

The Veddas invoke Bambura Yaka for help in getting pig and yams, both staple foods, the latter being an extremely important element in their diet. The dance is pantomimic, and depicts a boar hunt in which Bambura, the boar-hunting hero, was aided by a Vedda woman, who killed the pig with an arrow she shot from her husband's bow and whose spirit is therefore called Dunne Yakini (Bow Spirit), while the spirit of this woman's husband who turned the boar with his yam stick (*ule*) has become Ule Yaka, that is (Yam-stick Spirit). This ceremony, though not so widely spread, is as dramatic as that in which Kande Yaka stalks and kills sambar deer. We saw it danced by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya and by Wannaku of Uniche. 776 535 773 796

The invocation of Bambura Yaka at Sitala Wanniya. The dance at Sitala Wanniya will be described first, since the story was told us here in its more complete form. Once long ago many Vedda men and women went out in search of yams, 776 773 796

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

motions, once more put their arms round them, soon after which the dancers fell limply into their arms. The leader of the dance seemed especially excited at this stage and, trembling and quivering all over, stood back to the pole and wildly waved his scarf in the air. Soon his movements became less vigorous, his head nodded on his shoulders and hung down on his chest as he addressed the other dancers in a harsh and broken voice (Plate LXXI). In view of the Vedda ceremonies which we subsequently saw we have no doubt that he prophesied good fortune. It appeared to us that this old man really presented the ordinary characteristics of Vedda "possession," i.e. the dance, though only a rehearsal, had produced the customary effects associated with it, and certainly this old man's muscles continued to quiver irregularly for some time after the dance was over. As for the remaining dancers we have no doubt that the dance remained for them as it had begun, simply a rehearsal and an amusing piece of acting. 535 796 787

Such dances are held only to cure sickness or in return for good crops, and it was emphatically denied that anything similar took place after childbirth or death. 535 796

Very little was elicited concerning death and mourning ceremonies. The corpse is washed, and it seemed that although this is usually done by a barber or *dhobis* (professional washerman) it might be done by one or more of the relatives of the dead man. The grave must be at some distance from the habitations of the living and also from their cultivation patches. No fire is lit on the grave. A feast is held a few days after burial, which appears to be called *bati bane*, and the food for this, especially rice, is provided by the near relatives of the dead man and distributed. A *kudaram* is built upon which the food is placed for "a short time" as an offering to Kapalpei, after which it is eaten by the assembled people. 764

This account agrees with that given by the Sarasins, who record that a coast Vedda, Pereman, when asked about his religion "laughed and said they had that of the Tamils, they honoured their dead by cooking rice in front of their house, folding their hands, saying a few words and then eating the rice. As they did this they spoke the name of the deceased and said: 'Help 769 177

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 us in danger, sickness etc.' When we enquired whether their
177 dead lived on as spirits he replied, they did not consider whether
[775] the departed were living or dead, they were just spirits, in Tamil *sami* or *dewi*, in Sinhalese *yako*; all spirits were alike, neither good nor bad. Another coast Vedda named Patiniya told us that their religion was that of the Tamils. In memory of their dead, whom they called *yako*, they cooked rice and ate it; they invoked the *yaka* in sickness, etc.[1]"

761 Just as Kapalpei sent sickness, so death was also attributed
753 to him, but perhaps not epidemics, for it appeared to be generally
776 considered that a single death would satisfy him for the time, so that it would be days or weeks before he would be expected to send sickness or death again.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 498.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

wildest Veddahs are without an "instinct of worship." They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread. 776

Such appears to be the form which the superstitions of every savage tribe naturally assume,—the necessity for a belief in something more than human, imparting to the commonest objects a supernatural character. But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every near relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their "néhya yakoon," kindred spirits. They describe them as "ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting." In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, "bilindoo yakkoon," or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke.* 776 775 769

It is a pretty belief, and contrasts favourably with the superstitions of the Kandyans, who have spirits enough in their system, but almost all thoroughly malignant, and needing constant propitiation. But the Veddah spirit-world is singularly free from evil. I can find only one *absolutely* malignant spirit in it whom they really fear;† though, like all savages, they have an undefined awe of the nameless spirits whom they believe to haunt the darkness. The shades of their ancestors and of their children seem to be purely benevolent. The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following. An arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm. 769 776 782

"Mà miya, mà miy, mà deyà'
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandà'h!" [539]

* They also speak of them as "witera yakkoon," "child-spirits." They seem to prefer their great-grandmother (maha kiri amma) to the rest of their defunct ancestors; but I cannot ascertain any cause for their preference for the old lady. I may, however, be wrong in describing it as a preference. It may be the reverse, for she is invoked chiefly in cases of sickness, when the patient is supposed to be suffering from the malignity of a spirit. [753]

† Awàramada Yakko, who especially injures women, lying wait for them in the forest.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
776
[539]

"My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?"*

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions when the intervention of the guardian spirits is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.†

[224] Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. "Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come, wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!" And they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.‡

776 They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. "Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!" 782 was the only reply I received to repeated questions.§ They have

* I find in my notes another version of this invocation, which slightly alters the first words. It runs thus: "Ma mini, ma mini!—my gem, my gem;" but "miya," which signifies "dead," is the most common. [The word in the invocation translated "God" is evidently a corruption of the Sanskrit deva, a god or divinity. EDIT.]

† And they are invoked without any ceremony at all—by a mere mental ejaculation. I once saw a Veddah make a bad shot, and he threw down his bow with a gesture of impatience, saying—"That was because I did not call on my Bilindoo Yakkoon." And before making his next shot, he muttered an invocation.

‡ A superstition similar somewhat to this is prevalent among the neighbouring Singhalese. If a man die who has lived a good life, his relatives give alms to the poor, calling on the dead by name to look down on them, and enable them to follow his good example. If he has lived an evil life, alms are also given; but these are propitiatory offerings for his sins, and to avert his evil influence from his survivors. For, in this case, he has become an evil spirit, apt to injure his own family and their cattle unless civilly treated. The degree of malignity depends on the degree of evil in the life led by deceased. If he dies with a hankering after worldly things, he haunts the house in which he lived in a variety of forms—perhaps most commonly that of a toad or a cobra, probably because these frequent houses. It is also, in some parts, a common belief that if a man die, and shortly after one of the family fall sick, and is not cured by the usual medicines and ceremonies, the sickness is attributed to the spirit of the dead, who must be propitiated by a mess of rice, left in the house for him. This, generally, is supposed to effect a cure.

§ It is curious that in one of their invocations, "mà Deyà", my God! [782] occurs, see before; and that of thunder they say, "a spirit, or a god has cried out".

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings. 782 776 [346]

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medicine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, so universal amongst Buddhists. 755 769 [775]

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded. 771 174

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡ [821]

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Wedde-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapāna-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapāna-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddirates, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon, 789

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).* 776

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred. 761 [768]

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakka*).† 769 771

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *audes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells. 776 796

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Ravathath*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees*, *Peti-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*). 776

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad. 787

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakka* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakka* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakka* ancestral spirit. *Hetka* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanniya* is another word synonymous with *yakka* and *hetka*. [196]

†The Veddas, by Seligmann; page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *warugu* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

instead of *kodai*, *tiru* being a Tamil word, so that a composite word meaning "really nothing" is now used.

At the present day there are probably no more than a dozen families left as representatives of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas and all of these live on Sinhalese chenas and are in dire poverty. The country has been referred to already as unhealthy, monkeys although abundant are not easily approached especially in the dry season, and other game is scarce. Isolated families have settled down in Sinhalese villages to pick up whatever living they can as occasional hired labourers, and some of these people were seen in a wretchedly starved condition. The most prosperous are three families living on the large Sinhalese chena (Plate XII, figure 1) at Bandaraduwa near Devulani tank. But even with the assistance of the chena these people are not well off, and it appeared that they were no strangers to hunger. Owing to their position on the border of the Sinhalese and Tamil country, they had been influenced by both Hinduism and Buddhism to a certain extent. In spite of this they knew numerous Vedda songs and incantations, and the ceremonies following a death which occurred in the vicinity during our visit clearly demonstrated that foreign ideas formed but a thin stratum overlying their own beliefs.

The Uniche Veddas were not seen in their own country but some men were brought to us by the Forest Ranger, Mr S. Perera, at Maha Oya, where the photograph shown in Plate XII was taken. We have no note that these Veddas were Uru *waruge* men, but it seems probable that they represented the Uru *waruge* community recorded (as mentioned by the Vedda Arachi) on the last page. They had retained their own customs and beliefs very largely and appeared to be living in a condition very similar to the people near Devulani, though perhaps they were better fed.

Sitala Wanniya. After visiting so many decaying or degenerate communities a refreshing state of affairs was found at Sitala Wanniya. Here there were at least four families who were living the life their forefathers had lived for generations without perceptible change. They still found game, honey and yams in quantities sufficient not only to support life, but to leave

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION (CONTINUED)

114
771

WE have now described the fundamental ideas of the Vedda cult of the dead, but superposed upon these there are two other strata of belief both of which have influenced the religion of certain groups of Veddas to a greater or less extent. Before discussing these we may briefly indicate the views of the more thorough of previous investigators. In this as in other matters Knox was better informed than many of his successors when he said of the Veddas, "The *tamer* do build Temples, the wild only bring their sacrifice under Trees, and while it is offering dance round it, both men and women[1]." Tennant's account adds little to this; Bailey's account, undoubtedly the most complete and trustworthy that has been given to date, is not quoted here because it will be found almost in full on pp. 160 and 161 where the religious beliefs of the Nilgala Veddas are discussed. Tennant writes, "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state...in short, no instinct of worship, except...when sick, they send for devil dancers to drive away the evil spirit, who is believed to inflict the disease. The dance is executed in front of an offering of something eatable, placed on a tripod of sticks, the dancer having his head and girdle decorated with green leaves. At first he shuffles with his feet to a plaintive air, and by degrees he works himself into a state of great excitement and action, accompanied by moans and screams, and during this paroxysm, he professes to be inspired with instruction for the cure of the patient[2]."

114
771
765

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 63.
[2] Tennant, *op. cit.* pp. 441 and 442.

[p. 146]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had never thought the matter over. Nevertheless they honour the names which like the Sinhalese they call Yakas with food, dances or offerings. Any monotheistic idea of God is absent both in 'Nature' and in 'Culture' Veddas[1]."

The three strata of belief to which we referred at the beginning of this chapter and which exist among the Veddas of the present day, have not fused so thoroughly that there is any great difficulty in isolating them. We believe they may be tabulated as follows:

I. The Cult of the dead, including the cult of the spirits of recent ancestors, i.e. of the Nae Yaku and the *yaku* of certain Veddas who have been long dead and may well be regarded as heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka.

II. The Cult of foreign spirits, who have become naturalised and have taken the friendly protective nature of the Vedda *yaku*.

III. The Cult of foreign spirits who, though not often regarded as such, have retained their foreign nature and are in the main terrible or even hostile.

Another feature of the last stratum of thought is the endowment of true Vedda *yaku* with foreign attributes[2]. When the history of the island is considered, it is not surprising that the first condition, which may be considered the primitive religion of the Veddas, should nowhere be found standing alone at the present day. It is impossible to say how much the Indian invaders influenced the aboriginal inhabitants of Lanka (Ceylon) when they took possession of the island under Vijeyo about 500 B.C., for the few references made to Veddas in the ancient chronicles of the country throw no light on this subject.

Knox mentions that Veddas paid a tribute of game and honey to the Sinhalese, and in his day there were "wild and tame" Veddas, and it is certain that from the middle ages onwards there was a considerable amount of intercourse between at least the tamer Veddas and the Sinhalese. Therefore it is natural that foreign beliefs should have gradually infiltrated the native Vedda cult.

[1] Ibid.

[2] The invocation (No. xxi) to Ambarapol Kirisuma given on p. 316 is an excellent example of this. Bilindi Yaka is here treated as if he were a Sinhalese or Tamil deity.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

621 771 To illustrate and prove these propositions we must examine in detail the beliefs of some of the communities in which each stage is respectively dominant. The Veddas met at Godatalawa and Sitala Wanniya form the best example of the first stage of belief. In comparing their beliefs it must, however, be remembered that the Godatalawa family have drifted away from their hunting grounds and are in dire want, and that their oldest man and leader (now quite infirm though still mentally vigorous) was never a shaman and consequently could give only the lay opinion of his group on religious matters. It must then not be assumed that no spirits beyond the *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Bilindi Yaka were known to the shaman of the Galmeda community, although the fact that the laymen only knew of these spirits shows how vastly more important they were than any other.

The Sitala Wanniya people, on the other hand, were living in a condition which must have been general from ancient times up to about 70 years ago. Four of the five families had never made even rough chena or built bark houses, but lived on game, honey and yams and wandered about from rock-shelter to rock-shelter within their territory.

776 782 At Godatalawa Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were both known though they were not recognised as brothers, and Kande Yaka was said to be greater than all other *yaku*. They are the two principal *yaku* invoked in order to obtain game, but with them there are invoked three other *yaku*, who, it was stated, are not the spirits of the dead but have existed as *yaku* from the beginning. These were, however, of little importance, and our informant, an old man the senior of the group but not a shaman, did not remember their names. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka would be invoked in order to obtain game at the [224] *kirikoraha* ceremony, or simply when dancing round an arrow struck in the ground. These dances were not in gratitude for game already killed, but when the hunting had been successful, pieces of flesh from the neck and chest of the kill were cooked on the ashes and Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked to come to this offering which a few minutes later would be consumed by the Veddas. If part of the meat were not thus

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and rocks were known; they were said not to be worshipped, although they were looked upon with awe and respect as they were believed to cause sickness.

These spirits are the Maha Yakini who are especially associated with the hills Nuwaragala, Walimbagala and a rock called Kalumal Ela. The chief of the Maha Yakini is the Maha Kiriamma, and the other Maha Yakini are her attendants. Although associated with rocks and hill-tops they are not invoked before taking honey in these places. It was stated that the Maha Yakini were formerly living people—old women—and that they were especially fond of children and might even steal them. It is for this reason that infants are protected by an arrow struck in the ground, and it is clear that something of their character as old Vedda women still survives in spite of their generally more or less unfriendly attributes.

Concerning the Maha Kiriamma nothing definite could be learnt: our informant had heard it said that she had been invoked in the old days, but knew nothing of this himself. Handuna said that what little knowledge they had of the Maha Kiriamma had travelled to them from the Bintenne Veddas near Horaborawewa[1].

In the Sitala Wanniya community, therefore, the second stratum is well developed and the third is indicated. The second and third strata, though probably not recently introduced, are, however, entirely subsidiary to the primitive cult of the friendly dead.

The Bandaraduwa community is one in which the second stratum is so highly developed that at first sight it appears dominant, for after a death offerings are made to the Buddhist priest, but this is only done as an additional means of propitiation of the *Nae Yaku* who are still considered of the first importance, to whom an offering is made on the seventh day after death. Further, Kande Yaka is still closely associated with the *Nae Yaku* and is invoked with them, but he is no longer formally regarded as the Lord of the Dead, that function has been usurped by Kanda Swami or Skanda known to these Veddas as "the Kataragam

[1] An invocation to the Maha Kiriamma (No. XXXIII), a fragment of a much longer formula (No. XXXIX), unknown to our informants, is given in Chapter X.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God." He is one of the four gods who protect Ceylon, said to have come from India, and is worshipped chiefly by Tamils, who coming from the north-east frequently pass through the territory of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas on their pilgrimage to the temple of their God in the south of the island.

The following information concerning Kataragam is taken from Mr Herbert White's *Manual of Uva.*

Although the present temple is of brick and of no architectural pretensions it is the lineal descendant of the temple endowed some 2000 years ago by Dutugamunu, King of Mogana, as a thank-offering for assistance in overcoming the Tamil King Elala[1]. But Kataragam was a holy place before this, for the Mahavansa describes how the princes of Kataragam assisted at the planting of the shoots of the sacred Bo tree and how one of the miraculously produced offshoots was planted at Kataragam itself[2].

"The aspect and natural features of the country surrounding the temple of Kataragama are not calculated to make a favourable impression upon the eye when they first meet it. There is nothing in them to attract and invite it. Everything, with the exception of the temple and the river on which it stands, at the village of Kataragama and its vicinity looks wild, dreary and monotonous....

"The population of the village may be estimated at forty, including women and children; but it is liable to fluctuation at different periods of the year, from the influx and efflux of the pilgrims who resort to the temple. And I need scarcely add that the village, its adjacent hills, and the surrounding country, are all temple lands, and their occupants are attached to the temple service as its tenants[3]."

The guardian of the temple and its lands, the latter including a domain of some 60,000 acres, is a Buddhist headman resident at Badulla, and although there are now no Veddas near Kataragam, tradition states that there were formerly many Veddas in

[1] Kataragam is situated at the south-east of the island, on the left bank of the Manik-ganga, at a distance of more than forty miles north-east of Hambantota and about sixty miles south-east of Badulla.

[2] Mahavansa, Chapter XIX.

[3] *Manual of Uva*, p. 47.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

total amounting to 2 Rs. 97 cents. The offering made to the *Nae Yaku* cost only 40 cents and consisted of a coconut, 50 betel leaves and a measure of rice. 775 769

The actual ceremony at which the spirit of the dead man was invoked and offerings made to it is described in Chapter IX, pp. 233 to 237.

Certain of the invocations used by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas, for instance, in invocation (No. XXXIV) to Indigollae Kiriamma for success in hunting and the invocations sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony, especially that to Unapane Kiriamma (No. XXXVIII), show how greatly foreign influence has altered the character of spiritual beings who existed in the original Vedda religion.

The Veddas of Uniche form a community in much the same stage of belief as the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. A few days after death the spirit of the deceased obtains permission from a "chief" to accept offerings and assist or harm the living. Our informants could not tell us who this chief was, but appeared to think that he had lived in comparatively recent times, and were confident that he was not Kande or Bilindi Yaka. 771 775

The *Nae Yaku*, including the spirit of the dead man, are invoked a few, perhaps five, days after a death has taken place. A pot of coconut milk with betel leaves in it is placed upon a rice pounder, and the shaman, holding a ceremonial arrow in each hand, dances round this, invoking the spirits, including that of the dead man. When possessed, the shaman sprinkles some of the coconut milk on the relatives and places betel leaves on their chests; the shaman also feeds the relatives from the bowl of coconut milk. The object of this dance is said to be to enable the *prana karaya* to become a *Nae Yaka*. It is clear that this is simply a condensed account of the ceremony we witnessed at Bandaraduwa, described on pp. 233 to 237. 775 769

The conditions prevailing at Henebedda, which at first were most puzzling, were found to be largely due to the influence of Tissahami "the Vedda Arachi," whose strong personality has been already referred to on p. 41. This man had taught the present Henebedda shaman much of his lore, and the latter 776 775

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ת״ס
ת״ל
[539]

'Mâ miya, mâ miya, mâ deyâ,
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâh!'

'My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?'

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions, when the intervention of the guardian spirit is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.

"Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

"Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. 'Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come! wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!' and they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.

"They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. 'Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!' was the only reply I received to repeated questions. They have no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings[1]."

ת״ל

Although in essentials this account is accurate, certain corrections and suggestions must be made. The "bilindoo yakkoon" are not "infant spirits" but obviously represent Bilindi Yaka who became a *yaks* while still a child. The arrow dance is clearly described and agrees with the dance we saw and photographed near Bendiyagalge, figures of which are given in Plate XXVI.

ת״ס
114

With regard to the spirits of the dead appearing in dreams and stating where game will be found, this, which is quite contradictory to our experience, has already been referred to on

114

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* pp. 300—303.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

755 the offering is placed. The dance is held at night and continue
until morning when the whole community eat the offering
though only the men dance. We were shown a pot in a smal
cave near the settlement which was said to be kept there pur
posely, and which it was stated was used for boiling rice for th
ceremony.

● 771 177 We may now consider the religious beliefs of certain com
munities in which the third stratum of belief already alluded t
is dominant. Such communities are the village Veddas of Uv
Bintenne and those of the Eastern Province and Tamankaduwa
among all of whom the *Nae Yaku* were known and reverenced
but the great Vedda heroes have all disappeared, their plac
having been taken by numerous Sinhalese gods and demon
Some of the village Veddas even build temples, rough bark o
[346] mud huts like their own habitations in which the variou
symbols of the *deviyo* and *yaku* are kept and in which the shama
dances.

Such a temple was seen at Yakure dedicated to Gang
Bandar Deyo, here also were two rough stones leaning again
[778] a tree on the *bund* of Yakurewaewa which were held sacred t
Gane Deyo (Ganesa).

At a place called Nadena, where there were said to b
Veddas until a few years ago, on the road running inland fro
Patrippu in the Eastern Province, there is a temple containin
an image of Ganesa and this is looked upon as a Vedda shrin
Other temples or shrines in the Eastern Province are traditional
associated with Veddas though none survive at the prese
day, except, we believe, at Portiv near Patrippu and at Mand

Village Veddas of the Bintenne.

775 115 At Dambani and the neighbouring settlements of Bulug
haladena and Wellampelle the *Nae Yaku* are held to be
great importance. Reference has already been made on p.
to the difficulty of working with these village Veddas, and o
information concerning the religious beliefs of the Dambani fo
was obtained from the Arachi of Belligala; with regard
Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the little information
possess was obtained at first hand and carefully checked, a

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clear what opportunities existed for obtaining it. Deer and pig would be killed and eaten, and snakes were said to be killed without a scruple though one informant denied that he would kill a cobra. 262

Time did not allow of any systematic study of the religion of the Verdas, but it was clear that this had been much affected by Tamil influence while yet retaining some of the more obvious outward features of the Vedda cult of the dead. Unfortunately we had no opportunity of ascertaining definitely whether the Verdas have also retained the essence of the Vedda cult, i.e. the belief in the loving-kindness and the guiding influence of the spirits of their dead, though since the leader of the dance seen at Vakarai showed the classical signs of "possession," there seems to be every reason to hold this belief at least provisionally. The dance we saw rehearsed at Vakarai was said to be performed for sickness and in thanksgiving when a good harvest had been gathered. The dance took place at night, the men dancing in relays till daylight, the women squatting on the ground, but taking no part. No food is taken during the dance, but some is placed upon the "altar" *kudaram* (lit. cage or small shed, *T*) which is eaten by all in the morning. 771 177 525 796

The temple seen at Pellanchenai, of which a rough plan is given in fig. 14, was a building some 12 feet long by about 10 broad; it faced east and the roof was carried forward for a few feet beyond the front wall in which was a door. A stout pole (marked *P*), thought to be some 30 feet long and consisting of a young tree with the bark removed, stood in front of the temple about 30 feet from the entrance. To the north of the pole and about 8 feet from it was a hole in the ground *F*, really a small well containing water, while to the south of the pole and at a distance of about 12 feet from it there was a young tree before which a small platform *T* (*kudaram*) was built, on which a rough stone rested. Some distance beyond the pole and somewhat to the south of it stood a tree *H*, apparently quite dead, with a fringe of dried leaves and small twigs round its trunk, before which were the remains of a *kudaram*; to the south-west of the pole and roughly in the position of *Y* in the plan, a limb of a tree was planted in the soil. The branches 346

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 if they have even any language. "Some," he says, "are so degraded that it has appeared doubtful whether they possess any language whatever; and not only is their dialect incomprehensible to a Singhalese, but even their communications with each other are made by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which bear little or no resemblance to distinct words or systematized language."* I can only say that I have been repeatedly among the very wildest of the race—indeed the "wretched outcasts," here so summarily deprived of the power of speech, are those whom I have been endeavouring to describe, and I never knew one of them at a loss for words sufficiently intelligible to convey his meaning, not to his fellows only, but to the Singhalese of the neighbourhood, who are all, more or less, acquainted with the Veddah patois.

775 The Veddahs have no idea of a future state of rewards and
[681] punishments; for the vague vestige of a belief in retributive justice, which I have before mentioned, cannot be said to show any faith in the punishment by a Superior Power of sinners in this world.

114 It has been most truly said that it is a matter of almost insuperable difficulty to arrive at a proper understanding of the creed of barbarous tribes through the medium of direct questioning, and that nothing can be more vague than all their statements on this most important subject.†

It is not to be wondered at that a people so barbarous as the
771 Veddahs are—without literature of any kind—who have lived in the depth of the forests in almost complete seclusion for centuries on centuries, should be incapable themselves of giving any definite or intelligent account of what they do believe. They are unable to express in language their ideas on subjects, which, even in their own minds, have never assumed any distinct form; and though they are ready enough to answer the questions put to them, it is no easy task so to frame them as to make their object intelligible to such rude and unlettered savages. The result
776 of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than for evil. Still, vague as this belief is, not even the

* Tennent, vol. ii, pt. ix, c. iii, p. 441, 2nd ed. This is stated on the authority of "a gentleman who resided long in their vicinity, G. R. Mercer, Esq., of the Civil Service, who held office at Badulla." Those who remember that gentleman's love of a practical joke, will smile at seeing this "joke" gravely recorded in the *Physical, Historical, and Topographical Account of the Island of Ceylon*, by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, K.C.S., LL.D., etc.; and my able predecessor, Mr. Mercer, must have been as much amused at seeing it there, as any one else.

† See Hodgson's "Brief Note on Indian Ethnology," Bengal Asiatic Society's *Journal*, March 1840.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings. 782 776 [346]

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medicine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, so universal amongst Buddhists. 755 769 [775]

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded. 771 174

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡ [821]

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Weddo-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapāna-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapāna-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddirates, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon, 789

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

181 sophisticated Vedda knows what is expected of him he will act up to
152 the expectation right enough. Personally I have never yet met a Vedda who could not laugh. The truth is that the Vedda will laugh with the best of us when there is occasion; but he is a stranger to the conventional, hypocritical smile of civilisation, meant only to please and so uncertain an index of the heart. The Vedda's face, like a child's, is a mirror to his mind.

His natural expression is one of apathy and moroseness. Schooled to hardship and privation, he is neither greatly distraught by sorrow nor transported by joy. He expresses his emotions with more moderation than we; he is the greater fatalist; and accepts with stoic equanimity the hard conditions of his life which have wrought into his expression a dour indifference, a decorous gravity.

There is something naturally fierce in his nature; and it does not do to anger him. The tradition is undoubtedly true that the Veddas, at one time, carried in their betel bags fragments of human liver which they chewed when roused, to give fire to their frenzy. And this is probably the origin of the Sinhalese threat, "I'll eat your liver!" There is a spot in the Eastern Province which commemorates to this
[173] day an early incident of colonisation: A Vedda had once way-laid and killed a European soldier, and going up to him could hear the ticking of his watch; examining this he said, "His life is still here," and dashed it to pieces on a rock.

When a Vedda returns from an expedition no one must speak to him until he has rested and it has pleased him to talk first. One who had accompanied us once on a hunt nearly killed a Sinhalese boy who innocently asked him what he had brought, the moment he arrived. Most sportsmen, Vedda or not, are impatient of cross-examination when fatigued—especially if unsuccessful.

171 The Veddas have no conception of a supreme being; nor have they any myth or theory bearing on cosmogony. The panorama of the heavens is beyond their questioning; but its supremacy is instinctively avowed: "*Mā Suriya Deyyo*" (by the Sun God) is an oath by which
195 the Vedda vouches his good faith.

176 Like animals, concerned only with their immediate needs, they take the world very much as they find it. But if the aloof heavens leave their imaginations untouched, not so their immediate environment. Here exist real powers more within the pale of their comprehension, influencing every act of their lives, overshadowing their credulous minds, and affording at least some data on which to found a faith. Is it surprising then that they people Nature with sentient beings, unseen, but very evident by their acts. And what spirits more comprehensible to the primitive mind, more inspiratory of faith and fear, than those of one's

---

Another strange thing about the Veddas, and one which may possibly be connected with their lack of humour, is the fact that every one of them is a George Washington, unable to tell a lie or to conceive of anyone else telling a lie.

They cannot even believe that any one would take the property of anyone else, and association with civilisation has failed to convince them that it is possible.

With all this—or, rather without all this—the Veddas are a peaceable, gentle, quiet people. They take wives without any marriage ceremony, and are faithful and constant to them, supporting them to death.

Aberdeen Paper, 1922

5; Spittel B-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).* 776

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred. 761 [768]

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakka*).† 769 771

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *audes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells. 776 796

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Ravathath*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees*, *Peli-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*). 776

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad. 787

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakka* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakka* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakka* ancestral spirit. *Hetha* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanniya* is another word synonymous with *yakka* and *hetha*. [196]

†The Veddas, by Seligmann; page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

were formerly numerous, it seems reasonable to suppose that Rugam *waruge* was originally a local group called after the territory they inhabited. 614

Dehigama is another *waruge* name given as one to which a small number of Veddas of Uva Bintenne belonged and is avowedly a place name.

Bendiya was also given as a *waruge* name and perhaps is also a place name.

With regard to the origin of the names of the genuine Vedda *waruge*, the only hint that any of them are recognised by Veddas as springing from place names was that conveyed by the statement of a number of Morane men that their ancestors came from Moranegala in the Eastern Province, but no Unapane man ever suggested that his clan had originally come from the place of that name near Kallodi. Moranegala is a hill name, and probably the hill has been named from the *mora* trees (*Nephelium longana*) which it may be assumed grew there, so that Moranegala means "the hill of the *mora* trees," and it might be argued that Morane *waruge* derived its name from the *mora* tree. Some support for this argument might be adduced from the fact that in songs collected at Sitala Wanniya both men and women of Morane *waruge* are addressed as "*mora* flowers." We were unable to discover that any Veddas had legends of the origin of their clans, but this is not to be wondered at in view of the almost total absence of myths among them. The Sinhalese on the other hand have legends of origin for four of the Vedda clans, and these legends, varying only slightly in form, can be collected from the Sinhalese all over the Vedda country. This, as well as the fact that Mr Bibile heard most of them many years ago from his father, show that they are not of recent origin, or invented for the benefit of European inquirers. [773]

With the exception of the legend of the origin of Morane *waruge* given by Mr B. Horsburgh the accounts here given of the origin of the Vedda clans were obtained from the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde, but the same stories with only slight variations were also obtained from the Lindegala "Veddas" and the Arachi of Beliigala. 614 773

Mr Horsburgh obtained his account of the origin of Morane

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

614 *waruge* from the "Veddas" of Rotawewa—a rice-growing village in Sinhala Pattuwa of Tamankaduwa, the inhabitants of which say they are descendants from Veddas—although all accounts show that they are indistinguishable from their Sinhalese neighbours. "When Kuveni was abandoned by Vijaya she returned with her two children, a boy and girl, to her own people, who killed her. Her children fled to the jungle and lived on the fruits of the '*mora*' tree. One of their children came to Minneriya and founded the Minneriya (now Rotawewa) Veddas of the Morane Waruge." We have not visited these people but it may be assumed that they are at least as sophisticated as the "Veddas" of Yakure.

Unapane. Unapane *waruge* is an offshoot from Morane. A chief's daughter was given to another chief's son. When going to the bridegroom's cave the girl got thirsty on the way and the only water available was a minute trickle down the face of a rock. The man allowed this to soak into a piece of cloth which he squeezed into a bamboo from which the girl drank. This is the origin of the name from *una* "bamboo" and *pane* "water," and the descendants of this couple were called Unapane.

Uru. A Morane girl became pregnant and refused to give the name of her lover. She was beaten and driven away from the group and brought forth her child in a hole dug by a wild boar, *uru*, hence the name Uru *waruge*.

Aembala. Aembala *waruge* has sprung from Unapane. An Unapane girl's husband died while she was pregnant, and all her other relations were dead. When her child was born she left it under a tree while she went to dig yams. On her return she found that red ants (*aembaleo*) had blinded her child, whence the child was called Aembeli, and her descendants formed Aembala clan.

Namadewa. An Aembala woman brought forth a female child under a *namada* tree; this girl was therefore named Namadi and from her descendants arose the Namadewa clan.

582 611 Exogamy prevails among the Veddas of Bintenne and Tamankaduwa and clan descent is matrilineal. These conditions also prevail at Godatalawa and therefore must be assumed to have existed at Galmede whence the Godatalawa family had

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 At Sitala Wanniya the principal *yaku* are Kande Yaka,
773 Bilindi Yaka, Bambura Yaka and the *Nat Yaku*. According to these people Kande Wanniya killed his younger brother Bilindi when the latter was only an infant. The story is that their parents were out hunting when Bilindi, feeling hungry, began to cry and would not desist in spite of the endearments lavished upon him by Kande. At last Kande threw the child on the ground in despair and so killed him.

776 It appeared that as a hunting hero Bambura Yaka is on the whole as important as Kande Yaka, though he is certainly not looked upon as so benevolent nor so loved as the latter, who helps men to kill deer and never sends sickness. Bambura Yaka is a somewhat grim spirit who although he gives yams and helps men to kill pig, also sends sickness and must be invoked to remove it, and he is also invoked when dogs are lost or taken by leopards. Because of his giving yams he is sometimes known as Ale (yam) Yaka, and yams are offered to him together with other vegetable food when this can be obtained.

224 The *kirikoraha* ceremony is performed to obtain game, in
776 gratitude for which the head and a portion of the flesh from
782 the breast of every deer killed is cooked as an offering to Kande Yaka and is afterwards eaten by the community. If this were not done Kande Yaka would be angry and little game would be killed.

The *kirikoraha* seen at Sitala Wanniya is described on pp. 223 to 226, and the ceremony at which Bambura Yaka is invoked on pp. 237 to 245.

775 The spirits of the dead become the *Nat Yaku* and with
782 Kande Yaka are invoked for success in hunting; a description
769 of this ceremony will be found on pp. 230 to 233. A few days after a death the dead man is invoked for assistance in hunting, being addressed as *mal parnat wanna*, and when the relatives or the group leave the cave to look for game they repeat the invocation as they move along. After this, if they are successful, they know that the spirit of the dead man has become powerful as a *Nat Yaku* and invoke him at the *kirikoraha* among the *Nat Yaku* called upon. The *Nat Yaku* must obtain permission

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nat Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas.

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaku* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death.

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*kaduwa*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness.

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 158), had been naturalised and were said to represent *ambu*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the temple forests who in some sense served the temple and were known to the Sinhalese as the Kovil Vanamai Veddas. Concerning these Nevill says: "This name means Vaeddas of the Temple wilds, and they were from time immemorial guards of the Katthiragam temple. Their district was from Kumbukan Ara to the Temple precincts, and north as far as the settled villages of Butala and Maha Vaedda Rata....They are said traditionally to descend from the Vaeddas who found the noble babe Valliamma left in the forest, and reared her as their child[1]." Writing in 1886 Nevill points out that he had himself met the last remnants of these people most of whom were, however, "too reduced by want and disease to retain any memory for old customs."

At the present day the sanctity of Kataragam is reputed to be due to the tradition that the god halted on the highest of its seven hills on his return homeward from the conquest of the Asuras. "The particular spot...where Kataragama first met Valliammal in the guise of a hungry and thirsty *pandaram*, or mendicant, and begged of her to appease his hunger and quench his thirst, when she was watching her *chena* cultivation as the adopted daughter of a Vedda chief, and preparing cakes from a composition of honey and *sami* or milled flour, is pointed out at a distance of more than four miles from the temple. The precise spot again, with footmarks of an elephant on a rock, where she had suddenly encountered the ponderous brute and entreated the *pandaram* to protect her from its attacks, is also shown to the enthusiastic pilgrim[2]."

Now Valliamma was the daughter, or the adopted daughter, of a Vedda, and to this day such Veddas as those of Bandaradawa who have come under the influence of Hinduism, although acknowledging that the Kataragam God, whom they do not call by any other name, is greater than the *Nat Yaka*, nevertheless hold him in less awe and treat him with less formality than do the Tamils and Sinhalese.

These Veddas know nothing of the other three great gods who protect Ceylon, and they regard Valliamma as a Vedda and speak of her as their elder sister (*akka*), while the Kataragam

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. 1, p. 180.

[2] *Manual of Uva*, p. 92.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God is almost, if not quite, thought of as their brother-in-law. In fact the divinity of the God and of his consort has not among the Veddas reached the proportions it has among the Sinhalese and Tamils. It has already been stated that among the Sinhalese the spirits of the dead who desire to become *Bandāra* present themselves to the Kataragam God, and from him obtain permission to receive offerings of cooked food (*adukku*) in return for benefits to be conferred, or to smite men with sickness and other disasters, and we were told that the Kataragam God would not refuse any spirit who approached him with this request[1].

Further, these Veddas hold that the man may become possessed by the Kataragam God in the same way as by the *Nae Yaku*, and the god is worshipped at certain shrines in the Kovil Vanamai district which are traditionally associated with Veddas and are said to be of Vedda origin. One of these at a place called Kokkadichchola is said to have arisen as follows.

A Vedda and his wife were cutting the trunk of a tree for honey when the tree began to bleed and they found in it not a bee's nest but an infant. The Vedda became possessed and while this condition lasted the God within him announced that he was the Kataragam God and that a temple must be built to him there. When the Vedda returned to his senses the child could not be found, but in its place was an image of the God.

Returning to the beliefs held by the Bandaraduwa people concerning the *Nae Yaku*, these can be best illustrated and explained by considering the events following the death of a Kovil Vanamai man called Tuta.

The day after our arrival at Bandaraduwa a Vedda called Kaira came to our camp sobbing and shaking and protesting that he could not stay long with us as his brother was dead. He seemed deeply affected, though another brother, Kaurale, who was with him appeared quite calm, which led us to suspect that his uncontrollable agitation was due to something more than mere affection for the dead man, and we soon discovered

[1] This belief in spirits of the dead obtaining favours from the Kataragam God is also held by some rural Sinhalese.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to his assistance when he began to quiver and sway, then moved and put both arms round one of the dead man's brothers as a sign of kindness from the deceased. (Plate XXXIX, fig. 2.) The brothers said: "It was good of you to come. See we have given you food, now do not come back again," and the *yaka* agreed. The shaman then took the *aude* and transfixed a betel leaf with each and danced and again showed favour to the relatives by giving them each another betel leaf, after which one of the relatives danced, but the shaman threatened to stab with the *aude* the men who were not relatives of the dead man. (Plate XL., fig. 1.) Soon both the shaman and the two brothers fell back and the Yaka departed from them. When the shaman revived, he bent his head over the *kirikoraha* as a sign of respect; then holding both hands over the rice pot he repeated a silent charm, asking any of the other *yaku* who might have come to the ceremony to depart peacefully. After this he fed each relative of the dead man, holding the *kirikoraha* to their mouths, as is shown in Plate XL., fig. 2.

769
535
787

The Invocation of Bambura Yaka.

The Veddas invoke Bambura Yaka for help in getting pig and yams, both staple foods, the latter being an extremely important element in their diet. The dance is pantomimic, and depicts a boar hunt in which Bambura, the boar-hunting hero, was aided by a Vedda woman, who killed the pig with an arrow she shot from her husband's bow and whose spirit is therefore called Dunne Yakini (Bow Spirit), while the spirit of this woman's husband who turned the boar with his yam stick (*ule*) has become Ule Yaka, that is (Yam-stick Spirit). This ceremony, though not so widely spread, is as dramatic as that in which Kande Yaka stalks and kills sambar deer. We saw it danced by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya and by Wannaku of Uniche.

776
535
773
796

The invocation of Bambura Yaka at Sitala Wanniya. The dance at Sitala Wanniya will be described first, since the story was told us here in its more complete form. Once long ago many Vedda men and women went out in search of yams,

776
773
796

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 and they took their dogs with them. While all were busy digging yams, the dogs strayed in the jungle and soon put up
773 a boar, to which they gave chase, giving tongue. The men
796 hearing the dogs followed them and soon came up with the boar at bay, which immediately charged them. None of the men could kill the boar, but a woman, whose spirit afterwards became Dunne Yakini, picked up a bow and arrow and killed the boar with the help of her husband Ule Yaka and his brother, who became Kuda Ule Yaka, i.e. Little Yam-stick Yaka. Although Bambura Yaka takes no part in the story as it was told us, he is the important *yaka* of the ceremony; it is he who is especially invoked, Dunne Yakini, her husband and brother-in-law coming in as his attendants, as do a varying number of other *yaku*, presumably the spirits of those who joined in the boar hunt[1].

535 During the dance Bambura Yaka and all his attendants
796 were present, so that it was not at all clear which part of the dance represented the actions of Bambura Yaka himself, since after the first complete possession *yaku* entered and departed from the shaman without any obvious signs. But we were told after the dance that Bambura was returning to his cave at Lewangala carrying yams and a couple of the large monitor lizards when he came across the hunt.

The properties for this dance are rather complicated and were carefully prepared on the dancing ground, all the men helping in the work and charms being sung the while. The necessary sticks were cut and two flat reddish stones found by a stream were placed below the *maesa* which was built with a double platform, a bundle of grass, leaves and twigs bound together to represent the boar being suspended from the lower platform. The stones were called Kuda Lewangala and Maha Lewangala respectively, and represented the red rocks or rocky hills of Lewangala, the unknown land in which Bambura lived and which is still the chief abiding place of his *yaka*. The majority of these properties are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1.

[1] We may here refer to a matter we discuss at greater length in Chapter X. It is certain that the invocations (Nos. XXVII and XXVIII) used at the Bambura Yaka ceremony and specially addressed to Bambura, which were only partially understood by those who sang them, originally applied to honey collecting.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The story relates that there was once three brothers, and one day the youngest was very angry and quarrelled with his wife. He left her in his cave and went out hunting, and when he returned he found a strange man in the cave with his wife. The stranger escaped so quickly that the angry husband could not shoot him; but he then beat his wife, and though he did not kill her he jumped into the fire and was burnt to death and became Gini Rahu Bandar or Yaka. When they died his two brothers became Rahu Yaku also. 776 773

A post was placed in the centre of the cleared dancing space, the upper end was split and bound so as to form the support for a pot containing coconut milk, a few areca nuts and betel leaves. This was called the *wilkoraha* (lake pot), for once in the old days water was required to make the coconut milk for an offering to the Rahu Yaku, and as there was no stream near by it had to be fetched from a lake; hence the name *wilkoraha*. A *maesa* (well seen in Plate LXVIII, fig. 1) about 4 ft 6 in. high was built of sticks at one side of the dancing ground, and two pots of cooked rice and coconut milk were put on it as an offering to the *yaku*. A piece of bark to represent a necklace was put on the *wilkoraha*; it was not known why it was necessary to offer a necklace to the Rahu Yaku, but it was always done[1]. Wooden *kaduwa* (swords) were used when invoking Rahu Yaku; these were two flattened sticks about 18 ins. long decorated with bands of red and yellow pigment and with guards made of twigs of fresh green leaves. One of these *kaduwa* without its guard is shown in fig. 11. 796 535 778

The use of the sword (*kaduwa*) and the objects themselves are both curious, for Veddas have never used any weapon but the bow and axe, and Handuna explained that though these were called *kaduwa* they really represented ceremonial arrows [177]

[1] It was quite clear that Vedda men never wore necklaces, but *yaku*, especially dangerous *yaku*, as the Rahu Yaku were declared to be, were sometimes offered necklaces or pieces of bast to represent them. Thus at Unuwatura Bubula, Indigollae Yaku was considered especially dangerous, and the shaman kept a particular string of old and highly valued beads and used it only when making invocations to this *yaku*. These and other instances strengthen the idea expressed in Chapter VIII that beads are prized among the Veddas for their magical properties, the idea of ornament being quite secondary.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

When later we asked Handuna for the *kaduwa* as specimens, the request was not granted until something was given in exchange to the Rahu Yaku, as Handuna said they might cause trouble if their property were taken from them. 796

WANAGATA YAKU.

The story of the Wanagata Yaku was that once a family became imprisoned in their rock-shelter by the fall of rock which blocked the entrance to the cave, so that the whole family died and their spirits became Wanagata Yaku, who are now invoked for help in hunting. In spite of this the ceremonial with which these *yaku* are invoked did not appear to have any reference to the story. 776 773

A sapling rather more than six feet high with its head and branches was stripped of its bark and thrust into the ground in the centre of the space cleared for dancing; its upper end had been split previously so as to form a support for small objects, and long strands of bast were tied to it. A handkerchief was thrown over the top and pressed down between the split ends, and some betel leaves were placed on this. 796 535 778

The shaman wearing a *hangala* danced slowly round the post with a handkerchief in his hand, while the invocation was sung. The handkerchief was soon exchanged for an *aude*, and it was noted that this was not the same one that had been used when invoking Kande Yaka in a previous dance. In order to avoid putting the handkerchief on the ground the shaman tied it round his shoulder. Then taking some betel leaves he danced with these and the *aude* in his hands, then transfixing the betel leaves on the point of the *aude* he raised them to his head, thus offering them to the Wanagata Yaku (Plate XLIX, fig. 1). Soon he became possessed and bent his head, shaking his hair over his face as he clung to the post with one hand while his whole body quivered and shook. With a shout he seized two *aude*, and holding one in each hand came to one of us (C. G. S.) and holding both *aude* over his shoulders said, as he quivered and shifted from one foot to the other, "You have called us, what do you want?" He returned to the post, when a rice 796 535

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

THE AVANA CEREMONY.

796 The *avana* ceremony which we saw at Henebedda may be described here. Mr Bibile told us that he had heard of it having been performed in his father's time by Sinhalese in the neighbourhood of Bibile, and the former Korala of Bakiella in the Eastern Province, a man particularly versed in magic and spiritual matters, knew all about this custom, while on the other hand many Veddas did not know of it. Our impression is that we are here dealing with an original Vedda custom, consisting of an offering of part of the game killed, which has been modified by the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedda country, and again adopted from them in its modified form by the Veddas.

The following account of the *avana* custom records what we 796 actually saw done on the night of February 7th, at Henebedda 224 on the occasion of the death of a fine buck. The stag, which 782 had been shot a short distance from Bendiyagalge caves, was carried to a convenient slab of rock between our camp and the caves and there cut up, an arrow being most skilfully used to skin and disjoint the animal; the throat was opened low down in the front of the neck, one or more big veins being severed, and three double handfuls of blood were smeared upon a heap of *mora* leaves which had previously been laid on a rock. Then six long narrow pieces of muscle called *anda malu* (eel flesh, because the strips of muscle are long like eels) were cut from the root of the neck as well as two morsels from the tongue, the nostril and the ears. These twelve pieces of meat, constituting 796 the offering called *avana*, were put on the blood-smeared leaves 782 for the Kadawara Yaku, who were said to be the spirits of eleven Veddas who were named and described as follows:

773 Avana Vedda, the first Vedda who instituted the rite.

Lē Vedda, the first man who smeared blood on the heap of leaves.

Mas Vedda, the first man who laid meat upon the heap of leaves.

Buta Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who sent the animal whose blood and flesh were used at the first *avana* ceremony.

Atu Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who makes noises in the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

forest near the hunter to make him believe that the game he is following has run away. 796

Bedi Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who breaks sticks and causes dead branches to fall and so frighten game away. 782 773

Kili Mas Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who cut up the animal whose flesh and blood were used at the first *avana*.

Polu Mas Vedda, who smoked part of the meat of this animal.

Melihi Vedda, the *yaka* who blinds hunters so that they cannot track the wounded game.

Ahuru Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first snapped his fingers to call his dogs.

Ihurun Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first whistled to his dogs to come hunting.

These eleven *yaku* are considered strong enough to kill folk and to send sickness; it appeared to us that the individuals of this group were not carefully differentiated but rather regarded as one power. [753]

The Korala of Bakiella who has already been mentioned said that a leaf cone (*goṭuwa*) containing blood was placed on a heap of leaves with flesh from the throat, tongue and ears of the kill and the whole offered to the 64,000 Maralu Yaku and 64,000 Kadawara Yaku. The leaf cone is a distinctly Sinhalese feature and the ceremony described by the Korala had become entirely Sinhalese in character. This is borne out by the invocation which was written down for us by the Korala. 796 782 177 539

Ath avanē lē dena mantraya Kaḍawara Rīri Yakaṭa Yakinniṭa.

Vēṭāla nuwara sīnāpoti bisawun wahansēge hradaya palā bihi unu Kaḍawēra Riri Yakshayā Yakshiniṭa atu awanak aetun koṭu awanak aetun, amu mas amu riri aetun.

Adat mama anḍagasā kaepa kera dennē. Mama yana issaraṭa rubera an munayak genāc'ṇ, ellē pāḍu kera dīlā, veḍī munē is(sara)ṭa kera dīla, amaren giyat (a) mareṇ piṭat wilā, marana pathera dīlā, waessī langaṭa mīden ennā wāgē, kambe kanuweṭa magul aetek baenda palikera wāge, ella pāḍu (ka) ra denḍa Kaḍawera Riri Yakshayā Yakshigen warami.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

LEGENDS.

773
538

There is an extraordinary absence of legend among all groups of Veddas who have not been greatly influenced by Sinhalese. Concerning the origin of men, natural features, and things the Veddas seem absolutely incurious, nor do their songs refer to any of these subjects. There are no stories of talking animals or of how their rock-shelters were formed; they have not even a tale of their own origin. Apart from a few accounts of the origin of particular *yaku* and the deeds they performed (e.g. the pig-hunting of Bambura Yaka) the following two legends were all that we could hear though the most diligent inquiry was made.

The Origin of Fire.

773

There was a man who had fire; he distributed this to animals, trees and stones, but a little remained to him at the end and this he swallowed. His name was Wasawatiya. "We cannot say whether he was a Vedda. Because he swallowed this fire we all get hungry, for we all have fire within us. There were men before Wasawatiya but they could not talk; otherwise they were as ourselves. Wasawatiya made and sent the first dog to those people, and the dog barked at them; so that those people feared greatly and stammering and stuttering began to talk, and the first words were *ballakai, ballakai*—'dog will bite.'" Handuna of Sitala Wanniya was our informant and he also gave the following account of the rainbow.

The Rainbow.

[821]

When there is rain there is a "kind of yellow bow" (rainbow) in the sky. One of our women made a bow of wood like it and that is all.

How the hill Yakagala came by its name.

The following story was told by Wannaku of Uniche; a variant occurs as a song at Sitala Wanniya and is given in Chapter XV. Once upon a time two families of Veddas lived

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

at Aralu Talawa about two miles east of Peria Pillumalai in the Eastern Province on the Badulla-Batticaloa road. Now these Veddas possessed elephants and cattle, so that when two Moormen pedlars came and saw the Veddas living well and in comfort, they thought how good it would be to kill them and take their goods. The Moormen asked the Veddas to barter honey with them, and Moormen and Veddas went to the hill now called Yakagala, for there were *bambara* colonies among its rocks. The Veddas went down ladders of creepers to the combs, but before they could take the honey the ladders were cut by the Moormen and the Veddas were dashed to pieces. The Moormen came back to the settlement and when the Veddas' wives questioned them as to the whereabouts of their husbands the Moormen said they were bathing in a stream close by. The women did not believe this and, suspecting foul play, went to look for their husbands and found the bodies at the foot of the precipice. They went back to their houses, let loose the cattle and fired their houses, for they determined to kill themselves. The elder sister saw the Moormen running towards them, so standing on the edge of a precipice she called her young sister to her saying that her bangle was broken. As her younger sister stood near her she suddenly grasped her round the body and jumped over the cliff. The *yaku* of these women and of their husbands still remain in the neighbourhood of their old dwelling-place which because of them looks clean, as if folk still lived there. The rock bee still lives on this hill to which the Veddas resort to take honey. 773

POTTERY.

The Veddas make very rough pots. A lump of dark coloured clay is taken, patted into the desired shape, left to dry in the air, and then baked. The Henebedda Veddas who made the pots shown in Plate LXII said that these pots were placed on the fire and covered with pieces of dried wood so as to be submitted to heat on every side. The less sophisticated Veddas of Sitala Wanniya stated that they simply placed the air dried pots on the fire, when they were soon baked hard. 323 [184]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

and terrified they stood around the border. Then did the Saviour cause the pleasant Giridipa (Highlands) to come here near to them, and when they had settled there, he made it return to its former place. Then did the Saviour fold his rug of skin; the devas assembled, and in their assembly the Master preached them the doctrine. The conversion of many kotis of living beings took place and countless were those who came into the precepts of duty. The prince of the devas craved of him something to worship. The Conqueror, who had pure and blue black locks, passing his hand over his head, bestowed on him a handful of hairs. And he, receiving this in a splendid golden urn, when he had laid the hairs on a heap of many coloured gems, seven cubits round, piled up at the place where the Master had sat, covered them over with the thupa of sapphire and worshipped them.

"When Sambuddha had died, the thera Sarabhu, by his miraculous power, received, even from the funeral pyre, the collar bone of the Conqueror and brought it to Lanka and laid it in that same cetiya.

"The king Dutthagamini, dwelling there while he made war upon the Damilas (Tamils) built a mantle cetiya over it eighty cubits high. Thus was the Mahiyangana-thupa completed."

Barely four miles from Alutnuwara is the beautiful tank of Horabora Wewa whose vast waters have been cunningly trapped by a great earth work or bund, amidst a natural barrier of surrounding hills. As one sits here of an evening and looks across with field-glasses to the wilder opposite shore, small herds of deer may be seen feeding on the grassy edge between forest and lake; and in the drought, herds of elephants come to the water. White cranes fly overhead to roost on the bordering trees at dusk. Placed as it is in the heart of the Vedda country, this tank has long been associated with the Veddas. To-day only a few very destitute families of half-Veddas are to be found at Malgoda on the borders of the tank, living in the crudest of shelters, and feeding for the most part on the seeds of lotus pods (*olu*).

By an ancient sluice cut out of stone,* the tank-water is conducted along a channel to a wide stretch of paddy fields, now mostly in disuse owing to the paucity of the population. This brimming waterway, its grassy banks studded with beautiful trees, affords many a delightful picture, especially where the lotus thrives with its large, snow-white blossoms and no less beautiful leaves be-diamonded with sparkling droplets of water. Here halcyons fish all day. Up to recent years the tank itself was covered with lotus; but now, for some reason or other, there is none; and when no breeze stirs the glassy waters at midday, they reflect an ever changing panorama of dazzling clouds only broken where a darter or cormorant gambols.

It is not surprising that so beautiful a tank should have inspired a fine poem, of which I have attempted a poor translation that does scant justice to the euphonious idioms, the long vowel cadences, the alliterations, and rhymes of the Sinhalese original.

*Tradition has it that two giants (*yodhayas*) sat here on opposite sides of a crack in the great rock, and each, seizing that part on which he was seated with his hands, and thrusting with his foot against the other, wrenched the rocks apart, making an outlet for the water!

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *warage* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *hangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

betel bags and strike-a-lights may all be buried in the graves of male "Culture Veddas," and in one such grave they even found bullets[1]. 764

When an attempt is made to discover the nature of the noxious influence felt in the place of death, the usual answer given is to the effect that "if we stayed where the death had occurred we should be pelted with stones." Further questions made it clear that in many instances there was no definite idea that some part of the dead man was the active agent in the stone-throwing; on the other hand some Veddas, and these as far as we could judge some of the least contaminated, definitely believed that it was the spirit or *yaka* of the dead man who would cause stones to rain on anybody staying near the corpse. And in this instance it was admittedly fear of the spirit of the dead individual that caused them to hurry from the site of death. Stone-throwing is the usual method by which the *yaku* show their displeasure, using *yaku* in the broadest sense, and by no means limiting this term to the spirits of the recent dead. It was clear that during certain disturbances described as "stone-throwing" no actual rocks or stones were moved or fell, and this was recognised by the Veddas who, however, continued to speak of the upheaval as "stone-throwing," which they ascribed to annoyance felt by the *yaku*. In one instance it was possible to say that the aggrieved *yaku* were not those of the recent dead. While camping within a couple of hundred yards of the Bendiyagalge caves in that part of the Uva jungle known as Henebedda we were startled between eleven and twelve one night by a deep groaning sound of considerable volume which was immediately followed by an outcry from the caves. Men shouted, women and children cried out, and every dog in the settlement howled its loudest. The noise which alarmed the cave occurred only once, and can hardly have lasted for more than ten seconds, but the chatter of people and the howling of dogs must have continued for about a quarter of an hour. We are entirely unable to state the cause of the noise, but suppose that it was due to one rock slipping upon another, or to the splitting of a mass of rock below the surface of the 769 775

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 494.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 ground, but no freshly exposed rock surfaces or any displacement of the soil was to be seen next morning in the neighbourhood of the caves or the country immediately round them. The
775 Veddas, however, had no doubt as to the cause of the noise and described it as "stone-throwing," stating that a number of *yaku* must have been annoyed with their proceedings on the previous day, when, after going through the *kirikoraha* ceremony over a fine buck which one of them had shot the night before, they were tempted to show us some part of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony without providing the proper gifts for the *yaku* invoked on that occasion. They pointed out that it was the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had manifested their displeasure by stone-throwing, though they all admitted that no one had seen the stones thrown or could show the stones with which the alleged bombardment had been effected. This, combined with the fact that a minority of Veddas frankly admit that the cause of leaving the site where death has occurred is fear of the *yaka*, seems to point to the whole process of desertion being due to fear of the spirit of the deceased, which for a short but indefinite time seems to be thought of as existing near the body it has left, though it was never possible to discover that this was a clearly formulated belief.

The matter may indeed be said to have been put beyond doubt by a discovery made by Mr Parker. The words *mal pannat wenna* occur in a number of invocations to the Nae Yaku. We could obtain no translation for these words in the field, though it was said that they alluded to the dead man, but by comparing a number of invocations to the Nae Yaku Mr Parker ascertained that *mal* is used as the equivalent of both "flowers" and "Veddas," so that this expression, which is undoubtedly a term of address to the dead man's spirit, is to be translated "driver away of Veddas."

795 Although the fear of the dead (as expressed by leaving the site of death) occurs among all the wilder Veddas, we met with a few old men, notably Poromala (Walaha) of Henebedda, and Handuna of Godatalawa, who were by no means confident that all men on their death became *yaku*. Although they were sure that all important and influential men, as well as those who

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

during life had the power of calling and becoming possessed by the *yaku*, became *yaku* after death, they considered that it was by no means certain that any part of quite ordinary individuals survived death. At Godatalawa such doubts in the case of particular dead individuals might be settled by calling upon the deceased at a Nae Yaku ceremony when the following invocation was used: 775 775 769

Lord! New Driver away of Vaeddas, if it is true that there are miracles, killing one wild monitor lizard in the jungle while coming I must meet with a sambar deer. (Be pleased) to drink, Driver away of Vaeddas, this young coconut[1].

If much game was killed after this ceremony the deceased was considered to have become a *yaka* ready and willing to help his friends and relatives.

To ascertain the actual condition of the spirits of the departed for the first few days after death is a matter of some difficulty, for although certain communities have perfectly definite views on this point, others have not; hence it will be convenient to leave this matter for the present and to return to it when the attitude of the Veddas towards their dead has been further defined. 775

As each Vedda community consists of a small number of families who, since cousin marriage prevails, are usually related both by blood and marriage, the *yaku* of the recent dead, called collectively Nae Yaku, are supposed to stand towards the surviving members of the group in the light of friends and relatives, who if well treated will continue to show lovingkindness to their survivors, and only if neglected will show disgust and anger by withdrawing their assistance, or becoming even actively hostile. Hence it is generally considered necessary to present an offering to the newly dead within a week or two of their decease; but this is not invariably the case, for a few Veddas said that they would not hold a Nae Yaku ceremony until they specially required the help of the *yaku* or until misfortune threatened or had overtaken them. 775 769

Among most Veddas the offering must consist of cooked rice and coconut milk, the food that every Vedda esteems above all

[1] The transliteration of this invocation will be found in Chapter X, p. 277.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 other, but betel leaves and areca nut are often added and the oldest survivor of a small group of comparatively unsophisticated Veddas seen at Godatalawa stated that in the old days this offering would have consisted of yams and water, if, as was often the case, coconuts and rice—which were only to be secured with difficulty and by barter—could not be obtained. In each 775 community there is one man called *kapurale* or *dugganawa*, who 769 has the power and knowledge requisite to call the *yaku*, and in 791 the ceremony of presenting the offering called *Nae Yaku Natanawa* (literally the dancing of the *Nae Yaku*), this man calls upon the *yaka* of the recently dead man to come and take the offering. It was stated that *dugganawa* was an older word than *kapurale* and was in fact a Vedda word, though it was soon obvious that only a minority of Veddas knew it. The *dugganawa*[1] who throughout this book will be spoken of as the shaman, becomes possessed by the *yaka* of the dead man who speaks through the mouth of the shaman in hoarse guttural accents, declaring that he approves the offering, that he will assist his kinsfolk in hunting, and often stating the direction in which the next hunting party should go.

Each shaman trains his successor, usually taking as his 791 pupil his own son or his sister's son (i.e. his actual or potential son-in-law). Handuna of Sitala Wanniya learnt from his father. At Henebedda we were told that a special hut was built in which the shaman and his pupil slept, and from which women were excluded. It seems probable that this is only done among Veddas who have come under Sinhalese influence, as among them, but not among the wilder Veddas, women are considered unclean, and there was no isolation of the shaman and his pupil at Sitala Wanniya.

Sella Wanniya of Unuwatura Bubula was instructed by his father, and during his apprenticeship he resided with him in a hut into which his mother was not allowed to come.

The pupil learns to repeat the invocations used at the various ceremonies, but no food is offered to the *yaku*. At Sitala Wanniya we were told that the shaman recited the following [539] formula, explaining to the *yaku* that he is teaching his pupil:

(1 See footnote, p. 16.)

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 invoked to give success in hunting. With Kande Yaka is also associated the *yaka* of his younger brother Bilindi, who is commonly believed to have been killed by Kande Wanniya in a fit of temper and who according to another version is not the brother but the brother-in-law of Kande Yaka. It is usual to invoke Kande Yaka and also Bilindi Yaka at the beginning of a *Nae Yaku* ceremony, and it was pointed out at different times by a number of our informants that the *Nae Yaku* could not come to the offerings unless accompanied by Kande Yaka, who was even spoken of as bringing the *Nae Yaku* with him. In fact, many Veddas stated that the *Nae Yaku* go to Kande Yaka and become his attendants; this point of view was illustrated by the fact that in two death dances seen (one held for a man who had died seven days previously, the other a rehearsal performed for our benefit), Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked, and possessed the shaman and gave signs of their favour to the group of Veddas present, before the shaman became possessed by the *Nae Yaku*. Further, many of our informants, especially the less sophisticated, pointed out that soon after death the spirit of the deceased resorted to Kande Yaka in order to obtain his permission to accept offerings from their living relatives, and to obtain power from him to assist them in return for their offerings, or to injure them in the event of their bad behaviour. Thus Kande Yaka, who is of especial assistance in hunting, becomes Lord of the Dead. We have, however, little doubt that to the majority of Veddas Kande Yaka is especially the *yaka* who gives success in hunting, and that his relation to the dead does not leap to their minds on the mention of his name as does the idea of his helpfulness in hunting, for Kande Yaka was essentially a friendly and helpful *yaka*, who, unlike many other *yaku* usually beneficent, never sent sickness; in fact, Kande Yaka the spirit scarcely differs as patron of hunters from Kande Wanniya the mighty hunter, still living and showing kindness and helpfulness towards the people among whom he dwelt.

It is now possible to consider the condition of the spirit of the deceased for a few days after death, according to those Veddas who state that a definite period elapses before the spirit

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

becomes a *yaka*, for it appears that properly speaking the word *yaka* should not be applied to the spirit of the dead for the first few days after it has left the body. During this short period the word *prana karaya* (living one) should be used for the spirit of the deceased, for it has not yet attained the condition implied by the term *yaka*. Among the Henebedda Veddas it was thought that the *prana karaya* resorted to Kandé Yaka a few days, perhaps three or five, after death, and then obtained permission from him to accept offerings from the living, and thus become numbered among his attendants, the *Nae Yaku*; but beyond a vague idea that the spirit might perhaps exist for a short time at the site where death had occurred, these folk had no knowledge of its state before it reached Kande Yaka. The Bandaraduwa Veddas, who had come more under Sinhalese and Tamil influence, asserted that the spirit of the deceased spent some days in the neighbourhood of the death scene, which it only left to seek the Kataragam God and obtain his permission to become a *yaka* and pass into the train of attendants on Kande Yaka, and so become a *Nae Yaku* capable of accepting offerings from the living and in return helping or injuring them.

The method of invocation of the *yaku* is essentially the same in all Vedda ceremonies; an invocation is sung by the shaman and often by the onlookers, while the shaman slowly dances, usually round the offering that has been prepared for the *yaku*. Sometimes the invocations are quite appropriate and either consist of straightforward appeals to the *yaka* invoked for help, or recite the deeds and prowess of the *yaka* when he too was a man, as when Kande Yaka is addressed as "continuing to go from hill to hill [who] follows up the traces from footprint to footprint of excellent sambar deer." But at other times the charms seem singularly inappropriate; probably in many of these instances they are the remains of old Sinhalese charms that have not only been displaced from their proper position and function, but have been mangled in the process, and have in the course of time become incomprehensible. As the charm is recited over and over again the shaman dances more and more quickly, his voice becomes hoarse and he soon becomes possessed by the *yaka*, and, although he does not lose consciousness and can coordinate

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It is not suggested that the conscious element is entirely absent from the Vedda possession dances, it is impossible to believe that such a sudden collapse as that occurring in the Henebedda *kirikoraka* ceremony (p. 222) (when Kande Yaka in the person of the shaman shoots the sambar deer), followed by an almost instantaneous recovery, is entirely non-volitional, and the same holds good for the pig-spearing in the Bambura Yaka ceremony (p. 243) at Sitala Wanniya. We believe that these facts can be fully accounted for by a partial abolition of the will, that is to say, by a dulling of volition far short of complete unconsciousness. The shaman in fact surrenders himself to the dance in the fullest sense, and it is this, combined with a high degree of sub-conscious expectancy, which leads him to enact almost automatically and certainly without careful forethought the traditional parts of the dance in their conventionally correct order. Further, the assistant, who follows every movement of the dancer, prepared to catch him when he falls, may also greatly assist by conscious or unconscious suggestion in the correct performance of these complicated possession dances. Again, we do not think there can be any doubt as to the non-volitional nature of the possession, by the *yaka*, of the bystanders, near relatives of the dead man, which may take place during the *Nae Yaku* ceremony[1].

One remarkable fact may be chronicled here, viz. that we have never met a Vedda who had seen the spirit of a dead man, that is to say, no Vedda ever saw a ghost, at least in his waking hours. We have never been able to obtain any corroborative evidence for Bailey's assertion that "the spirits [of the dead] appear to them in dreams and tell them [the Veddas] where to hunt." Veddas certainly dream, but Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira, two most trustworthy informants, said that they did

[1] There was nothing about the general behaviour of any of the Veddas with whom we came in contact that suggested a specially neurotic or hysterical tendency. The graver stigmata of hysteria such as would warrant a diagnosis of functional disease were always absent and the Veddas, even when ill, were in no sense fuss makers or inclined to magnify their ailments in the way so many Melanesians do. We are indebted to Dr C. S. Myers for the suggestion that possession by the *yaku* can best be explained as an affection (dissociation) of altered personality. If this be so the condition is comparable to a number of well-known cases in the sphere of mental pathology.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

987 not often have dreams. Dreams are considered uncanny, and
828 Handuna said that, although a shaman, he himself feared them. He told us that a man would usually remain quietly in the rock-shelter for a whole day after a dream, and would not leave it to get food, even if staying in the cave meant going hungry. Handuna once dreamt that he had shot a monkey and brought it back to the cave, so he did not go out hunting the next day but stayed in the cave. He said that he had never had dreams that were of themselves of a terrifying nature, such as being attacked by bears or falling over a precipice. He dreamt of his father a few days after his death, but seldom or never since then. In his dream his dead father invited him to come hunting with him, and together they went into the jungle and found some yams and cooked and ate them. Handuna said that he was not afraid "because he was my father; what was there to be afraid of? Nevertheless I stayed in the cave, for I was sorry that day." Handuna told us that children—even small children that cannot talk—may wake up shrieking, but he has never heard of people talking in their sleep.

987 With regard to the causation of dreams there was a real but
775 ill-defined belief connecting the dream-forms of dead relatives with the spirits (*yaku*) of the dead. Discussing this matter in connection with his dream of his dead father, Handuna said, "We think it is through love they come," but he showed that he realised that living people who were not near relatives might be seen in dreams, by volunteering the statement that at our departure he might dream of one of us (C. G. S.) to whom he was speaking.

Although the dream-forms of dead persons were vaguely associated with their *yaku*, it was generally denied that the dead seen in dreams told the living where to hunt, and it must be remembered that the general opinion was that no living person had ever seen a *yaku*, and it was only when specially discussing dreams that it was said that *yaku* were seen in dreams. Nor did the *Nae Yaku* regularly make their presence known in any other way than by possession, though some Veddas translated the minor noises of the jungle into signs of the presence of the *yaku*. These facts also seem to militate against the idea that any

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

considerable part of Vedda possession is a fraud, deliberately conceived and perpetrated, for knowing, as many Veddas do, of the frequency with which the Sinhalese see "devils" and "spirits" of all sorts, nothing would appear easier, if fraud were intended, than for a shaman to assert that he could see the spirits which every Vedda believes are constantly around him.

Arrows play a considerable part in the Vedda religion, two forms of arrow being used. The first is the ordinary arrow used for shooting game, the second a ceremonial arrow called *aude* with a blade 8 to 18 inches long, which is usually but not always hafted into a handle often considerably shorter than the blade[1]. Both forms of arrows are used in the possession dances described in Chapter IX, but in addition to this the shooting arrow is used as a protection to infants, being commonly thrust in the ground by the side of a sleeping child when its mother is forced to leave it. We heard of this custom in several communities, and at Sitala Wanniya, where arrows were scarce, were shown a wooden bladed arrow which was said to be used in this way (figure 7 (*a*)); *aude* might also be made of wood when an iron blade was not available, and figure 7 (*b*) shows a wooden *aude* made for us at Henebedda. These facts are important as showing that the power of the arrow lies in itself and not in its iron blade.

The protective power of the arrow was noted by Nevill, who stated that the Nilgala Veddas "regard the symbol of an arrow, placed by their babe, as efficient protection for it. They leave tiny babes upon the sand for hours together, with no other guard than an arrow stuck in the ground by their side. Their belief in the efficacy of this has received no shock. They never knew such a child to be attacked by wild beasts, pigs, leopards, jackals, etc. or harmed[2]."

With regard to the long-bladed and short-handled ceremonial arrows, the handles of these are sometimes covered with incisions so roughly executed that they do not form a pattern and can hardly be decorative even in intention, so that probably they only serve the useful purpose of preventing the hand from

[1] These ceremonial arrows are doubtless identical with the large blades described by various authors as formerly used in shooting elephants.
[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 184.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

375 Besides the important part in the Vedda cult of the dead played by the propitiation of the *Nae Yaku*, and of the *yaku* of certain other Veddas such as Kande Wanniya who as *yaku* have attained to special importance (approaching that of culture heroes in other forms of belief), there is a certain feeling of reverence for a host of unnamed *yaku*. Little attention is paid to these but, since it is stated that they too were once men, the suggestion may be hazarded that they represent the *yaku* of the forgotten dead. These *yaku*, although all around in the jungle, are in some instances thought of as vaguely attached to special localities, especially to glades in the forest, unusually large trees, and above all large rocks and rocky hilltops. The *yaku* of rocks and hilltops, indeed, tend to become named, taking the name of the hill they inhabit; even among the less civilised Veddas they are sometimes identified with the *yaku* of Vedda headmen who have lived on or near the hills. On the other hand among the more sophisticated Veddas these *yaku* tend to become less and less the spirits of dead Veddas, and finally, under Tamil influence, are thought of as dangerous spirits, immigrants from beyond the Ocean, each of whom with a female of his own species haunts the hilltops and sends disease. Somewhat akin to these *yaku* in their less dangerous forms are the *kiriamma* (literally milk mothers, i.e. grandmothers), the *yaku* of Vedda women, generally the wives of Vedda headmen or chiefs, many of whom are thought of as haunting the sides and tops of hills where there are rocks and springs. They are sometimes jealous of people gathering honey—indeed there is a [222 tendency to avoid rocky mountain tops on their account—but 769] may be placated by a charm, though occasionally a little honey is left for them with a muttered *kapau kiriammala*—Eat O [153] Kiriamma. Although they retain the fondness for children which they felt in their lifetime they not infrequently send sickness, at least among the more sophisticated Veddas.

A few *kiriamma* have become rather important *yaku*, notably an old woman of the Unapane clan now known as Unapane Kiriamma, but such *kiriamma* do not appear to be especially associated with rocky or hilly sites.

769 We are now in a position to discuss the possible evolution of
782

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775
769

generally hurtful; but some have certain protective functions, and protect cattle and coconut trees and crops.

"The offerings are kept up everywhere in that part of the island to the present day at the Dewalas, and elsewhere. Luckily, it is a branch of their religion to which I devoted special attention...and although my lists are doubtless incomplete I have the names of considerably more than 100 of them.

"Some were included in the lists as important ancestors; others, the majority, because of their power, others because of their cruelty, or their sudden violent death.

"Panikki Vaedda occurs among them, and there are a few other names which may be those of Vaeddas,—such as Yapa, Hiti, Hapu etc....

"I have been informed that every one for whom a *dana* or funeral feast is not offered (at which the spirit is supposed to be present) remains in the form of a homeless spirit (*preta*) or *yaku*. These commonly disappear in time and are forgotten. Some of them remain about their old abodes, and uncanny noises heard during the night in the houses are caused by these ghosts, as in Europe....

"The Sinhalese demonology is very intricate, and it is extremely difficult to understand. There are many classes of *yaku*; but I believe that this Bandar worship is the only indigenous portion of it. I have traced practically all the other demons to Southern India, although the *kapurala* claim that a few others, in addition to the Bandaras, are of local origin. They themselves admit that all the rest were imported from India.

"The twelve Vaedi Yaku are, I believe, an entirely different set of evil spirits....

"The Vaeddas told me that they are extremely malignant. Besides these, they said that the whole forest is full of local nameless Yaku, who make strange noises in the night and frighten people in various ways. This also is a firmly rooted Sinhalese belief; their estimate of the number is two millions."

The resemblance between this *Bandara* cult and the Vedda worship of the Nae Yaku is obvious and is still further shown by

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the canonization as a Bandar of one Godegedara, an influential Ratemahatmaya, first of Wellasse and then of Badulla who died in 1872 and whose spirit now prevents disease among cattle, increases their milk, protects man and animals from beasts of prey, helps hunters and prevents their meeting wild beasts suddenly in the jungle and in fact gives success in all things[1]. About three months after his death certain unusual happenings suggested that one of the dead was trying to attract the attention of the living. An elephant appeared at Damenegama in Uva and in the neighbourhood, and although repeatedly shot at continued to come to the villages and tear the roofs off the houses, but did no other damage. This unusual behaviour led to the suspicion that one of the dead had sent the elephant, and accordingly the turning stone (*paema balanawa*) was consulted as to whether one of the old or recent dead was responsible. When it was ascertained that it was the latter, a ceremony *kamba kanuwa natanawa* was undertaken to discover whose was the spirit. The *kapurale* became possessed, when the spirit within him announced that he, Godegedara, had sent the elephant and that he desired to be honoured and invoked to help men. It was explained that the spirits of the dead always approach the living for the first time through animals, or signify their desire for offerings by making a man sick. The rank of the deceased is roughly estimated by the animal sent, in which, however, the spirit of the deceased is not immanent. The lion is said to be highest, then comes the elephant; the leopard indicates the spirit of a rather less exalted person.

It appears that the dead have no power to interfere in human affairs and take offerings until permission has been obtained from one or more high gods, of whom the chief is the Kataragam God. How the spirit obtains this permission was not clear, but the early signs of the power of the deceased were always in some way connected with the Kataragam God. Thus Godegedera caused the elephant of the Kataragam God to go mad at the *perahera* ceremony, and when Kosgama became a Bandar a leopard sent by him rode round the Kataragam temple on the

[1] A translation of the invocation used when calling upon Godegedera is given in the addendum to this chapter.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
. AX5 Vedda AX5

back of one of the God's bulls, i.e., one of the *tavalam* bulls, bringing provisions and salt to the temple.

Kosgama Bandar is associated with Kosgama, where he lived in the 18th century or earlier. He refused to pay tribute to the king and from his invocation given elsewhere[1] it may be gathered that he rebelled and was betrayed by an adherent whom he trusted. He was captured, tied to a tree and shot to death with arrows. Kosgama Bandar was said to be especially helpful in litigation and in recovering lost cattle, but in fact he is of assistance in all ways.

We may now return to Panikki Yaka, who Mr Parker agrees with us may safely be identified as the spirit of the 16th century "Vedda" chief, Panikki the Vedda. In the same manner as this *yaka* has been remembered and has developed the characters of a Vedda hero, so we believe Kande Yaka and other hero Yaku of the wilder Veddas have arisen, for it is as a mighty Vedda of the old days that the Veddas revere Kande Yaka.

We need only assume that such heroes were unusually successful hunters, stronger personalities than their neighbours, so that their names were held in honour among a people more numerous than their immediate family circle, to see clearly how after their death their names would be continued in memory and their spirits be invoked by those who had admired and feared them, and by their children and children's children. It is entirely in harmony with this view that Kande Yaka should have become the Lord of the Dead, to whom the lesser spirits resort to obtain permission to accept offerings and to aid their still living relatives and former companions.

No reverence is paid to the heavenly bodies, and our old Kandyan informant knew nothing of any worship of the sun or moon. He nevertheless agreed that in his youth as at the present day the Veddas would call the moon Hande Deyo or Sande Deyo and the sun Ira Deyo respectively[2].

1 "Note on the Bandar Cult of the Kandyan Sinhalese," *Man*, 1909, p. 77.

2 We found Deyo to be commonly used for "god," the proper word for which is *dewiyô*, pl. *dewiyô*; but as explained to us by Mr Parker these words are often altered to *deyiya* and *deyiyo* and the Sinhalese "always say 'Kataragama Deyiya' or 'Deyiyo.' The plural forms are used honorifically with a singular meaning."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Even Nevill missed the essentials of the Vedda cult of the dead, though he shows that he knew something of what actually occurred. "The Vaedda religion seems to have been such that the spirit alone was recognised as human, and the flesh, when the spirit has left it, receives neither veneration nor superstitious reverence. Where the life left the body, there the body was left....Two or five days after the death, however, the relations were invited to the scene of funeral and a feast was held...to satisfy relations there had been no foul play....

"The Vaeddas of Bintenne, however, having assembled relations and neighbours, procure rice, or other grain, and decorate the pot in which it is cooked with sprays of the liniya tree[1], a shrub with leaves like our hazel, but with bright scarlet flowers. If no flowers can be got, bits of red cotton or other cloth should be used. The celebrant then dances round the pot of food, with an arrow in his hand, singing any chant he knows, and making obeisance to the food by a wave of the arrow. The food is then distributed....

"It is evident this custom cannot apply to those who formerly did not eat grain. These, however, were few. Roasted game would probably with such take the place of grain, and the latter seems only used as the best and most unusual food procurable, much as our poor try to provide cake, and not bread and cheese, etc. at weddings....

"Bodies were never buried until the English Government endeavoured to enforce burial. The Vaeddas have not the least objection to the corpse being buried, but object greatly to being forced to dig the grave...[2]."

Although the Sarasins underestimated the importance of the Vedda cult of the dead, and failed to discover that even "Nature" Veddas make offerings to the spirits of their departed, their opinions and conclusions are necessarily given at some length on account of the undoubted importance of their work. "The Veddas of Dewilane told us that after death they became spirits or yakas, but as to whether these persisted (*lebten*) or not they never thought; they did not pray to them nor honour them. The 'Nature' Veddas from Danigala...told us in 1885

[1] *Holigerna isora*, L. [2] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 179.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

.114
769
775

that they worshipped neither their ancestors, nor a devil nor a god. Five years later the Veddas settled at Henebedda in the Nilgala district told us that they believed that the dead became spirits or yakas; but they did not make offerings to them. At Wewatte they likewise believe that the dead become yakas and there they invoke them in cases of sickness...gods they have none. A Vedda from the neighbourhood of Kalodai (Pallegama district) named Manikrala informed us that they worshipped children, father, mother, grandfather, grandmother—in short their dead relatives. In remembrance of the death of such relatives they gave a present to the first Buddhist priest whom they met. We therefore asked this 'Culture' Vedda whether his relatives continued to live as spirits after death, but he replied that he did not know; the present of rice was simply in remembrance of the deceased man. In answer to the further question whether they had a definite religion or worshipped a god, he replied that he had never thought about it, and he gave us the impression that this question and the idea it suggested were new to him.

"We found the idea of the existence of the departed as spirits further developed in an old 'Culture' Vedda of Mudagala near Mahaoya, named Sella. He said they had no gods besides their departed. Every year at the full moon they consumed yams and other food at the burying place. On this occasion they hold a dance in honour of the departed, invoke the dead by name and pray them to help them. At Omuni the corpses were buried in Sinhalese fashion and provided with burial presents; but two Veddas when we questioned them about their religion could tell us nothing on this point, and said that the departed were not honoured as gods[1]."

From these data the Sarasins conclude that "genuine 'Nature' Veddas either lack, or at the most have a quite uncertain idea of the persistence of the souls of the dead at the site of death, and that they make no offerings to their manes[2]." Further, they state "that among 'Culture' Veddas this idea has developed but little, for they either answered that they did not know whether they persisted as souls after death, or that they

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 497 and 498. [2] *Loc. cit.*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

had never thought the matter over. Nevertheless they honour the names which like the Sinhalese they call Yakas with food, dances or offerings. Any monotheistic idea of God is absent both in 'Nature' and in 'Culture' Veddas[1]."

The three strata of belief to which we referred at the beginning of this chapter and which exist among the Veddas of the present day, have not fused so thoroughly that there is any great difficulty in isolating them. We believe they may be tabulated as follows:

I. The Cult of the dead, including the cult of the spirits of recent ancestors, i.e. of the Nae Yaku and the *yaku* of certain Veddas who have been long dead and may well be regarded as heroes. The most important of these is Kande Yaka.

II. The Cult of foreign spirits, who have become naturalised and have taken the friendly protective nature of the Vedda *yaku*.

III. The Cult of foreign spirits who, though not often regarded as such, have retained their foreign nature and are in the main terrible or even hostile.

Another feature of the last stratum of thought is the endowment of true Vedda *yaku* with foreign attributes[2]. When the history of the island is considered, it is not surprising that the first condition, which may be considered the primitive religion of the Veddas, should nowhere be found standing alone at the present day. It is impossible to say how much the Indian invaders influenced the aboriginal inhabitants of Lanka (Ceylon) when they took possession of the island under Vijeyo about 500 B.C., for the few references made to Veddas in the ancient chronicles of the country throw no light on this subject.

Knox mentions that Veddas paid a tribute of game and honey to the Sinhalese, and in his day there were "wild and tame" Veddas, and it is certain that from the middle ages onwards there was a considerable amount of intercourse between at least the tamer Veddas and the Sinhalese. Therefore it is natural that foreign beliefs should have gradually infiltrated the native Vedda cult.

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] The invocation (No. XLI) to Ambárapoti Kiriámmá given on p. 316 is an excellent example of this. Bilindi Yaka is here treated as if he were a Sinhalese or Tamil deity.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

presented to Kande Yaka the hunters would expect bad luck in future, and might even be bitten by snakes or attacked by bears.

The *Nae Yaku* are the spirits of the dead, they must report themselves to Kande Yaka as the chief of all the *yaku* and from him obtain permission to help the living and accept their offerings. Kande Yaka comes to the *Nae Yaku* ceremonies since the spirits of the dead could not be present without him. It was definitely stated that the spirits of the dead did not become *yaku* until the fifth day after death, but my informant knew nothing of the state of the spirits during this period though it was surmised that at least part of the time would be passed in seeking Kande Yaka or in his company, though there was no idea as to where Kande Yaka had his being. It was however stated, that the spirits of the dead were in hills, caves and rocks. The *Nae Yaku* including the spirit of the dead man are invoked on the fifth day after death. An offering is made of coconut milk and rice, if these are obtainable, but if not one consisting of yams and water is substituted. The shaman dances, holding in his hand a big ceremonial arrow for which no special name could be elicited, while the remainder of the community gather round. The shaman invokes the *Nae Yaku* and also Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka. The shaman becomes possessed and is supported lest he fall while the spirit of the deceased promises that yams, honey, and game shall be plentiful. He then sprinkles coconut milk or water from the offering on the relatives of the deceased as a sign of the spirit's favour. One or more of the relatives of the dead man may also become possessed. The shaman gives the relatives water and yams, putting their food into their mouths himself while he is possessed, and it appeared that this might cause the relatives to become possessed. At the end of the ceremony he asks the *Nae Yaku* to depart to where they came from and the spirits leave the offering.

Nothing was known concerning the Kataragam God or the *kolamadua* ceremony, though our informants said that they had heard of other Veddas performing this ceremony. Gale Yaka was not known, nor yet Wanagata Yaka.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 At Sitala Wanniya the principal *yaku* are Kande Yaka,
773 Bilindi Yaka, Bambura Yaka and the *Nae Yaku*. According to these people Kande Wanniya killed his younger brother Bilindi when the latter was only an infant. The story is that their parents were out hunting when Bilindi, feeling hungry, began to cry and would not desist in spite of the endearments lavished upon him by Kande. At last Kande threw the child on the ground in despair and so killed him.

776 It appeared that as a hunting hero Bambura Yaka is on the whole as important as Kande Yaka, though he is certainly not looked upon as so benevolent nor so loved as the latter, who helps men to kill deer and never sends sickness. Bambura Yaka is a somewhat grim spirit who although he gives yams and helps men to kill pig, also sends sickness and must be invoked to remove it, and he is also invoked when dogs are lost or taken by leopards. Because of his giving yams he is sometimes known as Ale (yam) Yaka, and yams are offered to him together with other vegetable food when this can be obtained.

224 The *kirikoraha* ceremony is performed to obtain game, in
776 gratitude for which the head and a portion of the flesh from
762 the breast of every deer killed is cooked as an offering to Kande Yaka and is afterwards eaten by the community. If this were not done Kande Yaka would be angry and little game would be killed.

The *kirikoraha* seen at Sitala Wanniya is described on pp. 223 to 226, and the ceremony at which Bambura Yaka is invoked on pp. 237 to 245.

775 The spirits of the dead become the *Nae Yaku* and with
782 Kande Yaka are invoked for success in hunting; a description
769 of this ceremony will be found on pp. 230 to 233. A few days after a death the dead man is invoked for assistance in hunting, being addressed as *mal paenae wanna*, and when the relatives or the group leave the cave to look for game they repeat the invocation as they move along. After this, if they are successful, they know that the spirit of the dead man has become powerful as a *Nae Yaku* and invoke him at the *kirikoraha* among the *Nae Yaku* called upon. The *Nae Yaku* must obtain permission

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nae Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas.

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaka* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death.

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*kaduwa*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness.

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 256), had been naturalised and were said to represent *ande*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God is almost, if not quite, thought of as their brother-in-law. In fact the divinity of the God and of his consort has not among the Veddas reached the proportions it has among the Sinhalese and Tamils. It has already been stated that among the Sinhalese the spirits of the dead who desire to become *Baṇḍāra* present themselves to the Kataragam God, and from him obtain permission to receive offerings of cooked food (*adukku*) in return for benefits to be conferred, or to smite men with sickness and other disasters, and we were told that the Kataragam God would not refuse any spirit who approached him with this request[1].

Further, these Veddas hold that the man may become possessed by the Kataragam God in the same way as by the *Nae Yaku*, and the god is worshipped at certain shrines in the Kovil Vanamai district which are traditionally associated with Veddas and are said to be of Vedda origin. One of these at a place called Kokkadichchola is said to have arisen as follows.

A Vedda and his wife were cutting the trunk of a tree for honey when the tree began to bleed and they found in it not a bee's nest but an infant. The Vedda became possessed and while this condition lasted the God within him announced that he was the Kataragam God and that a temple must be built to him there. When the Vedda returned to his senses the child could not be found, but in its place was an image of the God.

Returning to the beliefs held by the Bandaraduwa people concerning the *Nae Yaku*, these can be best illustrated and explained by considering the events following the death of a Kovil Vanamai man called Tuta.

The day after our arrival at Bandaraduwa a Vedda called Kaira came to our camp sobbing and shaking and protesting that he could not stay long with us as his brother was dead. He seemed deeply affected, though another brother, Kaurale, who was with him appeared quite calm, which led us to suspect that his uncontrollable agitation was due to something more than mere affection for the dead man, and we soon discovered

[1] This belief in spirits of the dead obtaining license from the Kataragam God is also held by some rural Sinhalese.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

●n75
769

that this brother had lived with him and died in his hut, and that it was his duty to make an offering to the nearest Buddhist priest and to provide the necessities for a dance to the *Nae Yaku*, and that he had not the wherewithal to do these things. If these duties were neglected the spirit of the dead man would be angry, and after seven days when the spirit had become a *yaku* would cause misfortune and sickness and perhaps kill him. His manifest relief when we offered him the money needed to purchase the offerings showed that his sorrow for the loss of his brother was the least of his troubles, and he was quite gay when he started on his twenty mile walk to the nearest boutique with Rs. 3·50 in his betel pouch, and readily assented to our condition that he must return with his purchases so that the *Nae Yaku* ceremony might be performed near our camp. The local shaman, who was Vidane of the Vedda settlement, was perfectly ready to agree to this, indeed it suited him well, for it saved him the trouble of walking some eight miles to the scene of the death, and as he pointed out, the *Nae Yaku* could be invoked as well in one place as in another. It was important that the *Nae Yaku* dance should be held on the seventh day after death, since it was thought that the spirit of the dead man, which became a *yaku* on the third day after death, resorted to the Kataragam God and on the seventh day obtained authority from him to accept offerings and to help or molest the living according to the way in which he was treated by them. We were assured that whatever the intentions of the relations might be with regard to the spirit of the dead man, no danger was to be apprehended until the seventh day when the *Nae Yaku* ceremony should be performed, though this could not be done unless alms had previously been given to a Buddhist priest. The offerings which must be given to the priest are worth nearly three rupees and consist of the following foods and other objects. The numbers in parentheses after each object show the price in cents at the nearest boutique, some fifteen or twenty miles from Bandaraduwa. Rice 3 measures (60), 2 coconuts (20), 50 balls of jaggery sugar (15), 25 areca nuts (6), 5 tobacco leaves (12), 100 betel leaves (18), 1 plate (30), 1 cup (25), 1 mat (25), 1 handkerchief (36), half a bottle of coconut oil (50), the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

total amounting to 2 Rs. 97 cents. The offering made to the *Nat Yaku* cost only 40 cents and consisted of a coconut, 50 betel leaves and a measure of rice. 775 769

The actual ceremony at which the spirit of the dead man was invoked and offerings made to it is described in Chapter IX, pp. 233 to 237.

Certain of the invocations used by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas, for instance, in invocation (No. XXXIV) to Indigollae Kiriamma for success in hunting and the invocations sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony, especially that to Unapane Kiriamma (No. XXXVIII), show how greatly foreign influence has altered the character of spiritual beings who existed in the original Vedda religion.

The Veddas of Uniche form a community in much the same stage of belief as the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. A few days after death the spirit of the deceased obtains permission from a "chief" to accept offerings and assist or harm the living. Our informants could not tell us who this chief was, but appeared to think that he had lived in comparatively recent times, and were confident that he was not Kande or Bilindi Yaka. 771 775

The *Nat Yaku*, including the spirit of the dead man, are invoked a few, perhaps five, days after a death has taken place. A pot of coconut milk with betel leaves in it is placed upon a rice pounder, and the shaman, holding a ceremonial arrow in each hand, dances round this, invoking the spirits, including that of the dead man. When possessed, the shaman sprinkles some of the coconut milk on the relatives and places betel leaves on their chests; the shaman also feeds the relatives from the bowl of coconut milk. The object of this dance is said to be to enable the *prana karaya* to become a *Nat Yaka*. It is clear that this is simply a condensed account of the ceremony we witnessed at Bandaraduwa, described on pp. 233 to 237. 775 769

The conditions prevailing at Henebedda, which at first were most puzzling, were found to be largely due to the influence of Tissahami "the Vedda Arachi," whose strong personality has been already referred to on p. 41. This man had taught the present Henebedda shaman much of his lore, and the latter 776 775

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776
775

was but too anxious to assimilate and practise all that the Arachi would teach him. The knowledge he thus acquired spread to the younger members of the tribe, such as Sita Wanniya, who obviously took more interest in the ceremonial observances of his religion than any other of the younger men we met, and it was said that he would probably be the next shaman. The older men, on the other hand, appeared to know little of the developments introduced by the Arachi. To them Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nas Yaku* were not only the most important spiritual powers, but appeared to be the only ones who were at all well known; the simplicity of the eschatological beliefs of these older men has already been referred to on p. 126 and agrees wonderfully well with those described by Bailey in 1863. "The result of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than evil. ...They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread....But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their 'nehya yakoon,' kindred spirits. They describe them as 'ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting.' In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, 'bilindoo yakkoon,' or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke....

775
769
539

"The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following: an arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm:

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

'Mâ miya, mâ miya, mâ deyâ,
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâh!'

'My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?'

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions, when the intervention of the guardian spirit is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.

"Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

"Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. 'Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come! wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!' and they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.

"They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. 'Is he on a rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!' was the only reply I received to repeated questions. They have no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings[1]."

Although in essentials this account is accurate, certain corrections and suggestions must be made. The "bilindoo yakkoon" are not "infant spirits" but obviously represent Bilindi Yaka who became a *yaka* while still a child. The arrow dance is clearly described and agrees with the dance we saw and photographed near Bendiyagalge, figures of which are given in Plate XXVI.

With regard to the spirits of the dead appearing in dreams and stating where game will be found, this, which is quite contradictory to our experience, has already been referred to on

[1] J. Bailey, *op. cit.* pp. 300—303.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 p. 135, but it may be noted that Bailey clearly did not know of the existence of shamanistic ceremonies and we have little doubt that the information given him, which he took to refer to dreams, in fact described the experiences of possession. The "few sticks...with a branch thrown over them" are clearly remains of the *mesas* upon which the offerings are placed.

The *Maha Yakino* are the spirits of old Vedda women, the chief of whom is the Maha Kiriamma, who, as Bailey pointed out in 1863, is more feared than loved, and in many cases is supposed to send sickness. It was said that her name was Anami and that she lived at Okegala near Alutnuwara, dying of old age; but in spite of these circumstantial details, which are perhaps due to the teachings of Tissahami, neither the name nor the memory of her husband has survived.

775 753

Unapane Kiriamma is another important *Maha Yakini* who lived near Unapane[1].

775

Unapane Kiriamma also gives luck in honey getting, and it is thought that she in some way causes bees to build good combs, in fact, all the *Maha Yakino* are associated with rock honey from the belief that they especially affect the rocky crests of hills[2].

Although the *Maha Yakino* are looked upon as the spirits of old Vedda women and are reputed to show their fondness for children by kidnapping them, they are regarded with considerable awe, for they are considered to send disease, and it is necessary to make an offering to them in order that this may be removed. This is generally done at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony described on p. 268. With the exception of the

[1] She is known to the jungle Sinhalese of the Vedirata, who state that with her husband Unapane Kaira Wanniya she made the Unapane paddy fields. She is particularly invoked by barren women, and those who have brought forth still-born children, for increase of cattle and milk, to prevent cattle being taken by leopards or damaging the crops and to give good harvests. [842a]

[2] Offerings of honey made to the *Maha Yakino* are described elsewhere. The belief that the *Maha Yakino* are especially associated with hills is also found among the Sinhalese of the Vedda country, who especially associate these spirits with hills on which springs are found or on which streams arise. One such hill near Nilgala, which at the end of the rains has many small streams running down its face, is known as Yakini Ela and is especially associated by the neighbouring Sinhalese with the *Maha Yakino*, who they say can be heard moving about the crest at night. [823]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

invocation of the *Maha Yakino* at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony the beliefs of the Henebedda people, old and young, as far as we have described them, belong to the true Vedda stratum, but we must now record a number of *yaku* including Panikkia Yaka, who are equally believed in by the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedda country and who, like Panikkia Yaka, are probably all *yaku* of important Veddas who were village Veddas or lived in more or less organized contact with the Sinhalese. These *yaku* are:

Mawaragala Panikkia, invoked to give good fortune and avert sickness from man and beast.

Rerangala Yaka who lived in the Uva Bintenne and was particularly expert at noosing elephants, though it is not known whether he first practised this art. He died of old age, and is invoked to prevent sickness, particularly epidemic diseases, and to give prosperity in all things.

Lepat Yaka lived at Lepatgala in the Bintenne and was called Lepatgala Wanniya; nothing is known of his life or death. This *yaka* is invoked during epidemics and before hunting to prevent danger from wild animals.

Hantane Mahavedi Unehe who lived on Mawaragala, and of whose life and death nothing is known, is invoked to cure sickness and to give good fortune in hunting.

Walimbagala Yaka, whom the Veddas of Uva call Walimbagala Panikkia, formerly lived on Walimbagala between Bandaraduwa and Madana in the Eastern Province. He was a great and important chief and his spirit is invoked to cure sickness, to send game and to safeguard men taking honey.

Galaridi Bandar lived on Veragodagala near Nilgala. He was an expert at capturing elephants, which he used to present to the Kandyan kings. Galaridi Bandar is reputed to have constructed dagobas and to have brought a range of paddy fields under cultivation.

Kadaelle Nalla Panikkia was so good a huntsman that he could run down deer. It is not known where he lived, he is invoked at the *kolamaduwa* only.

Rangrual Bandar is invoked to prevent men falling when collecting honey, and also at the *kolamaduwa*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

c 776

Irugal Bandar is invoked to prevent epidemics and at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony[1].

Sandugal Bandar is invoked before hunting and safeguards men from the attacks of wild animals and snake-bite.

Ranhoti Bandar, a Vedda chief who lived at Hamanawa in Nilgala Chorale. His spirit is a very important *yaka* and not to be invoked carelessly along with others at the *kolamaduwa*, but when properly approached will help his suppliants in many ways.

Gange Bandar was in charge of rivers and also of insect pests. It is said that he belonged to the Morane *warugi*, though his place is not known. He is invoked at the *kolamaduwa*, and when there is not enough rain or too much.

With these *yaku*, all of whom were said to be the spirits of dead Veddas, there were invoked two spirits of whom it was definitely said that they were not Veddas. The first of these was Peradeneya Bandar who lived at Peradeneya near Kandy, where he was *dissava*. He prevents harm from wild beasts, and his protection is invoked during storms and at the *kolamaduwa*. Clearly this *yaka* is the spirit of a man of great local influence, probably comparable to that exerted by Godegedara whose canonisation is recorded on p. 143. The other *yaka* Kalu Bandar is more important and is widely feared throughout the Vedda-Sinhalese zone from Alutnuwara to the Eastern Province. According to the Vedda Arachi he was a native of Mallawa in India[2]. King Vijaya was frightened by a leopard and this man cured him of the sickness produced by fear; he is invoked to procure game and at the *kolamaduwa*.

We must point out that although we give these *yaku* as if a belief in them constituted an organic part of the Henebedda creed, and although the *kolamaduwa* ceremony is certainly performed by the Henebedda community, we consider that the belief in many of them is purely formal; we are convinced that a number of these *yaku* are never called upon or even considered except when invoked as part of the routine of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony. Further, we think it probable that a

[1] Mr Parker informs us that "Irugal Baṇḍāra was a Sinhalese chief who is said to have lived at Baṇḍāra Koswatta (where Knox dwelt) in the reign of King Wijaja Bahu."

[2] Mr Parker suggests that this may be Malwa in the Central Provinces of India or more probably Malawara, Malayalam.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

number of these *yaku*, especially Irugal Bandar and the other Bandar, may have been introduced since Bailey's time. It is even possible that Tissahami may be responsible in part. 775

The reference to King Vijaya shows that Kalu Bandar has nothing to do with the primitive beliefs of the Veddas, for no Vedda knew anything of Vijaya or Kuweni.

Before describing the beliefs of the village Veddas, among whom the third stratum of thought is dominant, the condition of the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula (who have moved there from Mudugala) must be considered and compared with those of both the wilder and the village Veddas. Many of the *yaku* of the less sophisticated communities were known to them, and some invoked by the village Veddas were also called upon at Unuwatura Bubula. Although Kande Yaka was known and considered powerful to send game and cure sickness, apparently he was no longer Lord of the Dead, as he was not invoked at the *alutyakagama* (see p. 260) to which the *Nae Yaku* were called. A structure called a *bulatyahana* was built for him and a Hindu trident as well as an *aude* was held when he was invoked. Bilindi Yaka was known, but we have no note as to whether he was considered the brother of Kande Yaka or no. Bambura Yaka and his attendants known to the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya and Uniche were unknown here. Pata Yaka (Sitala Wanniya) had been heard of but had never been invoked. The Wanegatha Yaku were of considerable importance here, they were said to be the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had perished in their rock-shelter owing to a fall of rock. Indigollae Yaka (the attendant of Kande Yaka at Sitala Wanniya) was known here and considered extremely powerful; when really short of food, offerings are made to him and his wife Indigollae Yakini, and the shaman thrusts an *aude* into the roof of his hut and hangs on it a string of beads which are kept specially for this purpose, and then Indigollae Yaka sends game. We were told that no charm or invocation accompanied this action. 775 776 [346]

We did not realise at the time of our visit that Indigollae Yaka might be another name for Gale Yaka, but this appears not unlikely in view of information furnished by Mr Parker, and the fact that Gale Yaka was here invoked with the *Nae*

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yaku, while at nearly all the village Vedda communities Indigollae Yaka was said to bring the *Nae Yaku*. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all: perhaps Gale Yaka had become Lord of the Dead as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony; Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate ceremony. No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both to bring evil upon man and to help them to get game was, however, volunteered and, as already mentioned, some old, specially valuable beads were kept to be offered to him.

Gale Yaka was also invoked to give success when gathering honey; he appeared to be associated with a certain rock near Mahaella, and we were told that beads were worn during the ceremony.

The Maha Kiriamma was said to be one of the most powerful of the *Maha Yakino*, a class of female spirits who were said to send sickness[1]. Unapane Yakini (Unapane Kiriamma) was another *yakini* of the same class who was thought to live at Omunigala. Here as among many other groups of Veddas the *Maha Yakino* were associated with hill tops, and it was the custom for people collecting the honey of the rock bee to leave a piece of the comb *in situ*, saying, "Eat, O Kiriamma[2]."

When the *Maha Yakino* are invoked to cure sickness a basket is used in which are put a bead necklace and bangles and the leaves of a *na* tree. The shaman becomes possessed and raises the basket above the patient's head and prophesies recovery. The leaves are subsequently thrown away, but the beads and bangles are preserved for the *Yakino*. Presumably this is the origin of the similar or identical use of these objects in the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which, however, appears to be of Sinhalese origin.

[1] Nothing was ever said to cause us to suspect that she was connected with Gale Yaka or Indigollae Yaka.

[2] Kiriamma is in the plural in the Sinhalese, showing that all the *Maha Yakino* in the neighbourhood were invoked to partake.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Gange Bandar, unknown among the wilder Veddas but worshipped by all village Veddas, was known at Unuwatura Bubula. 784

OMUNI.

The history of this settlement dating back to the first half of the last century has been given on pp. 45 and 46. The Omuni folk believe there are spirits (*yaku*) everywhere in the jungle, but none have seen them; further, there are many *yaku* of each kind or species such as the Indigollae Yaku, the Dadayan Yaku and many others including the Gale Yaku called the Jungle Yaku, who do not, however, frequent the jungle around Omuni. It was said that Ganga Bandar Deyo who lives in rocks in the river is greater than any of these. Omuni was one of the first Vedda settlements we visited, and as the importance of Sinhalese and Tamil gods and demons was not then appreciated no questions concerning these were asked. It is, however, reasonable to suppose that the Kataragam God and other mighty *deviyo* are worshipped. The spirits of the dead (*Nae Yaku*) are believed to be associated with rocks; on the whole they are kindly spirits, but it is necessary to invoke and propitiate them. 775

A *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some little time after a death has taken place, at which the shaman dances with an *aude* before a *maesa* on which is placed an offering of cooked yams and other food, and the *maesa* is decorated with special clothes kept for that purpose. The *aude* is held in the smoke arising from gum-resin thrown on glowing charcoal, and then pressed on the head of all the male members of the community. If this were not done little game would be killed. 769 782

We have an account of another ceremony performed to cure sickness and when the chena had been reaped, but it is not clear what spirits were invoked at this; presumably the most important of these were certain of the *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*, though the *Nae Yaku* may have played a subordinate part. A shed or very rough house is built and hung with special clothes reserved for this purpose, those shown to us being rather old and worn pieces of linen woven at Batticaloa. A roughly made shelf forming a sort of altar is built in the shed on which 755

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

755 the offering is placed. The dance is held at night and continues until morning when the whole community eat the offering, though only the men dance. We were shown a pot in a small cave near the settlement which was said to be kept there purposely, and which it was stated was used for boiling rice for the ceremony.

771 177 We may now consider the religious beliefs of certain communities in which the third stratum of belief already alluded to is dominant. Such communities are the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne and those of the Eastern Province and Tamankaduwa, among all of whom the *Nat Yaku* were known and reverenced, but the great Vedda heroes have all disappeared, their place having been taken by numerous Sinhalese gods and demons. Some of the village Veddas even build temples, rough bark or [346] mud huts like their own habitations in which the various symbols of the *devēyo* and *yaku* are kept and in which the shamas dances.

Such a temple was seen at Yakure dedicated to Gange Bandar Deyo, here also were two rough stones leaning against [778] a tree on the *bund* of Yakurewaewa which were held sacred to Gane Deyo (Ganesa).

At a place called Nadena, where there were said to be Veddas until a few years ago, on the road running inland from Patrippu in the Eastern Province, there is a temple containing an image of Ganesa and this is looked upon as a Vedda shrine. Other temples or shrines in the Eastern Province are traditionally associated with Veddas though none survive at the present day, except, we believe, at Portiv near Patrippu and at Mandur.

Village Veddas of the Bintenne.

● 775 115 At Dambani and the neighbouring settlements of Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the *Nat Yaku* are held to be of great importance. Reference has already been made on p. 50 to the difficulty of working with these village Veddas, and our information concerning the religious beliefs of the Dambani folk was obtained from the Arachi of Belligala; with regard to Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the little information we possess was obtained at first hand and carefully checked, and

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

though incomplete we have no doubt of its substantial accuracy as far as it goes. We had considerable doubts as to the reliability of our Dambani information, but these have been removed lately as far as they affect Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* owing to the kindness of Mr Hartshorne who allowed us to look through a number of notes collected among these people thirty years ago. And since the information obtained from the Arachi of Belligala was correct on these points, there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the rest of his information. 775 115

According to the Arachi, who, it must be remembered, as stated on p. 49, knows the Dambani folk well, there are three important classes of *yaku*. 775 776

The first of these are the *Nae Yaku* who do not go to Kande Yaka but to Indigollae Yaka, who lives on a hill (*kande*) called Indigollae Kande which never has been seen. Indigollae Yaka is first invoked at the *Nae Yaku* ceremony and with him come the *Nae Yaku*. An *aude* is used in calling upon Indigollae Yaka in this ceremony, while the *Nae Yaku* are invoked by means of a cloth and beads; as among other Veddas an offering of food is made.

We could not discover with certainty at Dambani what was the relative importance of the *Nae Yaku* and the two other classes of *yaka*, but at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle our informants made it quite clear that the *yaku* of recent ancestors were the most important. Thus Kuma stated that he considered his father's *yaka* to be the most important of all and that this spirit was invoked alike to send game and in thanks for game killed. 775

Bandia of Wellampelle said the most important *yaka* he knew was Punchi Badena, his father's father; his mother is dead but her *yaka* is not so important[1]. Punchi Badena is invoked to get game and honey or when people are sick. At all three villages a structure, which from the description given to us resembles an *alutyakagama*, is built for the invocation of the *Nae Yaku*, to whom the customary offerings are made before 775 782

[1] We have no note that the father of Kuma was dead; although we do not remember definitely inquiring about this our impression is that both parents had been dead for some time.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 being eaten by the community. A man becomes a *yaka* directly
782 he is dead, nothing is buried with him and the contents of his betel pouch are used in the ordinary way. The *Nat Yaku* ceremony is held some days after death, one, or according to another informant two, *aude* being used.

776 At Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle neither Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka was known, and these two *yaku* were also unknown at Dambani where, however, the Belligala Arachi said that Kande Yaka gives luck in hunting. This has been confirmed by Mr Hartshorne's notes, so that although our informants at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle stated that they did not know this *yaka*, too much stress must not be laid upon this.

The other two classes of *yaku* invoked at Dambani are
776 tree and rock *yaku*. Both send sickness and are invoked with
753 dancing and offerings to remove it, the stone magic described on p. 143 being used to determine which *yaka* is responsible for the disease. The most important rock *yaku* are Mawaragala Yaka, Rerangala Yaka, Barutugala Yaka, and Mehaluku Yakini. The latter is associated with a rock Batugala near Alutnuwara, the others with the peaks whose names they bear.

776 Two tree *yaku* were mentioned, each having a number of attendants. These tree *yaku* are named Na Gaha Yaka (Na tree Yaka) and Bo Gaha Yaka (Bo tree Yaka), that is to say they are called after the trees with which they are associated, and the Arachi pointed out that tree *yaku* habitually lived in trees of the species after which they are named. We could not discover any facts suggesting that these tree *yaku* were con-
[624] sidered to represent the life of the tree.

HORABORAWEWA.

The surroundings and physical characters of the Veddas of
776 Horaborawewa have been described on p. 53. The shaman is
775 the local Sinhalese headman, who stated that the same *yaku* are invoked by Veddas and Sinhalese alike. Seren (Riri) Yaka is the most important *yaka*, Wiloya Yaka and Kalu Yaka are also known, and it was stated that the latter spirit was also called Wangata Yaka. Our informant had not heard of Kande Yaka or Bilindi Yaka, and it was certain that the worshipped *yaku*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

were generally associated with rocks and were not the spirits of the dead. There is however an exception, namely, Dehigole Yaka, whose history is as follows. A man from Dehigole, a Vedda, went to Kandy to see the king, probably Sri Vikram Rajah Sinha, the last of the Sinhalese kings, who was dethroned early in the last century. On his way back he was killed by an elephant, and now his spirit looks after the chena and prevents elephants breaking into and destroying the crops. A leafy branch is tied to a pole or dead tree in the chena, and Dehigole Yaka and other spirits are invoked, an offering of sweetmeats, jaggery, coconuts and rice cooked in coconut milk being made and subsequently eaten by the owners of the chena. There was said to be no invocation of the *yaku* of the recent dead, nor before taking honey which is obtained from trees.

LINDEGALA.

The "Veddas" described on p. 76 from Lindegala in the neighbourhood of Kallodi worship a large number of male and female spirits including the Bo Gaha Yaka and the Na Gaha Yaka[1].

As already indicated the people of Lindegala are Veddas in scarcely more than name. The most important of them, an old man with his son and son-in-law, visited us at Kallodi. The old man who is tall and presented typical Sinhalese features is a renowned *vederala* (medicine-man) and is employed by the Sinhalese for miles round. He brought with him to show us two ceremonial arrows with which he invoked the spirits. One of these arrows is of the shape of a Hindu trident, the other is of the usual Vedda shape and is notable on account of the silver *bo* leaf with which the blade is inlaid. This *aude* is shown in Plate XXV. Both of these had been presented by the Sinhalese king to one of his ancestors, apparently about 100 years ago.

[1] Although these *yaku* were spoken of in the singular there were many individuals of each species. Some of the other more important *yaku* which were worshipped were named, Wategala Wanniya, Gala Degala Wanniya, Gurugala Wanniya, Maldampaha Yaka, Lepat Yaka, Eheregala Yaka, Meheregal Yaka, Kotal Yaka, Walmat Yaka, Hillbangala Yaka, Mikmal Naida Yaka, Kahelpotagala Yaka, Mawaragala Yaka, Hereng Yaka, Inihangala Wanniya, Mulahangala Wanniya, Gara Rajah Wanniya. These were only an insignificant fraction of the total number of *yaku* known to our oldest informant.

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

411
778
173

The story told us was that when this ancestor, who was a Vedda headman and a shaman of great fame, gave up his jungle life and began to cultivate, the Sinhalese king sent him the two *aude* as tokens that he granted the land on which he settled to him and his descendants for ever. It seems that previously to this they had led a more or less unsettled life, or had perhaps been dispossessed of their own territory during the troubles of the period. The arrows were in fact "seisin" and were considered the equivalent of a *sannasa*, the inscribed metal plate or rock face on which grants of land were formerly recorded. Inquiry showed that it was by no means uncommon for a man to be given a ceremonial example of an implement of his trade or profession as a *sannasa*. Thus, in the Kandy Museum there is a beautifully worked Bull's bell (*gonmitigediya*) given as *sannasa* to Rantun Mudiansе of Walala head of the Pattiya or Nilamakkara people by King Narendara Singhe of Kundasale who reigned 1706—1739. We may also refer to a ceremonial weaver's shuttle in the Colombo Museum and to the lacquered arrows described in Chapter XI.

776
775

The *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Wanegata Yaka are considered less important than the tree *yaku* and the host of *yaku* alluded to above. Indigollae Yaka and Rahu Yaka are recognised but not considered very powerful, though it was said that all these were formerly invoked to give success in hunting. The *kolamaduwa* ceremony is known, very many spirits being invoked including Unapane Kiriamma. The *Nae Yaku* become attendants on some of the *yaku* mentioned in the above list and these are invoked first and bring the *Nae Yaku* with them, but it appeared that it was no longer the custom to hold a *Nae Yaku* ceremony within a few days of a death. Among the *Nae Yaku* mentioned was the spirit of the man on whom one of the last Sinhalese kings had bestowed the land of which the inlaid *aude* shown in Plate XXV is the *sannasa*. Another *yaka* greatly venerated is that of Kimbul Otbe, an important individual living a few generations ago concerning whom Nevill has written at some length[1].

[1] Nevill, who says that he could find no clue to his identity, still regarded Kimbul Otbe as "a great historical personage," for "The Sinhalese of the Eastern Province

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

KALUKALAEBA.

The most important spiritual agencies are the following:— Gange Bandar Deyo, Kataragam Deyo, Indigollae Yaka, Rerang Yaka, Riri Yaka (Sinhalese), Marulu Yaka, Rahu Yaka, and Elle Yakini. 776

In spite of the fact that the people of Kalukalaeba keep cattle and are predominantly agriculturalists Gange Bandar Deyo, who lives on the hill Yangala beyond Hemberewa and gives luck in hunting and honey gathering, was said to be especially important. He is invoked when game is scarce, but it is the Kataragam God who gives increase of yams and vegetable food. They do not dance to him but make offerings of cooked brinjal and pumpkins, which are left for half-a-day on a rude altar and then eaten. Chena are also under the protection of the Kataragam God to whom offerings are made after the produce has been reaped, some of every kind of fruit being cooked and exposed in the chena for some hours before it is eaten by the people. 776 782

At Kalukalaeba Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Bambura Yaka were unknown. The spirits of the dead are recognised as the *Nae Yaku*, but they are certainly thought of as far less important than a number of other spiritual beings to be immediately considered. They are however invoked, but it seemed that this was not done habitually immediately after a death, but at quite uncertain intervals to remove sickness. The father of 775 755

and Bisenne, and Nilgala, alike agree that he was a great and powerful prince. They speak of him often, and call him Barangala Kimbul-Herat mudiyanse Rajapat Wannimache. From the name Herat it is manifest he headed some great political movement.... Raja-pat probably means king-maker, and the whole title may be translated as 'His Excellency the General Kimbul-Otbe of Barangala, the king-maker Lord-of-the-Marches,' or else the 'King-made Lord-of-the-Marches,' wanni, literally a forest or waste, being used exactly as we use the term 'marches,' of Wales or Scotland. The respect of the Sinhalese, and this elaborate title of highest honour, show that this great Vaedda Chieftain headed an army that replaced one of the Sinhalese kings upon the throne of his ancestors. I think it is more probable he figured in a comparatively modern war than in a very ancient one....It is perfectly likely that Kimbul-Otbe was a prince of the Sinhala royal family, who married a Vaedda....

"The supposition that Kimbul-Otbe was a Sinhala, and that he married either a Bandara or an Unapana lady, would thus account for the otherwise unexplained fact that the Sinhalese say some of their oldest and best families also descended from Kimbul-Otbe, though they did not know whether he was really a Vaedda or was claimed by the Vaeddas in mistake, having been their prince." *Op. cit.* Vol. i, p. 176.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[742] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

776 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka is known. The *Nae Yaku* are of the company of Indigollae Yaka, and with the latter are invoked after a death, but the *Nae Yaku* are not asked for good luck in hunting. The *Nae Yaku* are invoked after every death; coconut, jaggery (palm sugar), and rice are placed on a *maesa*, offered to the *yaku* and afterwards eaten by the shaman and other members of the community. While invoking the spirits the shaman holds a cloth in his hands but no *aude*.

ULPOTA.

The Kataragam God, Gane Deyo and Vihara Deyo, are worshipped, as probably are many others. These spirits are all considered more important than the *Nae Yaku*, and it is to their aid that success in hunting and in honey getting is largely attributed, nevertheless it was clear that the *Nae Yaku* were thought of as helpful in these activities. Our informant stated that they had never heard of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka, nor had they heard of the gods of the coast Veddas Kapalpe or Kadupe.

The spirits of the dead become *Nae Yaku*, and it is customary for a ceremony to be held eight days after a death, at which the spirits of all the recent dead are invoked. It was said that these spirits of the deceased joined the other *Nae Yaku* without asking permission from any other spiritual being and that the *Nae Yaku* came when they were invoked unaccompanied by any other spirit. The shaman does not hold an *aude* in his hand when invoking the *Nae Yaku*, but some rice and cooked pumpkin are put upon a *maesa* before which he dances. At the side of this is a pot of rice covered with a cloth supported on a rice pounder. The shaman faces the east whilst dancing, and appeals to all remembered *Nae Yaku* by name. It was said to be rare for any but the shaman to become possessed.

The *Nae Yaku* give honey and luck in hunting, and it is in order to obtain their favour that they are invoked, for if they were not they would give bad luck. When collecting tree honey the name of a dead man is called and he is requested to accept a little honey which is left at the foot of the tree for a short time, after which it is eaten by the honey gatherers. After killing game

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

a piece of flesh is offered to the *Nae Yaku* who are called by name, and then the Veddas eat it themselves.

Vihara Deyo is considered to send sickness, and he is invoked to make men whole again. Rice is cooked with milk usually obtained from the Tamil village of Horawila, and this with betel and areca nut is put upon a *maesa*. Only the shaman dances, and after the ceremony the offering is eaten by the whole community, including the sick man. Our informant did not know how the *yaka* or *deyo* causing the sickness was discovered, that being left to the shaman.

YAKURE.

The important spiritual agencies are:—Gange Bandar Deyo, Genikandia Deyo, Palugamman Deyo, Vihara Deyo, Mangara Deyo. Our informants knew of Indigollae Yaka but did not know if he ever was a man or had always been a spirit. Nothing was known of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka. Dead shamans are thought to become *yaku*, and it is the spirits of these people who are the *Nae Yaku*: the fate of the spirits of ordinary folk is uncertain, but they do not become *Nae Yaku*. The *Nae Yaku* are danced to and invoked with the other *yaku* in order to cure sickness, but apparently they are not considered particularly important. A *maesa* is made and a cloth put over it, and on it are laid flowers of many kinds, betel leaves and areca nuts. Incense is burned before these offerings, in front of which the shaman dances facing the east. In some instances the *maesa* is built inside the temple, the shaman holds a cloth in his hand and a pot of rice cooked in milk is placed by the *maesa* on a rice pounder[1]. This is not tasted during the dance, but is eaten afterwards by the shaman and the sick man and other individuals of the community[2].

Kataragam Deyo is invoked especially to protect the chena, and at harvest an offering is made which is afterwards eaten as at Elakotaliya.

[1] It must be remembered that Yakure is a great cattle breeding centre.

[2] This is an interesting contrast to the practice which Mr Parker informs us prevails in the south of the island, where food given to spirits is not eaten at all but is exposed in the jungle or some deserted place. The fact that at Yakure food offered to spirits, many of whom are of Sinhalese or Tamil origin, is eaten, is clearly a remnant of the Vedda belief that the spirits invoked are in the main beneficent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered.

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding.

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *aude* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo.

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

when he takes the shape of a well made young man dressed in white and with a white stick in his hand. Vedi Yaka also appears only in dreams, as a black man in a cloth with nothing else particular about him[1]."

The Avoidance of Certain Foods.

It must be assumed that the following prohibitions are of a religious or of a magico-religious nature, and for this reason they are included in the present chapter. They do not appear to be connected with totemism, yet we do not feel confident that they are derived from Hinduism, as is suggested by the Sarasins[2]. In this doubt we have the support of Mr Parker who writes: "This prohibition appears to have no connection with Hinduism, or the common Brown Monkey, *Rilawā* (*Macacus pileatus*), would be included, and also the Rat, as the vāhana of Ganēsa, and the Turtle as representative of Vishnu; or some of these[3]."

Bailey writes, "The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk, deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pengolin—all flesh indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.

"They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of these beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained, is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh[4]."

We are able to confirm Bailey's statement as far as it concerns the flesh of mammals, with the reservation that most Veddas do not eat porcupine. With regard to birds, the Veddas of Henebedda said they would not eat fowls or eagles. The majority of Veddas, including even the degenerate Veddas of the coast, avoid eating fowl, though many of the settled village Veddas keep them for sale or for the sake of their eggs, and in

[1] Both the passages quoted are from a report by Mr Hornbrugh to the Colonial Secretary.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 413.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 287 and 288.

[4] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769 us in danger, sickness etc.' When we enquired whether their
177 dead lived on as spirits he replied, they did not consider whether
[775] the departed were living or dead, they were just spirits, in Tamil *sami* or *dewi*, in Sinhalese *yako*; all spirits were alike, neither good nor bad. Another coast Vedda named Patiniya told us that their religion was that of the Tamils. In memory of their dead, whom they called *yako*, they cooked rice and ate it; they invoked the *yaka* in sickness, etc.[1]"

761 Just as Kapalpei sent sickness, so death was also attributed
753 to him, but perhaps not epidemics, for it appeared to be generally
776 considered that a single death would satisfy him for the time, so that it would be days or weeks before he would be expected to send sickness or death again.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 498.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 if they have even any language. "Some," he says, "are so degraded that it has appeared doubtful whether they possess any language whatever; and not only is their dialect incomprehensible to a Singhalese, but even their communications with each other are made by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which bear little or no resemblance to distinct words or systematized language."* I can only say that I have been repeatedly among the very wildest of the race—indeed the "wretched outcasts," here so summarily deprived of the power of speech, are those whom I have been endeavouring to describe, and I never knew one of them at a loss for words sufficiently intelligible to convey his meaning, not to his fellows only, but to the Singhalese of the neighbourhood, who are all, more or less, acquainted with the Veddah patois.

775 [681] The Veddahs have no idea of a future state of rewards and punishments; for the vague vestige of a belief in retributive justice, which I have before mentioned, cannot be said to show any faith in the punishment by a Superior Power of sinners in this world.

114 It has been most truly said that it is a matter of almost insuperable difficulty to arrive at a proper understanding of the creed of barbarous tribes through the medium of direct questioning, and that nothing can be more vague than all their statements on this most important subject.†

771 It is not to be wondered at that a people so barbarous as the Veddahs are—without literature of any kind—who have lived in the depth of the forests in almost complete seclusion for centuries on centuries, should be incapable themselves of giving any definite or intelligent account of what they do believe. They are unable to express in language their ideas on subjects, which, even in their own minds, have never assumed any distinct form; and though they are ready enough to answer the questions put to them, it is no easy task so to frame them as to make their object intelligible to such rude and unlettered savages. The result 776 of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than for evil. Still, vague as this belief is, not even the

* Tennent, vol. ii, pt. ix, c. iii, p. 441, 2nd ed. This is stated on the authority of "a gentleman who resided long in their vicinity, G. R. Mercer, Esq., of the Civil Service, who held office at Badulla." Those who remember that gentleman's love of a practical joke, will smile at seeing this "joke" gravely recorded in the *Physical, Historical, and Topographical Account of the Island of Ceylon*, by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, K.C.S., LL.D., etc.; and my able predecessor, Mr. Mercer, must have been as much amused at seeing it there, as any one else.

† See Hodgson's "Brief Note on Indian Ethnology," Bengal Asiatic Society's *Journal*, March 1849.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

wildest Veddahs are without an "instinct of worship." They be- 776
lieve that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread.

Such appears to be the form which the superstitions of every 776
savage tribe naturally assume,—the necessity for a belief in some- 775
thing more than human, imparting to the commonest objects a 769
supernatural character. But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every near relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their "néhya yakoon," kindred spirits. They describe them as "ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting." In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, "bilindoo yakkoon," or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke.*

It is a pretty belief, and contrasts favourably with the super- 769
stitions of the Kandyans, who have spirits enough in their system, 776
but almost all thoroughly malignant, and needing constant propi- 782
tiation. But the Veddah spirit-world is singularly free from evil. I can find only one *absolutely* malignant spirit in it whom they really fear;† though, like all savages, they have an undefined awe of the nameless spirits whom they believe to haunt the darkness. The shades of their ancestors and of their children seem to be purely benevolent. The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following. An arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm. [539]

"Mâ miya, mâ miy, mâ deyâ'
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâ'h!"

---

* They also speak of them as "witera yakkoon," "child-spirits." They seem to prefer their great-grandmother (maha kiri amma) to the rest of their defunct ancestors; but I cannot ascertain any cause for their preference for the old lady. I may, however, be wrong in describing it as a preference. It may be the reverse, for she is invoked chiefly in cases of sickness, when the patient is supposed to be suffering from the malignity of a spirit. [753]

† Awiramada Yakko, who especially injures women, lying wait for them in the forest.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot 782
be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, 776
with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to pro- [346]
tect their votive offerings.

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medi- 755
cine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the 769
patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, [775] ●
so universal amongst Buddhists.

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it 771
can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often 174
repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded.

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, [821]
although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Wedde-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapána-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapána-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddirates, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not 789
known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

or five years old. Before this they were called Tuta (male) and Tuti (female), i.e. "little one," and these expressions may persist and replace their proper names which in many instances seem to be forgotten, so that some children appeared to have no name at all. Small babies may be called Goraka or Gorakki, because they are reddish in colour, and so resemble the *gorakka* fruit (*Garcinia cambogia*). Apparently these names are not applied for more than the first few months after birth. It was said that the reason the names of young children were avoided was that to mention their names might attract the attention of evilly disposed *yaku* who might make the child ill or even kill it. We did not ascertain what were the names of the *yaku* who it was feared might injure the children, but it must be assumed that these spirits belonged to the third stratum of the Vedda religion defined on p. 149, and are either foreign spirits who have been adopted without losing their dangerous attributes, or the spirits of remote female ancestors (*hiriyanna*) who sometimes steal children. 551 551 776

At Bandaraduwa, where there was much foreign influence, we had an example of the belief in the inadvisability of bringing children too closely in contact with the *yaku*. This is recorded on p. 216.

At Omuni we were told that in the old days there was no fixed time for the naming of a child. The father and mother give the child its name, usually choosing that of an ancestor, for there is no harm in speaking or using the name of a dead relative when the name is given to a child; thus our informant, the headman of Omuni, calls his second child by the name of his own dead father, though in his lifetime he would have addressed his father by his kinship term. Our informant gave his father's name to his second child, not to his first, because his father was alive when his first son was born. A woman's name is generally given to a granddaughter born after her death. Children are also commonly named after their maternal and paternal aunts and uncles. 653

The following lists of the names of males and females were given me by Mr Bibile and Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi; they were all said to be good Vedda names, and many of 551

To illustrate and prove these propositions we must examine in detail the beliefs of some of the communities in which each stage is respectively dominant. The Veddas met at Godatalawa and Sitala Wanniya form the best example of the first stage of belief. In comparing their beliefs it must, however, be remembered that the Godatalawa family have drifted away from their hunting grounds and are in dire want, and that their oldest man and leader (now quite infirm though still mentally vigorous) was never a shaman and consequently could give only the lay opinion of his group on religious matters. It must then not be assumed that no spirits beyond the *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Bilindi Yaka were known to the shaman of the Galmeda community, although the fact that the laymen only knew of these spirits shows how vastly more important they were than any other.

The Sitala Wanniya people, on the other hand, were living in a condition which must have been general from ancient times up to about 70 years ago. Four of the five families had never made even rough chena or built bark houses, but lived on game, honey and yams and wandered about from rock-shelter to rock-shelter within their territory.

At Godatalawa Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were both known though they were not recognised as brothers, and Kande Yaka was said to be greater than all other *yaku*. They are the two principal *yaku* invoked in order to obtain game, but with them there are invoked three other *yaku*, who, it was stated, are not the spirits of the dead but have existed as *yaku* from the beginning. These were, however, of little importance, and our informant, an old man the senior of the group but not a shaman, did not remember their names. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka would be invoked in order to obtain game at the *Siriberaha* ceremony, or simply when dancing round an arrow struck in the ground. These dances were not in gratitude for game already killed, but when the hunting had been successful, pieces of flesh from the neck and chest of the kill were cooked on the ashes and Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked to come to this offering which a few minutes later would be consumed by the Veddas. If part of the meat were not thus

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

presented to Kande Yaka the hunters would expect bad luck in future, and might even be bitten by snakes or attacked by bears.

The *Nae Yaku* are the spirits of the dead, they must report themselves to Kande Yaka as the chief of all the *yaku* and from him obtain permission to help the living and accept their offerings. Kande Yaka comes to the *Nae Yaku* ceremonies since the spirits of the dead could not be present without him. It was definitely stated that the spirits of the dead did not become *yaku* until the fifth day after death, but my informant knew nothing of the state of the spirits during this period though it was surmised that at least part of the time would be passed in seeking Kande Yaka or in his company, though there was no idea as to where Kande Yaka had his being. It was however stated, that the spirits of the dead were in hills, caves and rocks. The *Nae Yaku* including the spirit of the dead man are invoked on the fifth day after death. An offering is made of coconut milk and rice, if these are obtainable, but if not one consisting of yams and water is substituted. The shaman dances, holding in his hand a big ceremonial arrow for which no special name could be elicited, while the remainder of the community gather round. The shaman invokes the *Nae Yaku* and also Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka. The shaman becomes possessed and is supported lest he fall while the spirit of the deceased promises that yams, honey, and game shall be plentiful. He then sprinkles coconut milk or water from the offering on the relatives of the deceased as a sign of the spirit's favour. One or more of the relatives of the dead man may also become possessed. The shaman gives the relatives water and yams, putting their food into their mouths himself while he is possessed, and it appeared that this might cause the relatives to become possessed. At the end of the ceremony he asks the *Nae Yaku* to depart to where they came from and the spirits leave the offering.

Nothing was known concerning the Kataragam God or the *kalamadua* ceremony, though our informants said that they had heard of other Veddas performing this ceremony. Gale Yaka was not known, nor yet Wanagata Yaka.

776 773 At Sitala Wanniya the principal *yaku* are Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, Bambura Yaka and the *Nae Yaku*. According to these people Kande Wanniya killed his younger brother Bilindi when the latter was only an infant. The story is that their parents were out hunting when Bilindi, feeling hungry, began to cry and would not desist in spite of the endearments lavished upon him by Kande. At last Kande threw the child on the ground in despair and so killed him.

776 It appeared that as a hunting hero Bambura Yaka is on the whole as important as Kande Yaka, though he is certainly not looked upon as so benevolent nor so loved as the latter, who helps men to kill deer and never sends sickness. Bambura Yaka is a somewhat grim spirit who although he gives yams and helps men to kill pig, also sends sickness and must be invoked to remove it, and he is also invoked when dogs are lost or taken by leopards. Because of his giving yams he is sometimes known as Ale (yam) Yaka, and yams are offered to him together with other vegetable food when this can be obtained.

224 776 762 The *kirikoraha* ceremony is performed to obtain game, in gratitude for which the head and a portion of the flesh from the breast of every deer killed is cooked as an offering to Kande Yaka and is afterwards eaten by the community. If this were not done Kande Yaka would be angry and little game would be killed.

The *kirikoraha* seen at Sitala Wanniya is described on pp. 223 to 226, and the ceremony at which Bambura Yaka is invoked on pp. 237 to 245.

775 782 769 The spirits of the dead become the *Nae Yaku* and with Kande Yaka are invoked for success in hunting; a description of this ceremony will be found on pp. 230 to 233. A few days after a death the dead man is invoked for assistance in hunting, being addressed as *mal pamae wanna*, and when the relatives or the group leave the cave to look for game they repeat the invocation as they move along. After this, if they are successful, they know that the spirit of the dead man has become powerful as a *Nae Yaku* and invoke him at the *kirikoraha* among the *Nae Yaku* called upon. The *Nae Yaku* must obtain permission

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nae Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas. 775 782 769

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaku* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death. 776 777 [773]

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*kadawa*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness. [411]

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and 776

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 156), had been naturalised and were said to represent *ambu*.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The names of certain spirits residing on certain hills and rocks were known; they were said not to be worshipped, although they were looked upon with awe and respect as they were believed to cause sickness.

These spirits are the Maha Yakini who are especially associated with the hills Nuwaragala, Walimbagala and a rock called Kalumal Ela. The chief of the Maha Yakini is the Maha Kiriamma, and the other Maha Yakini are her attendants. Although associated with rocks and hill-tops they are not invoked before taking honey in these places. It was stated that the Maha Yakini were formerly living people—old women—and that they were especially fond of children and might even steal them. It is for this reason that infants are protected by an arrow struck in the ground, and it is clear that something of their character as old Vedda women still survives in spite of their generally more or less unfriendly attributes.

Concerning the Maha Kiriamma nothing definite could be learnt: our informant had heard it said that she had been invoked in the old days, but knew nothing of this himself. Handuna said that what little knowledge they had of the Maha Kiriamma had travelled to them from the Bintenne Veddas near Horaborawewa[1].

In the Sitala Wanniya community, therefore, the second stratum is well developed and the third is indicated. The second and third strata, though probably not recently introduced, are, however, entirely subsidiary to the primitive cult of the friendly dead.

The Bandaraduwa community is one in which the second stratum is so highly developed that at first sight it appears dominant, for after a death offerings are made to the Buddhist priest, but this is only done as an additional means of propitiation of the *Nat Yaku* who are still considered of the first importance, to whom an offering is made on the seventh day after death. Further, Kande Yaka is still closely associated with the *Nat Yaku* and is invoked with them, but he is no longer formally regarded as the Lord of the Dead, that function has been usurped by Kanda Swami or Skanda known to these Veddas as "the Kataragam

[1] An invocation to the Maha Kiriamma (No. XXXIII), a fragment of a much longer formula (No. XXXIX), unknown to our informants, is given in Chapter X.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God." He is one of the four gods who protect Ceylon, said to have come from India, and is worshipped chiefly by Tamils, who coming from the north-east frequently pass through the territory of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas on their pilgrimage to the temple of their God in the south of the island.

The following information concerning Kataragam is taken from Mr Herbert White's *Manual of Uva*.

Although the present temple is of brick and of no architectural pretensions it is the lineal descendant of the temple endowed some 2000 years ago by Dutugamunu, King of Mogoya, as a thank-offering for assistance in overcoming the Tamil King Elala[1]. But Kataragam was a holy place before this, for the Mahavansa describes how the princes of Kataragam assisted at the planting of the shoots of the sacred Bo tree and how one of the miraculously produced offshoots was planted at Kataragam itself[2].

"The aspect and natural features of the country surrounding the temple of Kataragama are not calculated to make a favourable impression upon the eye when they first meet it. There is nothing in them to attract and invite it. Everything, with the exception of the temple and the river on which it stands, at the village of Kataragama and its vicinity looks wild, dreary and monotonous....

"The population of the village may be estimated at forty, including women and children; but it is liable to fluctuation at different periods of the year, from the influx and efflux of the pilgrims who resort to the temple. And I need scarcely add that the village, its adjacent hills, and the surrounding country, are all temple lands, and their occupants are attached to the temple service as its tenants[3]."

The guardian of the temple and its lands, the latter including a domain of some 60,000 acres, is a Buddhist headman resident at Badulla, and although there are now no Veddas near Kataragam, tradition states that there were formerly many Veddas in

[1] Kataragam is situated at the south-east of the island, on the left bank of the Menik-ganga, at a distance of more than forty miles north-east of Hambantota and about sixty miles south-east of Badulla.

[2] Mahavansa, Chapter XIV.

[3] *Manual of Uva*, p. 43.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

778 the temple forests who in some sense served the temple and were known to the Sinhalese as the Kovil Vannami Veddas. Concerning these Nevill says: "This name means Vaddas of the Temple wilds, and they were from time immemorial guards of the Katthiragam temple. Their district was from Kumbukan Ara to the Temple precincts, and north as far as the settled villages of Butala and Maha Vaddda Rata....They are said traditionally to descend from the Vaddas who found the noble babe Valliamma left in the forest, and reared her as their child." Writing in 1886 Nevill points out that he had himself met the last remnants of these people most of whom were, however, "too reduced by want and disease to retain any memory for old customs."

778 773 At the present day the sanctity of Kataragam is reputed to be due to the tradition that the god halted on the highest of its seven hills on his return homeward from the conquest of the Asuras. "The particular spot....where Kataragama first met Valliammal in the guise of a hungry and thirsty *pandaram*, or mendicant, and begged of her to appease his hunger and quench his thirst, when she was watching her *chena* cultivation as the adopted daughter of a Vedda chief, and preparing cakes from a composition of honey and *sami* or milled flour, is pointed out at a distance of more than four miles from the temple. The precise spot again, with footmarks of an elephant on a rock, where she had suddenly encountered the ponderous brute and entreated the *pandaram* to protect her from its attacks, is also shown to the enthusiastic pilgrim[2]."

● 776 177 Now Valliamma was the daughter, or the adopted daughter, of a Vedda, and to this day such Veddas as those of Bundaraduwa who have come under the influence of Hinduism, although acknowledging that the Kataragam God, whom they do not call by any other name, is greater than the *Nae Yaka*, nevertheless hold him in less awe and treat him with less formality than do the Tamils and Sinhalese.

These Veddas know nothing of the other three great gods who protect Ceylon, and they regard Valliamma as a Vedda and speak of her as their elder sister (*akka*), while the Kataragam

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. 1, p. 180. [2] *Manual of Uva*, p. 90.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God is almost, if not quite, thought of as their brother-in-law. 776 In fact the divinity of the God and of his consort has not among the Veddas reached the proportions it has among the Sinhalese and Tamils. It has already been stated that among the Sinhalese the spirits of the dead who desire to become *Bandāra* present themselves to the Kataragam God, and from him obtain permission to receive offerings of cooked food (*adukku*) in return for benefits to be conferred, or to smite men with sickness and other disasters, and we were told that the Kataragam God would not refuse any spirit who approached him with this request[1].

Further, these Veddas hold that the man may become possessed by the Kataragam God in the same way as by the *Nae Yaku*, and the god is worshipped at certain shrines in the Kovil Vanamai district which are traditionally associated with Veddas and are said to be of Vedda origin. One of these at a place called Kokkadichchola is said to have arisen as follows.

A Vedda and his wife were cutting the trunk of a tree for honey when the tree began to bleed and they found in it not a bee's nest but an infant. The Vedda became possessed and while this condition lasted the God within him announced that he was the Kataragam God and that a temple must be built to him there. When the Vedda returned to his senses the child could not be found, but in its place was an image of the God.

Returning to the beliefs held by the Bandaraduwa people concerning the *Nae Yaku*, these can be best illustrated and explained by considering the events following the death of a Kovil Vanamai man called Tuta.

The day after our arrival at Bandaraduwa a Vedda called Kaira came to our camp sobbing and shaking and protesting that he could not stay long with us as his brother was dead. He seemed deeply affected, though another brother, Kaurale, who was with him appeared quite calm, which led us to suspect that his uncontrollable agitation was due to something more than mere affection for the dead man, and we soon discovered

[1] This belief in spirits of the dead obtaining licence from the Kataragam God is also held by some rural Sinhalese.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

total amounting to 2 Rs. 97 cents. The offering made to the *Nat Yaku* cost only 40 cents and consisted of a coconut, 50 betel leaves and a measure of rice. 775 769

The actual ceremony at which the spirit of the dead man was invoked and offerings made to it is described in Chapter IX, pp. 233 to 237.

Certain of the invocations used by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas, for instance, in invocation (No. XXXIV) to Indigollae Kiriamma for success in hunting and the invocations sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony, especially that to Unapane Kiriamma (No. XXXVIII), show how greatly foreign influence has altered the character of spiritual beings who existed in the original Vedda religion.

The Veddas of Uniche form a community in much the same stage of belief as the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. A few days after death the spirit of the deceased obtains permission from a "chief" to accept offerings and assist or harm the living. Our informants could not tell us who this chief was, but appeared to think that he had lived in comparatively recent times, and were confident that he was not Kande or Bilindi Yaka. 771 775

The *Nat Yaku*, including the spirit of the dead man, are invoked a few, perhaps five, days after a death has taken place. A pot of coconut milk with betel leaves in it is placed upon a rice pounder, and the shaman, holding a ceremonial arrow in each hand, dances round this, invoking the spirits, including that of the dead man. When possessed, the shaman sprinkles some of the coconut milk on the relatives and places betel leaves on their chests; the shaman also feeds the relatives from the bowl of coconut milk. The object of this dance is said to be to enable the *prana karaya* to become a *Nat Yaku*. It is clear that this is simply a condensed account of the ceremony we witnessed at Bandaraduwa, described on pp. 233 to 237. 775 769

The conditions prevailing at Henebedda, which at first were most puzzling, were found to be largely due to the influence of Tissahami "the Vedda Arachi," whose strong personality has been already referred to on p. 41. This man had taught the present Henebedda shaman much of his lore, and the latter 776 775

1,Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Orig
715

was but too anxious to assimilate and practise all that the Arachi would teach him. The knowledge he thus acquired spread to the younger members of the tribe, such as Sita Wanniya, who obviously took more interest in the ceremonial observances of his religion than any other of the younger men we met, and it was said that he would probably be the next shaman. The older men, on the other hand, appeared to know little of the developments introduced by the Arachi. To them Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nat Yaku* were not only the most important spiritual powers, but appeared to be the only ones who were at all well known; the simplicity of the eschatological beliefs of these older men has already been referred to on p. 126 and agrees wonderfully well with those described by Bailey in 1863. "The result of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than evil. ...They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread....But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their 'nehya yakoon,' kindred spirits. They describe them as 'ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting.' In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, 'bilindoo yakkoon,' or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke....

715
769
539

"The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following: an arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm:

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

number of these *yaku*, especially Irugal Bandar and the other Bandar, may have been introduced since Bailey's time. It is even possible that Tissahami may be responsible in part. 775

The reference to King Vijaya shows that Kalu Bandar has nothing to do with the primitive beliefs of the Veddas, for no Vedda knew anything of Vijaya or Kuweni.

Before describing the beliefs of the village Veddas, among whom the third stratum of thought is dominant, the condition of the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula (who have moved there from Mudugala) must be considered and compared with those of both the wilder and the village Veddas. Many of the *yaku* of the less sophisticated communities were known to them, and some invoked by the village Veddas were also called upon at Unuwatura Bubula. Although Kande Yaka was known and considered powerful to send game and cure sickness, apparently he was no longer Lord of the Dead, as he was not invoked at the *alatyahagama* (see p. 260) to which the *Nae Yaku* were called. A structure called a *kulatyahana* was built for him and a Hindu trident as well as an *aude* was held when he was invoked. Biliadi Yaka was known, but we have no note as to whether he was considered the brother of Kande Yaka or no. Bambura Yaka and his attendants known to the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya and Uniche were unknown here. Pata Yaka (Sitala Wanniya) had been heard of but had never been invoked. The Wanegatha Yaku were of considerable importance here, they were said to be the *yaku* of long dead Veddas who had perished in their rock-shelter owing to a fall of rock. Indigollae Yaka (the attendant of Kande Yaka at Sitala Wanniya) was known here and considered extremely powerful; when really short of food, offerings are made to him and his wife Indigollae Yakini, and the shaman thrusts an *aude* into the roof of his hut and hangs on it a string of beads which are kept specially for this purpose, and then Indigollae Yaka sends game. We were told that no charm or invocation accompanied this action. 775 776 346

We did not realise at the time of our visit that Indigollae Yaka might be another name for Gale Yaka, but this appears not unlikely in view of information furnished by Mr Parker, and the fact that Gale Yaka was here invoked with the *Nae*

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yaku, while at nearly all the village Vedda communities Indigollae Yaka was said to bring the *Nae Yaku*. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all: perhaps Gale Yaka had become Lord of the Dead as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony; Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate ceremony. No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both to bring evil upon man and to help them to get game was, however, volunteered and, as already mentioned, some old, specially valuable beads were kept to be offered to him.

Gale Yaka was also invoked to give success when gathering honey; he appeared to be associated with a certain rock near Mahaella, and we were told that beads were worn during the ceremony.

The Maha Kiriamma was said to be one of the most powerful of the *Maha Yakino*, a class of female spirits who were said to send sickness[1]. Unapane Yakini (Unapanę Kiriamma) was another *yakini* of the same class who was thought to live at Omunigala. Here as among many other groups of Veddas the *Maha Yakino* were associated with hill tops, and it was the custom for people collecting the honey of the rock bee to leave a piece of the comb *in situ*, saying, "Eat, O Kiriamma[2]."

When the *Maha Yakino* are invoked to cure sickness a basket is used in which are put a bead necklace and bangles and the leaves of a *na* tree. The shaman becomes possessed and raises the basket above the patient's head and prophesies recovery. The leaves are subsequently thrown away, but the beads and bangles are preserved for the *Yakino*. Presumably this is the origin of the similar or identical use of these objects in the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which, however, appears to be of Sinhalese origin.

[1] Nothing was ever said to cause us to suspect that she was connected with Gale Yaka or Indigollae Yaka.

[2] Kiriamma is in the plural in the Sinhalese, showing that all the *Maha Yakino* in the neighbourhood were invoked to partake.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Gange Bandar, unknown among the wilder Veddas but worshipped by all village Veddas, was known at Unuwatura Bubula. 776 [184]

OMUNI.

The history of this settlement dating back to the first half of the last century has been given on pp. 45 and 46. The Omuni folk believe there are spirits (*yaku*) everywhere in the jungle, but none have seen them; further, there are many *yaku* of each kind or species such as the Indigollae Yaku, the Dadayan Yaku and many others including the Gale Yaku called the Jungle Yaku, who do not, however, frequent the jungle around Omuni. It was said that Ganga Bandar Deyo who lives in rocks in the river is greater than any of these. Omuni was one of the first Vedda settlements we visited, and as the importance of Sinhalese and Tamil gods and demons was not then appreciated no questions concerning these were asked. It is, however, reasonable to suppose that the Kataragam God and other mighty *deviyo* are worshipped. The spirits of the dead (*Nae Yaku*) are believed to be associated with rocks; on the whole they are kindly spirits, but it is necessary to invoke and propitiate them. [775]

A *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some little time after a death has taken place, at which the shaman dances with an *aude* before a *maesa* on which is placed an offering of cooked yams and other food, and the *maesa* is decorated with special clothes kept for that purpose. The *aude* is held in the smoke arising from gum-resin thrown on glowing charcoal, and then pressed on the head of all the male members of the community. If this were not done little game would be killed. 769 782

We have an account of another ceremony performed to cure sickness and when the chena had been reaped, but it is not clear what spirits were invoked at this; presumably the most important of these were certain of the *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*, though the *Nae Yaku* may have played a subordinate part. A shed or very rough house is built and hung with special clothes reserved for this purpose, those shown to us being rather old and worn pieces of linen woven at Batticaloa. A roughly made shelf forming a sort of altar is built in the shed on which 755

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

though incomplete we have no doubt of its substantial accuracy as far as it goes. We had considerable doubts as to the reliability of our Dambani information, but these have been removed lately as far as they affect Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* owing to the kindness of Mr Hartshorne who allowed us to look through a number of notes collected among these people thirty years ago. And since the information obtained from the Arachi of Belligala was correct on these points, there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the rest of his information.

According to the Arachi, who, it must be remembered, as stated on p. 49, knows the Dambani folk well, there are three important classes of *yaku*.

The first of these are the *Nae Yaku* who do not go to Kande Yaka but to Indigollae Yaka, who lives on a hill (*kande*) called Indigollae Kande which never has been seen. Indigollae Yaka is first invoked at the *Nae Yaku* ceremony and with him come the *Nae Yaku*. An *aude* is used in calling upon Indigollae Yaka in this ceremony, while the *Nae Yaku* are invoked by means of a cloth and beads; as among other Veddas an offering of food is made.

We could not discover with certainty at Dambani what was the relative importance of the *Nae Yaku* and the two other classes of *yaka*, but at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle our informants made it quite clear that the *yaku* of recent ancestors were the most important. Thus Kuma stated that he considered his father's *yaka* to be the most important of all and that this spirit was invoked alike to send game and in thanks for game killed.

Bandia of Wellampelle said the most important *yaka* he knew was Punchi Badena, his father's father; his mother is dead but her *yaka* is not so important[1]. Punchi Badena is invoked to get game and honey or when people are sick. At all three villages a structure, which from the description given to us resembles an *alutyakagama*, is built for the invocation of the *Nae Yaku*, to whom the customary offerings are made before

[1] We have no note that the father of Kuma was dead; although we do not remember definitely inquiring about this our impression is that both parents had been dead for some time.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 being eaten by the community. A man becomes a *yaku* directly
782 he is dead, nothing is buried with him and the contents of his betel pouch are used in the ordinary way. The *Nas Yaku* ceremony is held some days after death, one, or according to another informant two, *auds* being used.

776 At Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle neither Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka was known, and these two *yaku* were also unknown at Dambani where, however, the Belligala Arachi said that Kande Yaka gives luck in hunting. This has been confirmed by Mr Hartshorne's notes, so that although our informants at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle stated that they did not know this *yaka*, too much stress must not be laid upon this.

The other two classes of *yaku* invoked at Dambani are
776 tree and rock *yaku*. Both send sickness and are invoked with
753 dancing and offerings to remove it, the stone magic described on p. 143 being used to determine which *yaka* is responsible for the disease. The most important rock *yaku* are Mawaragala Yaka, Rerangala Yaka, Barutugala Yaka, and Mehaluku Yakini. The latter is associated with a rock Batugala near Alutnuwara, the others with the peaks whose names they bear.

776 Two tree *yaku* were mentioned, each having a number of attendants. These tree *yaku* are named Na Gaha Yaka (Na tree Yaka) and Bo Gaha Yaka (Bo tree Yaka), that is to say they are called after the trees with which they are associated, and the Arachi pointed out that tree *yaku* habitually lived in trees of the species after which they are named. We could not discover any facts suggesting that these tree *yaku* were con-
[624] sidered to represent the life of the tree.

HORABORAWEWA.

The surroundings and physical characters of the Veddas of
776 Horaborawewa have been described on p. 53. The shaman is
775 the local Sinhalese headman, who stated that the same *yaku* are invoked by Veddas and Sinhalese alike. Seren (Riri) Yaka is the most important *yaka*, Wiloya Yaka and Kalu Yaka are also known, and it was stated that the latter spirit was also called Wangata Yaka. Our informant had not heard of Kande Yaka or Bilindi Yaka, and it was certain that the worshipped *yaku*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

were generally associated with rocks and were not the spirits of the dead. There is however an exception, namely, Dehigole Yaka, whose history is as follows. A man from Dehigole, a Vedda, went to Kandy to see the king, probably Sri Vikram Rajah Sinha, the last of the Sinhalese kings, who was dethroned early in the last century. On his way back he was killed by an elephant, and now his spirit looks after the chena and prevents elephants breaking into and destroying the crops. A leafy branch is tied to a pole or dead tree in the chena, and Dehigole Yaka and other spirits are invoked, an offering of sweetmeats, jaggery, coconuts and rice cooked in coconut milk being made and subsequently eaten by the owners of the chena. There was said to be no invocation of the *yaku* of the recent dead, nor before taking honey which is obtained from trees.

LINDEGALA.

The "Veddas" described on p. 76 from Lindegala in the neighbourhood of Kallodi worship a large number of male and female spirits including the Bo Gaha Yaka and the Na Gaha Yaka[1].

As already indicated the people of Lindegala are Veddas in scarcely more than name. The most important of them, an old man with his son and son-in-law, visited us at Kallodi. The old man who is tall and presented typical Sinhalese features is a renowned *vederale* (medicine-man) and is employed by the Sinhalese for miles round. He brought with him to show us two ceremonial arrows with which he invoked the spirits. One of these arrows is of the shape of a Hindu trident, the other is of the usual Vedda shape and is notable on account of the silver *bo* leaf with which the blade is inlaid. This *aude* is shown in Plate XXV. Both of these had been presented by the Sinhalese king to one of his ancestors, apparently about 100 years ago.

[1] Although these *yaku* were spoken of in the singular there were many individuals of each species. Some of the other more important *yaku* which were worshipped were named, Wategala Wanniya, Gala Degala Wanniya, Gorugala Wanniya, Maldampaha Yaka, Lepat Yaka, Eherugala Yaka, Mehoregal Yaka, Kotmal Yaka, Walmat Yaka, Hittangala Yaka, Mikmal Naida Yaka, Kehelpotagala Yaka, Mawaragala Yaka, Herang Yaka, Isihangala Wanniya, Mulehangala Wanniya, Gara Rajah Wanniya. These were only an insignificant fraction of the total number of *yaku* known to our oldest informant.

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
Aliß Vedda AX5

411 778 173 The story told us was that when this ancestor, who was a Vedda headman and a shaman of great fame, gave up his jungle life and began to cultivate, the Sinhalese king sent him the two *aude* as tokens that he granted the land on which he settled to him and his descendants for ever. It seems that previously to this they had led a more or less unsettled life, or had perhaps been dispossessed of their own territory during the troubles of the period. The arrows were in fact "selsin" and were considered the equivalent of a *sannasa*, the inscribed metal plate or rock face on which grants of land were formerly recorded. Inquiry showed that it was by no means uncommon for a man to be given a ceremonial example of an implement of his trade or profession as a *sannasa*. Thus, in the Kandy Museum there is a beautifully worked Bull's bell (*gonmiligediya*) given as *sannasa* to Rantun Mudianse of Walala head of the Pattiya or Nilamakkara people by King Narendara Singhe of Kundasale who reigned 1706—1739. We may also refer to a ceremonial weaver's shuttle in the Colombo Museum and to the lacquered arrows described in Chapter XI.

776 775 The *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Wanegata Yaka are considered less important than the tree *yaku* and the host of *yaku* alluded to above. Indigollae Yaka and Rahu Yaka are recognised but not considered very powerful, though it was said that all these were formerly invoked to give success in hunting. The *kolamaduwa* ceremony is known, very many spirits being invoked including Unapane Kiriamma. The *Nae Yaku* become attendants on some of the *yaku* mentioned in the above list and these are invoked first and bring the *Nae Yaku* with them, but it appeared that it was no longer the custom to hold a *Nae Yaku* ceremony within a few days of a death. Among the *Nae Yaku* mentioned was the spirit of the man on whom one of the last Sinhalese kings had bestowed the land of which the inlaid *aude* shown in Plate XXV is the *sannasa*. Another *yaka* greatly venerated is that of Kimbul Otbe, an important individual living a few generations ago concerning whom Nevill has written at some length[1].

[1] Nevill, who says that he could find no clue to his identity, still regarded Kimbul Otbe as "a great historical personage," for "The Sinhalese of the Eastern Province

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

KALUKALAEBA.

The most important spiritual agencies are the following:— Gange Bandar Deyo, Kataragam Deyo, Indigollae Yaka, Rerang Yaka, Riri Yaka (Sinhalese), Marulu Yaka, Rahu Yaka, and Elle Yakini. 776

In spite of the fact that the people of Kalukalaeba keep cattle and are predominantly agriculturalists Gange Bandar Deyo, who lives on the hill Yangala beyond Hemberewa and gives luck in hunting and honey gathering, was said to be especially important. He is invoked when game is scarce, but it is the Kataragam God who gives increase of yams and vegetable food. They do not dance to him but make offerings of cooked brinjal and pumpkins, which are left for half-a-day on a rude altar and then eaten. Chena are also under the protection of the Kataragam God to whom offerings are made after the produce has been reaped, some of every kind of fruit being cooked and exposed in the chena for some hours before it is eaten by the people. 776 782

At Kalukalaeba Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Bambura Yaka were unknown. The spirits of the dead are recognised as the *Nae Yaku*, but they are certainly thought of as far less important than a number of other spiritual beings to be immediately considered. They are however invoked, but it seemed that this was not done habitually immediately after a death, but at quite uncertain intervals to remove sickness. The father of 775 755

and Bintenne, and Nilgala, alike agree that he was a great and powerful prince. They speak of him often, and call him Baranagala Kimbul-Herat mudiyanse Rajapat Wanniwaedu. From the name Herat it is manifest he headed some great political movement.... Raja-pat probably means king-maker, and the whole title may be translated as 'His Excellency the General Kimbul-Otbe of Baranagala, the king-maker Lord-of-the-Marches,' or also the 'King-made Lord-of-the-Marches,' wanni, literally a forest or waste, being used exactly as we use the term 'marches,' of Wales or Scotland. The respect of the Sinhalese, and this elaborate title of highest honour, show that this great Vaddin Chieftain headed an army that replaced one of the Sinhalese kings upon the throne of his ancestors. I think it is more probable he figured in a comparatively modern war than in a very ancient one....It is perfectly likely that Kimbul-Otbe was a prince of the Sinhala royal family, who married a Vaddda....

"The supposition that Kimbul-Otbe was a Sinhala, and that he married either a Bandara or an Unapana lady, would thus account for the otherwise unexplained fact that the Sinhalese say some of their oldest and best families also descended from Kimbul-Otbe, though they did not know whether he was really a Vaddin or was claimed by the Vaeddas in mistake, having been their prince." *Op. cit.* Vol. 1, p. 176.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[742] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIVA.

776 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka is known. The *Nae Yaku* are of the company of Indigollae Yaka, and with the latter are invoked after a death, but the *Nae Yaku* are not asked for good luck in hunting. The *Nae Yaku* are invoked after every death; coconut, jaggery (palm sugar), and rice are placed on a *maesa*, offered to the *yaku* and afterwards eaten by the shaman and other members of the community. While invoking the spirits the shaman holds a cloth in his hands but no *aude*.

ULPOTA.

The Kataragam God, Gane Deyo and Vihara Deyo, are worshipped, as probably are many others. These spirits are all considered more important than the *Nae Yaku*, and it is to their aid that success in hunting and in honey getting is largely attributed, nevertheless it was clear that the *Nae Yaku* were thought of as helpful in these activities. Our informant stated that they had never heard of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka, nor had they heard of the gods of the coast Veddas Kapalpe or Kadupe.

The spirits of the dead become *Nae Yaku*, and it is customary for a ceremony to be held eight days after a death, at which the spirits of all the recent dead are invoked. It was said that these spirits of the deceased joined the other *Nae Yaku* without asking permission from any other spiritual being and that the *Nae Yaku* came when they were invoked unaccompanied by any other spirit. The shaman does not hold an *aude* in his hand when invoking the *Nae Yaku*, but some rice and cooked pumpkin are put upon a *maesa* before which he dances. At the side of this is a pot of rice covered with a cloth supported on a rice pounder. The shaman faces the east whilst dancing, and appeals to all remembered *Nae Yaku* by name. It was said to be rare for any but the shaman to become possessed.

The *Nae Yaku* give honey and luck in hunting, and it is in order to obtain their favour that they are invoked, for if they were not they would give bad luck. When collecting tree honey the name of a dead man is called and he is requested to accept a little honey which is left at the foot of the tree for a short time, after which it is eaten by the honey gatherers. After killing game

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

a piece of flesh is offered to the *Nae Yaku* who are called by name, and then the Veddas eat it themselves.

Vihara Deyo is considered to send sickness, and he is invoked to make men whole again. Rice is cooked with milk usually obtained from the Tamil village of Horawila, and this with betel and areca nut is put upon a *maesa*. Only the shaman dances, and after the ceremony the offering is eaten by the whole community, including the sick man. Our informant did not know how the *yaku* or *deyo* causing the sickness was discovered, that being left to the shaman.

YAKURE.

The important spiritual agencies are:—Gange Bandar Deyo, Genikandia Deyo, Palugamman Deyo, Vihara Deyo, Mangara Deyo. Our informants knew of Indigollae Yaka but did not know if he ever was a man or had always been a spirit. Nothing was known of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka. Dead shamans are thought to become *yaku*, and it is the spirits of these people who are the *Nae Yaku*: the fate of the spirits of ordinary folk is uncertain, but they do not become *Nae Yaku*. The *Nae Yaku* are danced to and invoked with the other *yaku* in order to cure sickness, but apparently they are not considered particularly important. A *maesa* is made and a cloth put over it, and on it are laid flowers of many kinds, betel leaves and areca nuts. Incense is burned before these offerings, in front of which the shaman dances facing the east. In some instances the *maesa* is built inside the temple, the shaman holds a cloth in his hand and a pot of rice cooked in milk is placed by the *maesa* on a rice pounder[1]. This is not tasted during the dance, but is eaten afterwards by the shaman and the sick man and other individuals of the community[2].

Kataragam Deyo is invoked especially to protect the chena, and at harvest an offering is made which is afterwards eaten at Elakotaliya.

[1] It must be remembered that Yakure is a great cattle breeding centre.

[2] This is an interesting contrast to the practice which Mr Parker informs us prevails in the south of the island, where food given to spirits is not eaten at all but is exposed in the jungle or some deserted place. The fact that at Yakure food offered to spirits, many of whom are of Sinhalese or Tamil origin, is eaten, is clearly a remnant of the Vedda belief that the spirits invoked are in the main beneficent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered. 776 755

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding. 231 776 769

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *anda* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo. 778 346

Rotawaewa.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkawa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams, 776 753 776 234 776 775 787

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 775 787 when he takes the shape of a well made young man dressed in white and with a white stick in his hand. Vedi Yaka also appears only in dreams, as a black man in a cloth with nothing else particular about him[1]."

The Avoidance of Certain Foods.

262 It must be assumed that the following prohibitions are of a religious or of a magico-religious nature, and for this reason they are included in the present chapter. They do not appear to be connected with totemism, yet we do not feel confident that they are derived from Hinduism, as is suggested by the Sarasins[2]. In this doubt we have the support of Mr Parker who writes: "This prohibition appears to have no connection with Hinduism, or the common Brown Monkey, *Rilawā* (*Macacus pileatus*), would be included, and also the Rat, as the vāhana of Ganēsa, and the Turtle as representative of Vishnu; or some of these[3]."

Bailey writes, "The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk, deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pengolin—all flesh indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.

"They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of these beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained, is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh[4]."

We are able to confirm Bailey's statement as far as it concerns the flesh of mammals, with the reservation that most Veddas do not eat porcupine. With regard to birds, the Veddas of Henebedda said they could not eat fowls or eagles. The majority of Veddas, including even the degenerate Veddas of the coast, avoid eating fowl, though many of the settled village Veddas keep them for sale or for the sake of their eggs, and in

[1] Both the passages quoted are from a report by Mr Hornbrugh to the Colonial Secretary.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 418.

[3] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

[4] *Op. cit.* pp. 287 and 288.

Sinhalese demonology is very interesting.... There are many classes of Yaks; but I believe that this Bandara worship is the only indigenous portion of it. I have traced practically all the other demons to Southern India, although the Kapuralas claim that a few others, in addition to the Bandaras, are of local origin. They themselves admit that all the rest are imported from India."

Among these immigrant spiritual beings is one, the Gale Deviyo, who appears to be originally identical with the Gale Yaka of the village Veddas and the Indigollas Yaka of other groups. Mr Parker states that the Gale Deviyo is popularly supposed to have come from India with his Prime Minister Kurumbuda; he is worshipped in Uva, the North Central and North Western Provinces. "He is a beneficent God, who gives food and rain and guards the crops and prevents or checks epidemics." Two miles from the temple at Nirammulla are two caves, and in one of these Kurumbuda killed sixty priests who were there assembled, in order to take possession of the cave himself. Gale Deviyo is danced to annually in July or August on the summit of crags. The dancer, called *asumastirala* (i.e. one subject to command) represents the god; in the temple he assumes a three-tiered hat and holds a golden katty (*ran kaetta*), and the spirit of the god enters him without any of the usual phenomena of possession. The man who made the katty (or one of his descendants) and the dhobie who washed his clothes accompany the dancer to the foot of the crag which he ascends alone. The hat, katty, and flounces which the dancer wears are kept in the temple.

"In the North Central Province the chief temple of the God is at Indigollaewa, on the southern side of Kalawaewa. The 'dancing rock' (*natana gala*) near it is called Andiyagala. In the North Western Province his chief temple is at Nirammulla, 15 miles N.E. of Kurunegala; and its two 'dancing rocks' are on Devagiriya 'the Hill of the God,' where his original temple was established in a cave which he took by force from the monks killed by Kurumbuda."

Mr Parker points out that it is quite certain that the Gale Deviyo is identical with the Gale Yaka of some at least of the village Veddas, for "there is the same service to him everywhere,

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and the same tradition of his coming from Malawara-desa, our Malelyalam, accompanied by his minister Kurumbuda, called a Yaka, but also by the Kandians a Devata or Godling. 177 176

"I got the same account of him from the Tamil-speaking Vaeddas, the Vaeddas of Maha Oya district, the forests south of it, Maduru Oya district, and the extreme south of the Batticaloa district, and the Sinhalese of Uva, North Central Province and North Western Province. He is worshipped in all these three Sinhalese districts. There can be no doubt as to his being a God of the Village Vaeddas.... All in these districts appeal to him in cases of epidemics.... The Tamil-speaking Veddas told me that although called *yaka* he is really their God of all, who taught them everything they know and the names of things and animals, and instructed them regarding their dances.

"The Tamil-speaking Vaeddas address him as 'Lord God,' 'Lord of the Country,' 'Hill Lord' (Maleiya Swami).

"The Tamil-speaking Vaeddas give me the very same account of the arrival of the Gale Yaka and the Gale Deviyo as those of Bintenne and the Sinhalese of the North Western Province. They all agree that he came from Malawara-desa—the Malayalam country—with one minister, and the only point where they do not agree is as to the place where he landed. Some say Kokkagala, others Valeichena on the coast, and the Sinhalese say he came to some hills in their part."

Mr Parker states that the Sinhalese all call Gale Deviyo the god of the Veddas, and the village Veddas told him that a ceremony similar to that described in the North Central Province is performed on Omungala and Kokkagala in the Bintenne. There are temples to him throughout all the village Vedda districts "just like their own huts that might be passed without notice unless specially informed what they are." Where there is no rocky crag on which to dance, the ceremony is performed beneath a tree, and this occurs among the coast Veddas. Mr Parker points out that Gale Deviyo must not be confused with Gale Bandar who came with four or five followers in a stone boat from India and landed near Galle.

To sum up, Mr Parker's observations show that the Gale Deviyo of the Sinhalese of the North Central Province is regarded

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

as an immigrant God from beyond the ocean. Mr Parker states that he is also the most important God of the coast Veddas, and this is supported by our observation that the coast Veddas call their most important God Kappalpei, "Ship Spirit" (Mr Parker suggests "ship demon"), and say that he came from over seas. It is therefore clear that among Sinhalese and coast Veddas a foreign spiritual agency is considered the most important of the Gods and temples are raised to him. This God is danced to on certain crags by the Sinhalese, and similar rites occur among some of the sophisticated Veddas of the Bintenne who also say that the spiritual agency Gale Yaka whom they invoke in this ceremony is a foreigner.

In many communities of Veddas, far less sophisticated than the village Veddas, we were told about spirits who inhabited rock-masses or hills such as Walimbagala, but these did not at all correspond to the Gale Deviyo of Mr Parker. It was perfectly clear that to the majority of Veddas they really were simply local unnamed *yaka*, who were spoken of by the name of the peak or rock supposed to be their favourite haunt, and in only one advanced community were these spirits bearing hill names considered to be immigrants from India[1]. We therefore consider that the Gale Yaka of the village Veddas has been adopted from the Sinhalese by the more advanced communities of Veddas where alone he is known, and that although the foreign rite of dancing to him on crags is still retained, he has to some extent taken on Vedda characters as witnessed by his invocation at the *alutyakagama* ceremony described in Chapter IX.

The temple of the Gale Deviyo at Indigollaewa in the North Central Province has already been mentioned. His wife the Kiriamma is worshipped here with him, and God and Goddess are sometimes spoken of as Indigollaewa Devia and Indigollaewa Kiriamma. Concerning him Mr Parker writes, "I collected accounts of him in all parts, and about Indigollaewa in the North Central Province where his temple is, and they all agree that he is the Gale Yaka, while the Sinhalese of Indigollaewa know him

[1] Cf. Chapter IX, in which is described the *vamale* ceremony by which these spirits are propitiated.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

only as the Gale Deviyo." "The Sinhalese of Indigollaewa and some of the settled Veddas near Maha Oya make offerings to the Gale Yaka and the Kiriamma, as his wife, together; no offerings, however, are made to her on the hill tops, which are reserved for the Gale Yaka.... She is a great food provider for the Veddas. Some call her Indigollae Kiriamma; others Kuhubapola Kiriamma; but both names referred to the same person, they said."

At Unuwatura Bulula, where there is a small settlement of Veddas, we saw Gale Yaka invoked (see *alutyahagama*) in a dance in which the *Nae Yaku* and Rahu Yaku were also invoked. At the same dance a female spirit came, about whom there was some confusion, she may have been one of the *Nae Yakini*, or she may have been the Kiriamma who was certainly known. Unfortunately the Kapurale who performed this dance became ill after it and so was unable to discuss the matter with us. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all, perhaps Gale Yaka had become lord of the dead and so usurped the place of Kande Yaka, as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate dance (see p. 229, *Ambagahana*). No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka might be names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both for good and evil and for successful hunting, was volunteered, and some especially valuable beads were kept to offer him.

At Sinda Wanniya we heard of Indigollae Yaka. The invocation given in Chapter X (No. XXIII) clearly shows that he is of foreign origin, and we were told that Riri Yaka was another name for the same spirit. Now Riri Yaka is the Sinhalese and Tamil blood-devil, a demon with particularly well marked characteristics and considered extremely dangerous. There is thus no doubt that at Indigollaewa the "God of Indigollaewa" is the Gale Deviyo, and he retains this character among the village Veddas, but among the wilder Veddas he acquires Vedda characteristics, becomes an attendant on Kande Yaka, and as a foreigner may

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

be confused with other adopted and therefore little known *yaku*.

The position of the Indigollaewa Kiriamma and her relation to the Kiriamma of the Veddas is comparatively simple. Among the wilder Veddas there are certain female spirits, the *yaku* of old women called *kiriamma* (lit. grandmothers) who were especially fond of children, and would occasionally steal them. They sometimes caused sickness. Most of these live on rocks, and at Sitala Wanniya we were told that the Maha Kiriamma was the chief of these and the *Maha Yakini* were her attendants. All these *yakini* were said to be the wives of Veddas who lived long ago and in no case was the Kiriamma ever mentioned as the wife of the Gale Yaka or of Indigollae Yaka. At Unuwatura Bubula a Gale Yakini was mentioned, and this may have been the female spirit who was invoked after Gale Yaka, and in that case it seems reasonable to suppose that she was the original Maha Kiriamma or Maha Yakini of the Veddas, who has become confused with the foreign Kiriamma (identified by Mr Parker with Mohini in Ceylon), the wife of the foreign Gale Deviyo, who probably was introduced through the Sinhalese to the village Veddas at a very early date[1].

Although she does not appear to have passed from the village Veddas to the wilder Veddas, her consort has been carried on as Indigollae Yaka. Further, although when investigating the beliefs of the less sophisticated Veddas we knew nothing of the foreign Gale Yaka and the Indigollae Kiriamma, we feel confident, from much information volunteered to us, that Indigollae Yaka was an attendant spirit, and there was no connection in the minds of the Veddas between him and their own *kiriamma* who were the wives of long dead Veddas.

Even among the Sinhalese the relationship between the Gale Deviyo and the Maha Kiriamma varies in a manner that suggests that the connection between the two is late. Mr Parker writes, "The Kandians of the North West Province know of no wife of the God of the Rock, and I believe that they alone have preserved the correct tradition in this respect... for it is everywhere

[1] Reference is made on p. 188 to Mr Parker's view that Gale Deviyo is the original supreme god of the Veddas.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

agreed that when the Gale Yaka came to Ceylon he was accompanied only by Kurumbuda. No doubt she had been taken over from the Tamils, through the Sinhalese of the North Central Province, to provide a suitable wife for the Gale Yaka. Probably she is the one called the Alut Devi, the New Goddess."

There is another matter to which we may refer, namely, a suggested relationship of Kande Yaka to Kanda Swami the Kataragam God. This is a matter to which we paid much attention in the field. The circumstances which at first suggest the identity appear to be the similarity in name, and the fact that "Kandaswami's brother... an important deity in the Hindu temples is commonly called Pillaiar or 'the child.'" Further, it has been suggested that because "Kandaswami's favourite weapon is the *vel* or lance," therefore it is "most probably the original of the" ceremonial arrow "which plays so large a part in Vedda ceremonies." The passages between quotation marks are by Mr P. Arunachalam and are quoted because he has put the case for the identity of Kande Yaka and the Kataragam God more strongly than anyone else[1].

Remembering that the Veddas are bowmen and that until a few generations ago all genuine Veddas were dependent for their livelihood on the bow, the last argument seems to us of little force.

We have already (in Chapter VII) made mention of the celebrated temple at Kataragam and of the extent of its influence among the Veddas[2]. At Bandaraduwa and other places where the temple at Kataragam is known by repute, and at Henebedda in the Nilgala district, the god is called the "Kataragam God" and not Kanda Swami (*swami* "lord"). At these places Kande

[1] We quote from the report in *the Ceylon Observer* (May 26th, 1908) of Mr Arunachalam's remarks in a discussion on a paper read by one of us before the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

[2] Cf. Bailey (*op. cit.* pp. 329—330). "The far-famed Hindu Temple of Kataragam which attracts thousands of pilgrims annually from India and is regarded with awe by the Sinhalese is dedicated to Skanda...of the existence of Skanda or of Kataragam the Veddas are profoundly ignorant.". Bailey spoke of the Nilgala Veddas who at the time he wrote must have been in much the same condition as the Sinala Wanniya community is to-day.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177
776

Yaka is also known, he is always looked upon as a Vedda hero famous for his prowess in killing sambur, he is regarded as a powerful but benevolent spirit who never causes sickness, and who, when invoked and given certain offerings of food, grants luck in hunting. The Kataragam God on the other hand is everywhere held in awe, and acknowledged to be the most fearful of all gods.

Although we do not consider Kande Yaka and Skanda identical we are inclined to agree with Mr Parker that "the two may have been confounded by the Gangetic settlers, Skanda being also known as Kanda Kumara, and being a Hill-god." Any such confusion would be bound to react on the beliefs of the village Veddas or of those communities which later gave rise to the village Veddas. Mr Parker continues, "In *Ancient Ceylon* I have pointed out that Kataragama was an important station in the third century B.C., and suggested that the first settlers who landed near Kirinde... may have concluded from the similarity of names that he and Skanda were the same deity."

Since the above was written Mr Parker has been so good as to send us for perusal a part of the proof sheets of his work *Ancient Ceylon*. We may perhaps be allowed to comment on his main thesis that the Gale Yaka or Gale Deviyo is the god of the earliest inhabitants of Ceylon, and therefore of the Veddas.

In the first place Mr Parker's information concerning the Gale Deviyo was obtained from village Veddas, and the Tamil-speaking Veddas whom we call coast Veddas. He also states that the cult of this God is widely spread among Sinhalese villagers of the North Central and North Western Provinces.

We have noted that we found no trace of the Gale Yaka among the wilder Veddas, although allowed to participate in their ceremonies. However, we heard of Indigollae Yaka as an attendant on Kande Yaka, and although it may be that among the peasant Sinhalese and village Veddas these names are synonymous, this is certainly not the case among the less sophisticated Veddas. Again, Mr Parker states that the emblem of the God is the *Ran-kaetta* the "Golden Bill-hook" (*Ancient Ceylon*, p. 189). This cannot be regarded as a Vedda emblem, for the bill-hook is unknown to the Veddas, who are essentially

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

bowmen, and among whom the arrow in its ordinary or ceremonial form is associated with the invocation of their dead and the other *yaku* whom they worship.

It therefore seems reasonable to suppose that the Gale Yaka is an immigrant god introduced by the Sinhalese to the village Veddas. The fact that politically organized Veddas are mentioned in the Mahavansa as possessing a temple dedicated to the Vyādha Dēva[1]—the Vedda God—in the great city of Anuradhapura in the fourth century B.C. does not seem to us to bear upon the condition of the wilder Veddas, nor do we follow Mr Parker's identification of this God with the Gale Yaka. All the facts adduced by Mr Parker seem to us to be most readily explained by the interaction of Sinhalese and village Veddas as indicated in Chapter I.

[1] Mahavansa, Chapter X, p. 43 (Tournour's translation).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 787 We were told at Bandaraduwa that if men had no luck in hunting they might thrust an arrow into the ground, decorate it with leaves of the *na* tree (*Mesua ferrugines*) or the *mille*, and dance round it. If a shaman were present, which was not necessary, he would naturally take part in this, and any number might participate. This dance was performed at our request, the shaman and a Vedda called Tambia taking part in it. Two clusters of *na* leaves were tied to an arrow, one just below the feathers and another immediately above the blade. This was struck in the ground (Plate XXVII, fig. 1) and the dancers slowly moved round it singing an invocation (No. XV). Soon they both became possessed, the shaman falling into the arms of his supporter (Plate XXVII, fig. 2), almost immediately after which he came to one of the onlookers and promised him a sambar deer if he would hunt in a westerly direction early the next morning. Several times during the dance the performers touched the leaves tied to the upper part of the arrow, and bending low gathered them up to their faces (as in Plate XXVIII, fig. 1), while their hair mingled with the leaves. The shaman afterwards explained that the *yaka* first came to the arrow and the leaves tied to it, and then entered the persons of the dancers who became possessed. Before the *yaka* left the dancers bent low over the arrow shaking their heads violently, and after the dance both men salaamed to the arrow.

276 The *yaka* invoked in this dance was sometimes called Itale Yaka (Arrow Yaka), and though identical with Kande Yaka, there was nevertheless a tendency to think of Itale Yaka as a separate spirit, who was not so generally well disposed, as Kande Yaka. We discovered this by the shaman refusing to sing the invocation into the phonograph when we were surrounded by children, lest his attention being attracted, the *yaka* should come, which might be dangerous to the little ones. It must be [97] remembered that the Bandaraduwa community had been much exposed to foreign influence, so that there is nothing surprising in their *yaka* having to a certain extent assumed the dangerous complexion of Sinhalese and Tamil demons.

535 Although the arrow dance originally had, and still has, a religious significance, since it is danced to procure game and as

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to his assistance when he began to quiver and sway, then moved and put both arms round one of the dead man's brothers as a sign of kindness from the deceased. (Plate XXXIX, fig. 2.) The brothers said: "It was good of you to come. See we have given you food, now do not come back again," and the *yaka* agreed. The shaman then took the *aude* and transfixed a betel leaf with each and danced and again showed favour to the relatives by giving them each another betel leaf, after which one of the relatives danced, but the shaman threatened to stab with the *aude* the men who were not relatives of the dead man. (Plate XL, fig. 1.) Soon both the shaman and the two brothers fell back and the Yaka departed from them. When the shaman revived, he bent his head over the *kirihoraha* as a sign of respect; then holding both hands over the rice pot he repeated a silent charm, asking any of the other *yaku* who might have come to the ceremony to depart peacefully. After this he fed each relative of the dead man, holding the *kirihoraha* to their mouths, as is shown in Plate XL, fig. 2.

769
535
787

The Invocation of Bambura Yaka.

The Veddas invoke Bambura Yaka for help in getting pig and yams, both staple foods, the latter being an extremely important element in their diet. The dance is pantomimic, and depicts a boar hunt in which Bambura, the boar-hunting hero, was aided by a Vedda woman, who killed the pig with an arrow she shot from her husband's bow and whose spirit is therefore called Dunne Yakini (Bow Spirit), while the spirit of this woman's husband who turned the boar with his yam stick (*ule*) has become Ule Yaka, that is (Yam-stick Spirit). This ceremony, though not so widely spread, is as dramatic as that in which Kande Yaka stalks and kills sambar deer. We saw it danced by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya and by Wannaku of Uaiche.

776
535
773
796

The invocation of Bambura Yaka at Sitala Wanniya. The dance at Sitala Wanniya will be described first, since the story was told us here in its more complete form. Once long ago many Vedda men and women went out in search of yams,

776
773
796

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 and they took their dogs with them. While all were busy
793 digging yams, the dogs strayed in the jungle and soon put up
796 a boar, to which they gave chase, giving tongue. The men hearing the dogs followed them and soon came up with the boar at bay, which immediately charged them. None of the men could kill the boar, but a woman, whose spirit afterwards became Dunne Yakini, picked up a bow and arrow and killed the boar with the help of her husband Ule Yaka and his brother, who became Kuda Ule Yaka, i.e. Little Yam-stick Yaka. Although Bambura Yaka takes no part in the story as it was told us, he is the important *yaks* of the ceremony; it is he who is especially invoked, Dunne Yakini, her husband and brother-in-law coming in as his attendants, as do a varying number of other *yaku*, presumably the spirits of those who joined in the boar hunt[1].

535 During the dance Bambura Yaka and all his attendants
796 were present, so that it was not at all clear which part of the dance represented the actions of Bambura Yaka himself, since after the first complete possession *yaku* entered and departed from the shaman without any obvious signs. But we were told after the dance that Bambura was returning to his cave at Lewangala carrying yams and a couple of the large monitor lizards when he came across the hunt.

The properties for this dance are rather complicated and were carefully prepared on the dancing ground, all the men helping in the work and charms being sung the while. The necessary sticks were cut and two flat reddish stones found by a stream were placed below the *maesa* which was built with a double platform, a bundle of grass, leaves and twigs bound together to represent the boar being suspended from the lower platform. The stones were called Kuda Lewangala and Maha Lewangala respectively, and represented the red rocks or rocky hills of Lewangala, the unknown land in which Bambura lived and which is still the chief abiding place of his *yaks*. The majority of these properties are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1.

[1] We may here refer to a matter we discuss at greater length in Chapter X. It is certain that the invocations (Nos. XXVII and XXVIII) used at the Bambura Yaka ceremony and specially addressed to Bambura, which were only partially understood by those who sang them, originally applied to honey collecting.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 we provided the rice and coconut necessary for the ceremony.
796 This food is always eaten by the community after the *yaku* have inspected it.

The *yaku* invoked to ensure safety during pregnancy and
843 childbirth are three in number and are called Pata (bark) Yaku.
796 No story could be discovered concerning them, nor could any
796 reason be elicited for the name Pata (bark) or the large quantity of bast which is used in the dance. This can be taken from any tree in the jungle, and is torn into strips about half-an-inch broad. It may, however, be suggested that these particular *yaku* require the *inner* bark of trees as a resting-place just as the *yaku* invoked to come to the *kolomaduwa* or *alutyakagama* come first to the leaves used in making these structures, and then may or may not enter the person of the shaman, while they may take refuge again in the leaves after they leave the shaman. In the instances cited the leafy structures were beaten with sticks after the ceremony to drive the *yaku* away; this ritual was not observed in the Pata Yaku ceremony, but it must be remembered that only three *yaku* were invoked and the shaman may have been thoroughly satisfied that they had gone away from the place, while, on the other hand, in the two other ceremonies we were told that hosts of attendant *yaku* rested amid the leaves, and that the more important spirits alone entered the persons of the dancers.

The properties used in the Pata Yaku ceremony held for
843 Mari at Sitala Wanniya were as follows: three stout posts,
796 which were thrust into the ground in a line; the tallest was about 2 ft 6 in. high and the shortest somewhat less than 2 ft, the upper ends of all being forked and large quantities of strips of bast lashed to them. These bast covered stakes are called
[293] the *usmukaliya*, *medamukaliya* and *balakanna*, i.e. the high, middle and young post respectively, and each one belongs to one of the Pata Yaku. The *wilakodiya* or *kude* (umbrella), which belongs to all the Pata Yaku, is a similar bunch of bast strips tied to a rather longer stick which is not driven into the ground. The *amamula* is a stout stick about 18 inches long, to which bunches of bast are tied at each end and doubled back so as to present somewhat the appearance of a dumbbell. All these

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

THE DOLA YAKA CEREMONY.

222 437 Collecting honey is almost as important to the Vedda as hunting, for not only is honey valuable as food but it is one of the most important articles of barter, and every year at the end of the honey season the Moormen pedlar[1] penetrates into the wildest parts of the jungle with iron, cloth, pots and beads to exchange for the highly prized jungle honey.

222 776 796 Nor is honey collecting without risk, for the "Little People of the Rocks" can be very angry, and their sting is deadly. Hence the Veddas ask for success in honey collecting from their natural protectors the *yaku*, and Dola Yaka is especially invoked for this purpose. Although there is no tradition concerning his actions or his dwelling place his aid is invoked for success in collecting *bambara* honey from trees, and for the more dangerous task of cutting the combs from the craggy hill tops and rock faces in which the colonies of the rock bee make their homes. The successful invocation of Dola Yaka can only take place in the early afternoon at the time when the bees are most active in visiting flowers.

796 778 A *maesa* with a single platform about 4 ft 6 in. from the ground was built, and two arrows were fixed in the centre of the space cleared for the dance (Plate XLVII). A betel leaf was placed on the top of each and pressed down on the shaft so that it rested on the feathers, and a small bead necklace was looped over the head of each arrow and rested on the betel leaf. These leaves were said to represent the large bundles of leaves which the Veddas use to smoke the bees from the comb, and the necklaces represent the creeper by which the twigs would be tied together and by which it would be lowered over the cliff edge. It was noted that one arrow was taller than the other, and we were told that the taller arrow was the one which would be used in cutting the comb, and that when the honey was taken it would be thrust through the withy binding the bundle of leaves used

[1] The term Moormen is applied to the numerous Mohammedans who make their living as shopkeepers and pedlars. Many of them are proud of their alleged Arabic descent, but it is only in a minority that skin colour or features suggest Arab blood, and the appearance of the majority of Moormen scarcely differs from that of the Tamils of the East Coast, among whom their most considerable settlements are found.

Seligmann & Seligmann 2-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

996 535 rushed to the opposite side of the dancing ground to get away from the angry bees. After repeating this pantomime, Nila, with much gasping and shaking of the arrows, promised *hunuhara* combs to Handuna, wherever he went. More dancing round the arrows followed and another mock smoking was performed, after which the three men fled from the *massa* brushing the bees away and even feigning to pick some off their bodies. Then they returned to the arrows round which they danced until they all fell back and Dola Yaka departed from them.

Handuna explained to us that in dancing to Dola Yaka it was usual to hold a cloth over the head, and that Dola Yaka had remarked on the absence of cloths and warned the dancers that evil might befall them if they were to slip and fall with their heads uncovered. So two pieces of white cloth were provided for Handuna and Vela, who put on *hangala* and repeated the dance. The ceremony was identical with that already described except in two respects; in the first part of the dance Handuna and Vela held their cloths in their outstretched arms, frequently putting them over their heads and always doing so when listening for the hum of the bees, and when they prophesied to their fellows each held his cloth so as to cover both the man to whom he spoke and himself. Both men, however, put down their cloths just before the end of the dance and, pulling the arrows out of the ground, went through the pantomime of cutting the combs from below the *massa* with them.

The Invocation of the Rahu Yaku.

• 996 996 Sitala Wanniya was the only place at which we saw this ceremony, though the Rahu Yaku were also invoked at the *ahinahagama* ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula. At Sitala Wanniya the Rahu Yaku are called upon to cure sickness and to give good luck in collecting honey from trees. It seemed that they were not invoked to grant protection or good fortune when rock-honey was sought, this being the function of Dola Yaka. The offerings necessary to propitiate them are coconuts and rice, and each dancer must wear a piece of white cloth and cross shoulder straps of bark.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The story relates that there was once three brothers, and one day the youngest was very angry and quarrelled with his wife. He left her in his cave and went out hunting, and when he returned he found a strange man in the cave with his wife. The stranger escaped so quickly that the angry husband could not shoot him; but he then beat his wife, and though he did not kill her he jumped into the fire and was burnt to death and became Gini Rahu Bandar or Yaka. When they died his two brothers became Rahu Yaku also. 776 773

A post was placed in the centre of the cleared dancing space, the upper end was split and bound so as to form the support for a pot containing coconut milk, a few areca nuts and betel leaves. This was called the *wilkoraha* (lake pot), for once in the old days water was required to make the coconut milk for an offering to the Rahu Yaku, and as there was no stream near by it had to be fetched from a lake; hence the name *wilkoraha*. A *maesa* (well seen in Plate LXVIII, fig. 1) about 4 ft 6 in. high was built of sticks at one side of the dancing ground, and two pots of cooked rice and coconut milk were put on it as an offering to the *yaku*. A piece of bark to represent a necklace was put on the *wilkoraha*; it was not known why it was necessary to offer a necklace to the Rahu Yaku, but it was always done[1]. Wooden *kaduwa* (swords) were used when invoking Rahu Yaku; these were two flattened sticks about 18 ins. long decorated with bands of red and yellow pigment and with guards made of twigs of fresh green leaves. One of these *kaduwa* without its guard is shown in fig. 11. 796 535 778

The use of the sword (*kaduwa*) and the objects themselves are both curious, for Veddas have never used any weapon but the bow and axe, and Handuna explained that though these were called *kaduwa* they really represented ceremonial arrows [177]

[1] It was quite clear that Vedda men never wore necklaces, but *yaku*, especially dangerous *yaku*, as the Rahu Yaku were declared to be, were sometimes offered necklaces or pieces of bast to represent them. Thus at Unuwatura Ba'ala, Indigollae Yaka was considered especially dangerous, and the shaman kept a particular string of old and highly valued beads and used it only when making invocations to this *yaku*. These and other instances strengthen the idea expressed in Chapter VIII that beads are prized among the Veddas for their magical properties, the idea of ornament being quite secondary.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

When later we asked Handuna for the *hadurus* as specimens, the request was not granted until something was given in exchange to the Rahu Yaku, as Handuna said they might cause trouble if their property were taken from them. 796

WANAGATA YAKU.

The story of the Wanagata Yaku was that once a family became imprisoned in their rock-shelter by the fall of rock which blocked the entrance to the cave, so that the whole family died and their spirits became Wanagata Yaku, who are now invoked for help in hunting. In spite of this the ceremonial with which these *yaku* are invoked did not appear to have any reference to the story. 776 773

A sapling rather more than six feet high with its head and branches was stripped of its bark and thrust into the ground in the centre of the space cleared for dancing; its upper end had been split previously so as to form a support for small objects, and long strands of bast were tied to it. A handkerchief was thrown over the top and pressed down between the split ends, and some betel leaves were placed on this. 796 535 778

The shaman wearing a *hangala* danced slowly round the post with a handkerchief in his hand, while the invocation was sung. The handkerchief was soon exchanged for an *aude*, and it was noted that this was not the same one that had been used when invoking Kande Yaka in a previous dance. In order to avoid putting the handkerchief on the ground the shaman tied it round his shoulder. Then taking some betel leaves he danced with these and the *aude* in his hands, then transfixing the betel leaves on the point of the *aude* he raised them to his head, thus offering them to the Wanagata Yaku (Plate XLIX, fig. 1). Soon he became possessed and bent his head, shaking his hair over his face as he clung to the post with one hand while his whole body quivered and shook. With a shout he seized two *aude*, and holding one in each hand came to one of us (C. G. S.) and holding both *aude* over his shoulders said, as he quivered and shifted from one foot to the other, "You have called us, what do you want?" He returned to the post, when a rice 796 535

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

346 springing from the upper end of this limb had been removed with the exception of three which were left to support between them a rough earthenware pot. The remains of a *kudaram* also existed somewhat to the south-east of the doorway about the spot marked *X* on the plan. The post supporting the weight of that portion of the roof extending beyond the door had tied round it a fringe of dried shredded coconut leaves. Within the temple stood a *kudaram* (marked *K*) behind which in one corner of the temple was a model of a sailing boat about two feet long partly square-rigged and clearly meant to imitate a European ship. The temple was for the worship of Kapalpei, Ammal and

778
776

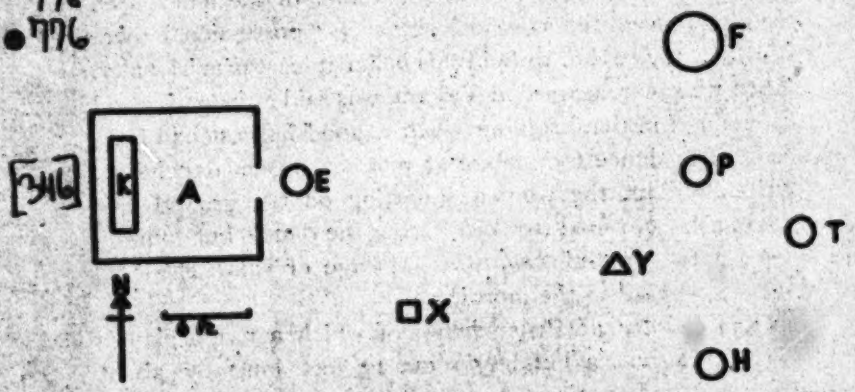


Fig. 14. Plan of Veda temple and its surroundings.

Komara Devam. The name Kapalpei means ship-demon. We could only discover that he is regarded as the most powerful of the beings worshipped and that he is a foreigner who reached the country in a ship. Ammal is a Tamil Goddess who sends smallpox and skin disease[1].

776 We could at the time discover nothing concerning Komara Devam, though doubtless he is the same as Kumara Deva, an immigrant deity, whose characteristic weapon is a silver sword, who was one of the chief spirits invoked to remove sickness by

[1] Mr A. Ber Kumarakulasingha tells me that there are temples to this Goddess at Jaffna, but that there are none in Batticaloa though possibly there may be some in the neighbourhood.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1].

535 755

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe.

[292]

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated.

[782]

177 778

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*.

793

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarala*.

535 796

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1909) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

us in danger, sickness etc.' When we enquired whether their dead lived on as spirits he replied, they did not consider whether the departed were living or dead, they were just spirits, in Tamil *sami* or *devi*, in Sinhalese *yaka*; all spirits were alike, neither good nor bad. Another coast Vedda named Patiniya told us that their religion was that of the Tamils. In memory of their dead, whom they called *yaka*, they cooked rice and ate it; they invoked the *yaka* in sickness, etc.[1]"

Just as Kapalpei sent sickness, so death was also attributed to him, but perhaps not epidemics, for it appeared to be generally considered that a single death would satisfy him for the time, so that it would be days or weeks before he would be expected to send sickness or death again.

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 498.

2; Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 If they have even any language. "Some," he says, "are so degraded that it has appeared doubtful whether they possess any language whatever; and not only is their dialect incomprehensible to a Singhalese, but even their communications with each other are made by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which bear little or no resemblance to distinct words or systematized language."* I can only say that I have been repeatedly among the very wildest of the race—indeed the "wretched outcasts," here so summarily deprived of the power of speech, are those whom I have been endeavouring to describe, and I never knew one of them at a loss for words sufficiently intelligible to convey his meaning, not to his fellows only, but to the Singhalese of the neighbourhood, who are all, more or less, acquainted with the Veddah patois.

775 [681] The Veddahs have no idea of a future state of rewards and punishments; for the vague vestige of a belief in retributive justice, which I have before mentioned, cannot be said to show any faith in the punishment by a Superior Power of sinners in this world.

114 It has been most truly said that it is a matter of almost insuperable difficulty to arrive at a proper understanding of the creed of barbarous tribes through the medium of direct questioning, and that nothing can be more vague than all their statements on this most important subject.†

771 It is not to be wondered at that a people so barbarous as the Veddahs are—without literature of any kind—who have lived in the depth of the forests in almost complete seclusion for centuries on centuries, should be incapable themselves of giving any definite or intelligent account of what they do believe. They are unable to express in language their ideas on subjects, which, even in their own minds, have never assumed any distinct form; and though they are ready enough to answer the questions put to them, it is no easy task so to frame them as to make their object intelligible to such rude and unlettered savages. The result 776 of the most patient inquiry is, that the Veddahs have a vague belief in a host of undefined spirits, whose influence is rather for good than for evil. Still, vague as this belief is, not even the

* Tennent, vol. ii, pt. ix, c. iii, p. 441, 2nd ed. This is stated on the authority of "a gentleman who resided long in their vicinity, G. R. Mercer, Esq., of the Civil Service, who held office at Badulla." Those who remember that gentleman's love of a practical joke, will smile at seeing this "joke" gravely recorded in the *Physical, Historical, and Topographical Account of the Island of Ceylon*, by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, K.C.S., LL.D., etc.; and my able predecessor, Mr. Mercer, must have been as much amused at seeing it there, as any one else.

† See Hodgson's "Brief Note on Indian Ethnology," Bengal Asiatic Society's *Journal*, March 1849.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

wildest Veddahs are without an "instinct of worship." They believe that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread. 776

Such appears to be the form which the superstitions of every savage tribe naturally assume,—the necessity for a belief in something more than human, imparting to the commonest objects a supernatural character. But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every near relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their "nêhya yakoon," kindred spirits. They describe them as "ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting." In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, "bilindoo yakkoon," or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke.* 776 775 769

It is a pretty belief, and contrasts favourably with the superstitions of the Kandyans, who have spirits enough in their system, but almost all thoroughly malignant, and needing constant propitiation. But the Veddah spirit-world is singularly free from evil. I can find only one *absolutely* malignant spirit in it whom they really fear;† though, like all savages, they have an undefined awe of the nameless spirits whom they believe to haunt the darkness. The shades of their ancestors and of their children seem to be purely benevolent. The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following. An arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm. 769 776 782

"Mâ miya, mâ miy, mâ deyâ'
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandâ'h!" [539]

* They also speak of them as "witera yakkoon," "child-spirits." They seem to prefer their great-grandmother (maha kiri amma) to the rest of their defunct ancestors; but I cannot ascertain any cause for their preference for the old lady. I may, however, be wrong in describing it as a preference. It may be the reverse, for she is invoked chiefly in cases of sickness, when the patient is supposed to be suffering from the malignity of a spirit. [753]

† Awtramada Yakka, who especially injures women, lying wait for them in the forest.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
769
776
[539]

"My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering!"*

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions when the intervention of the guardian spirits is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.†

Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game
[224] is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. "Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come, wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!" And they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.‡

They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. "Is he on a
776 rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!"
782 was the only reply I received to repeated questions.§ They have

* I find in my notes another version of this invocation, which slightly alters the first words. It runs thus: "Ma mini, ma mini!—my gem, my gem;" but "miya," which signifies "dead," is the most common. [The word in the invocation translated "God" is evidently a corruption of the Sanskrit deva, a god or divinity. EDIT.]

† And they are invoked without any ceremony at all—by a mere mental ejaculation. I once saw a Veddah make a bad shot, and he threw down his bow with a gesture of impatience, saying—"That was because I did not call on my Billadoo Yakkoon." And before making his next shot, he muttered an invocation.

‡ A superstition similar somewhat to this is prevalent among the neighbouring Singhalese. If a man die who has lived a good life, his relatives give alms to the poor, calling on the dead by name to look down on them, and enable them to follow his good example. If he has lived an evil life, alms are also given; but these are propitiatory offerings for his sins, and to avert his evil influence from his survivors. For, in this case, he has become an evil spirit, apt to injure his own family and their cattle unless civilly treated. The degree of malignity depends on the degree of evil in the life led by deceased. If he dies with a hankering after worldly things, he haunts the house in which he lived in a variety of forms—perhaps most commonly that of a toad or a cobra, probably because these frequent houses. It is also, in some parts, a common belief that if a man die, and shortly after one of the family fall sick, and is not cured by the usual medicines and ceremonies, the sickness is attributed to the spirit of the dead, who must be propitiated by a mess of rice, left in the house for him. This, generally, is supposed to effect a cure.

§ It is curious that in one of their invocations, "mā Deyā", my God!
[782] occurs, see before; and that of thunder they say, "a spirit, or a god has cried out".

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings. 782 776 [346]

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medicine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, so universal amongst Buddhists. 755 769 [775]

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded. 771 174

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡ [821]

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Weddo-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapána-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapána-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddiratee, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild bears*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon, 789

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

written from memory aided by not very adequate notes made shortly after the ceremony, helps to fill up a lacuna in the hitherto published records of Vedda customs and ritual. 121 796

In June of 1925 I was engaged, as a junior administrative officer, in dealing with an outbreak of cholera among the Muslim tobacco cultivators in the neighbourhood of a remote coast Vedda village, about forty-four miles north of Batticaloa on the Batticaloa-Trincomalee coast road. Investigation by the medical officer with whom I was associated soon revealed the fact that the focus of the infection was a yet more remote inland district lying behind that part of the coast, and that to grapple effectively with the disease it would be necessary to evacuate the population of that area and to concentrate it, for the treatment of the actually sick and for the segregation of the "contacts," in the comparatively accessible locality where we had already established ourselves, not far from the spot where the first cases to be brought to our notice had occurred. I therefore found myself obliged, at short notice, to enlarge the camp of which I had already begun the construction, and in particular to begin the building of a new hospital hut on a more grandiose scale than that originally contemplated. For the work of construction, which consisted of the erection of a framework of jungle sticks and the covering of it with *cadjans*,—dried and plaited palm branches,—according to the familiar village method, it was necessary to enlist the services of the coast Veddas of the adjoining settlement. The villagers were naturally reluctant to engage in work which they not unreasonably supposed would expose them to the infection, and it called for much tact and persuasiveness on the part of the Chief Headman of the *pattu* to get them to do so. Fully realizing that, apart from all other considerations, the occurrence of even one case of cholera among them would effectively put a stop to all co-operation, the Chief Headman and I took, successfully as the event showed, every possible precaution to prevent such a catastrophe. Everything seemed to be going on without let or hindrance when the Chief Headman upset my calculations by announcing that the work must cease for twelve hours on the 8th of June, to enable the villagers to perform a ceremony in honour of the *Periya Devi* 123 [131 361] [796 776]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 (Great Goddess).[8] It was in vain that I pointed out the urgency
[796 of the work and protested against any delay, even going the
776] length of suggesting that the ceremony should be postponed.
After a good deal of futile argument I was obliged to resign myself to the inevitable.

My chagrin was to some extent lessened when the Chief Headman approached me with an invitation from the people to be present at the ceremony. The invitation was welcome, for it offered an alternative to an evening spent in the company only of a book and of my own thoughts in the solitude of the one-roomed "rest house" where I had my temporary quarters. It was accordingly arranged that the Chief Headman should come to fetch me after my dinner.

The moon,—full two days before,—had already risen when the Chief Headman and his following of village notables emerged from the shadows of the jungle bordering the high road. I got up from the long chair in which I had been sitting on the verandah and joined them, and we set off northwards along the road. After walking along it for about half a mile we turned off to the right through alternate thick jungle and open spaces overgrown with *illuk*-grass, and with here and there a solitary tree casting a deep black shadow under the white light of the moon, in the direction of the mouth of the river which crossed the high road about three and a half miles to the north of our camp. We had
[534] gone in this way perhaps a mile in all when I began to be aware of the rhythmical throbbing of a tom-tom, at first only faint in the distance, somewhere ahead in the jungle. I recollect well the feeling of growing excitement as the sound grew gradually louder and more insistent with our advance. Another mile, and the path which our party was following, at that point through thick
123 jungle, took a sharp turn to the right, and we suddenly found
796 ourselves in a large circular clearing, surrounded by high timber. To our right as we entered were the spectators, squatted upon the ground in rows and facing towards that part of the enclosure which lay to our left. Even the fringes of the jungle seemed to be

[8] This goddess is presumably the goddess Ammal, "who sends small-pox and skin disease": see *The Veddas*, p. 356.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
843 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas, in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as *na* leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [325] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in 222 families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 252 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 757 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 262 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all 164 were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This [757] his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: 000 those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

CHAPTER V

WESTMINSTER ABBEY AND FRIAR'S HOOD

I. WESTMINSTER ABBEY

I know not where the white road runs,
nor what the blue hills are,
But a man can have a sun for friend,
and for his guide a star;
And there's no end of voyaging when once
the voice is heard,
For the river calls and the road calls, and oh!
the call of a bird.

GERALD GOULD

133 FROM some dominant height in the central uplands of Ceylon one can survey, to east and south, a vast sea of hill-studded forest. The scene, when glowing with the hues of evening, might well take its place among the panoramas of the world. In this medley of mountains there is one, a long ridge rising at one end to a square tower, which seldom fails to arrest the fancy. Westminster Abbey it is called by those who view it from afar, Govinda Hela by those with closer acquaintance of it. Well to the north of this is a peak, tall and lonely, known as Friar's Hood —the *Capello de Frade* of the old Portuguese mariners to whom it was a land-mark by which to evade their mortal foes the Dutch, "the rebels from Europe" as their despatches called them. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est*, says Tacitus; but does near knowledge always rob reality of romance? We shall see.

●776 The inhabitants of Siyambala Anduwa, half way between Muppane and Pottuvil, are a simple folk ingrained with jungle superstition: That river beneath the bridge was haunted by demons; it was not safe to go there alone at night, or to bathe there by noon especially with scented soap, for this attracted devils who showed their displeasure by hammering on the bridge or throwing sand; a small boy digging in the river-bed was swallowed into the earth and rescued only to die of a fever a few days later. Apparitions were seen in the form of dwarfs who shot up to the proportions of trees and suddenly disappeared, striking the beholder with terror. As for children you could not bring up "those things" in these parts. The *gawara* was a buffalo-like beast possessed of a tongue so horny that when it licked man or animal the flesh dissolved away leaving only the bones. The *Nittawo* were a pigmy race, that lived at one time in the Kattragam country of Lenama not far away. These hairy cannibals attacked in companies, driving their long nails into the

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

flesh which they tore out and ate. They were afraid only of the buffalo and the dog. The Veddas, not very long ago, are said to have herded the last of them into a cave and destroyed them. Brute or man, persistent rumour in jungle countries brings the *Nittaewo* within the realm of the probable. 776

Entering the forest at Siyambala Anduwa, and working north, we strove to maintain a route as far removed as possible from civilisation represented by the coast road on the one hand, and the Badulla-Batticaloa road on the other.

Two miles within the jungle was the old path, now over-grown and abandoned, from Badulla to Pottuvil. It led hereabouts through a narrow pass guarded, it is said, a few generations ago by the Karande Hela Vedda who, having fenced it across, levied toll on travellers. Intercepting, as he did, a trade route from the interior to the coast, we may be certain he made a good thing of it, getting his share both of the *hurrubhan*, maize, vegetables and fruit of the *Vanni*, as well as of the paddy, salt and dry fish of the Coast. 173

Kandanketiya, nine miles from Siyambala Anduwa, boasts an ancient temple of the era of Dutugemunu. We found it in the keeping of a doddering priest of eighty, who showed us round, all the while muttering "hu-hu, hu-hu," his only form of comment. His bed-room, dark, airless and dirty, was better adapted to mice and spiders than human beings. A great brass spittoon, emptied he told us once in two weeks, was the proudest thing there. A stupendous bo-tree, planted by himself, mocked with its vigour the withered frame of him who had tended it. Throwing open the doors of his little temple, without much ado he bade us enter the holy of holies, and pointed proudly to pictures of *devas* and harpies, half spurred-fowl half woman, who he confidently asserted lived in the Himalayas. Incidentally he indicated a money-box on the altar. But no sooner were our donations secure than his interest in us rapidly declined, reaching its climax when we told him we were going: "All right, go," he said, settling down comfortably on his bed. 172

A hornbill flying repeatedly to a large tree attracted our attention. Perching itself wood-pecker-wise on the trunk, it fed the occupant of a hole there with berries which it brought out of its crop one by one. We were told this was the male feeding the female he had deprived of feathers and shut up in the hole. We suggested there might be young. "Not so," said a woman; "where then are the feathers and droppings at the root of the tree?" Here was an opportunity to test the truth of gossip we had heard regarding the domestic amenities of hornbills. A man was sent up to the nest. Squeezing his hand through the narrow opening he produced an egg; then seized something by the beak, and unsuccessfully tried to pull it through. With an axe he enlarged the hole and soon handed down to us a veritable travesty of a bird. Scared out of her wits, voiceless, featherless, with half-opened beak, she flapped pathetic wings and tumbled ludicrously about in attempts to escape. She was obviously unfit for existence in the outer world and we returned her to her dark abode. Rumour was right, the male hornbill took no risks. 136

Bowala village lies at the northern end of Westminster Abbey. Buried as we were in the forest depths, we had not seen the hill since leaving the heights of Haputale. Suddenly the leviathan bulked over the trees. "There, that is why it is called Govinda Hela*," said our guide pointing 361 [103]

*Goa indu hela—rock where the monitor lizard is.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

181 sophisticated Vedda knows what is expected of him he will act up to
152 the expectation right enough. Personally I have never yet met a Vedda who could not laugh. The truth is that the Vedda will laugh with the best of us when there is occasion; but he is a stranger to the conventional, hypocritical smile of civilisation, meant only to please and so uncertain an index of the heart. The Vedda's face, like a child's, is a mirror to his mind.

His natural expression is one of apathy and moroseness. Schooled to hardship and privation, he is neither greatly distraught by sorrow nor transported by joy He expresses his emotions with more moderation than we; he is the greater fatalist; and accepts with stoic equanimity the hard conditions of his life which have wrought into his expression a dour indifference, a decorous gravity.

There is something naturally fierce in his nature; and it does not do to anger him. The tradition is undoubtedly true that the Veddas, at one time, carried in their betel bags fragments of human liver which they chewed when roused, to give fire to their frenzy. And this is probably the origin of the Sinhalese threat, "I'll eat your liver!" There is a spot in the Eastern Province which commemorates to this
[173] day an early incident of colonisation: A Vedda had once way-laid and killed a European soldier, and going up to him could hear the ticking of his watch; examining this he said, "His life is still here," and dashed it to pieces on a rock.

When a Vedda returns from an expedition no one must speak to him until he has rested and it has pleased him to talk first. One who had accompanied us once on a hunt nearly killed a Sinhalese boy who innocently asked him what he had brought, the moment he arrived. Most sportsmen, Vedda or not, are impatient of cross-examination when fatigued—especially if unsuccessful.

771 The Veddas have no conception of a supreme being; nor have they any myth or theory bearing on cosmogony. The panorama of the heavens is beyond their questioning; but its supremacy is instinctively avowed: "*Mā Suriya Deyyo*" (by the Sun God) is an oath by which
195 the Vedda vouches his good faith.

776 Like animals, concerned only with their immediate needs, they take the world very much as they find it. But if the aloof heavens leave their imaginations untouched, not so their immediate environment. Here exist real powers more within the pale of their comprehension, influencing every act of their lives, overshadowing their credulous minds, and affording at least some data on which to found a faith. Is it surprising then that they people Nature with sentient beings, unseen, but very evident by their acts. And what spirits more comprehensible to the primitive mind, more inspiratory of faith and fear, than those of one's

---

Another strange thing about the Veddas, and one which may possibly be connected with their lack of humour, is the fact that every one of them is a George Washington, unable to tell a lie or to conceive of anyone else telling a lie.

They cannot even believe that any one would take the property of anyone else, and association with civilisation has failed to convince them that it is possible.

With all this—or, rather without all this—the Veddas are a peaceable, gentle, quiet people. They take wives without any marriage ceremony, and are faithful and constant to them, supporting them to death.

Aberdeen Paper, 1921

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).* 776

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred. 761 [768]

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakka*).† 769 771

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *audes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells. 776 796

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Ravathath*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees*, *Peti-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*). 776

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad. 787

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakha* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakha* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakha* ancestral spirit. *Hetha* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanniya* is another word synonymous with *yakha* and *hetha*. [196]

†The Veddas, by Seligmann; page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

787 To ignore such warnings would be to court failure or even disaster. When a *kotaka* (large gekko) quaintly cries "krok, krok," a Vedda will seriously lean towards it and ask, "Shall we shoot a monkey to-morrow?" "Krok," says the *kotaka*, and the questioner's face falls, for here no answer is good news. Then there is that subtle thing the *hills*, an evil 778 influence possessed by certain kinds of meat when eaten under circum- 262 stances too involved to explain. The flesh of pigs, peafowl, langurs and a species of fish (*urang*, *monarang*, *wandoorang*, *magurang*) are said to have this property; but here it would seem that the rhyming of the names has something to do with their evil association.

776 There is an interesting little spirit, belief in which (as with many of the other superstitions already mentioned) is as universal among the Sinhalese as the Veddas. *Bolhili*, *Vilirany*, or *Kunnu-yakkini** (dirty she-devil) is its name. It is said to have a nasty nack of grasping one's leg in the dark, and so making it wither to the thinness of an *illuk*-blade. The incarnation of a woman who died in child-birth it is thought to be, and comes moaning at night in the form of a light. The story is best told in the words of a solemnly sworn eye-witness:—Kalu Banda (the narrator) and his sister Balahamy were occupying a watch-hut in a *kurrukhan* field one dark night when they heard a moaning as of one in pain—"*andoa, andoa, oo oo oo.*" Kalu Banda, suspecting what it was, told his sister not to speak—for the *villirany* is shy of women and vanishes at the sound of their voice. He then charmed a little oil, and placing it some distance away, called out, "If you have a stomach-ache, come, rub some oil, and go away." A shadow appeared at which Kalu Banda [825] fired. On going to the spot, what should he find but a green blood-sucker with a red head! This is said to be the invariable discovery when the *bodili* is killed. The same is said of the devil bird; but here apparently the rule has exceptions; for I have met several people who shot at devil birds, and had a bird to show.

825 The identity of the devil-bird—*ulama* or *ulalena*—is still a matter of doubt; and it is a pity that those who have had the rare fortune to shoot this bird have not thought it worth their while to send it up for identification. Much of the mystery surrounding it is due to the fact that it cries only at night and has wide and sporadic circuits. That it has some sort of a crest, I think, there can be no doubt; also that it is a large bird mottled in its breast feathers like a jungle-hen. These particulars all my reliable informants (who shot the bird as it cried at night) have independently confirmed. It is supposed to be the brown wood owl (*Surnium indrani*) by some, the *Huhua nepalensis* by others. The theory that different birds are capable of uttering the devil-bird's cry, is, I think, quite untenable. Its note is too invariable and distinctive for that.

825 The cry of the *ulama*, like that of the owl (*bakumuna*) and *hanga*, is 787 said to be a portent, varying according to its direction. Should it come from the west, it forbodes rain; from the east, good luck; from the north, the visit of a relative or friend; from the south, a death. One of these birds hovered about our camp one night uttering its blood-curdling calls, now from this direction, now from that, baffling the ingenuity of 825 its interpreters! Its "hoo-oo" is most eerily human; but it has an even worse note, a gurgling chuckle, strongly suggestive of a person

*This is perhaps none other than the Ceylon loris.

λ [a species of lizard.—Ancl pt]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

177 535

attributed to Sinhalese influence, especially the substitution of the mortar for the tripod, the drum for the slapping of hands and thighs, and the introduction of the coconut scraper and betel leaves.

The *hirihoraha* (milk-chatty)* dance has for its object the co-operation of certain ancestral spirits (*Nae Yakku*) in hunting enterprises. The occasion for it is a period of repeated ill luck, which is attributed to the disfavour of these spirits, whose names are, *Kande Yakha*, the great hunter, his brother *Bilinde Yakha* and their wives *Kudu Hora* (nest thief) and *Pol Hora* (coconut thief) respectively; also *Hath-kudu Hora* (seven-nests thief), elder brother of the two she demons. Significant signs in the ceremony are the fine bubbles that form when the coconut milk is handled, and the manner in which the coconut divides; if the halves are equal the omen is good, in unequal, bad.

535 796 [770] [787]

In a clearing was placed a mortar and on it a bowl containing a coconut with two arrows laid across the brim. Kaurala, the dancer, took care to eat no meat that morning. Having smeared his head with lime-juice and his body with saffron, he would have worn a white cloth borrowed for the purpose, had we not dissuaded him from covering his picturesque nudity, much to the disapproval of the other Veddas who feared the anger of the spirits invoked.

[262]

The dance began quietly enough. Taking up the coconut and an arrow, the performer clasped them together in his hands which he placed now on the shoulder, now on the head, now well before him, as he walked round the mortar chanting a supplication to *Kande Yakha*. Soon he began hopping alternately on each heel, making half-turns with the body so characteristic of Vedda dances, and sweeping his arms semi-circularly. Gradually the monotonous song loudened to the drum-beats, and more and more vigorous became the contortions of the dancer, whose shaggy hair covered his face and whose body streamed with sweat. So he danced for perhaps a half hour, when suddenly he became as one possessed. *Kande Yakha* had "covered" him. Shouting the fearful name he staggered to the mortar and, bending over the bowl, split the coconut in halves. He stood by panting, while the coconut was scraped, the milk prepared, and seven betel leaves were arranged around the sides of the bowl, which was then replaced on the mortar with a single arrow across it. The other arrow, with a betel leaf transfixed in its point, was now in the hands of the dancer who holding it at both ends resumed his movements. *Bilinde Yakha*, the spirit next invoked, soon possessed him. The dance was then continued to each of the other spirits, male and female, in turn. By each of these he was successively possessed. With each possession the strange, wild-eyed figure before us, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, shouted the name of the mastering demon,† and threw lifeless hands on the shoulders of one or other of the onlookers as if for support. Eventually, when the frenzy was at its height, he had just breath enough to gasp out the inspired message that the spirits were propitious and success was assured‡. With his forearm he indicated the length of the quarry's horns and, pointing to the heavens, the favourable time for starting. Then, taking up the two arrows and the bowl containing the two halves of the coconut, the milk and the betel leaves, he danced

*Coconut milk is the juice obtained by squeezing out with water the scraped kernel of the coconut.

†*Pana kiyanawa.*

‡*Hoey galgewera magalak alla thenawa.*

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Lastly, there is the *hengotuma* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakke-hatte* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom. 222 415 776

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuapa**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight. 222 [372]

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *hulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation* to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone. [58] 607 [782]

With smoking *hulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *hulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *hulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives. [412]

---

*"The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

†*Yethinawa* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Haibee, haibee, haibee.
Ma nindagang hetuahee marilchee,
Ahi upang nanumthangta malki helanry,
Malki wal epahara thenawa hithen,
Hamathayan tanthanu epanragana haryanahagana.
The hadey yanna, the hadey yanna, the hadey yanna.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

tail through a dorsal slit, partially separating the muscle mass from the caudal vertebrae, and introducing into the space thus formed strips of fat from the animal's flank; the skin is then sewn over with bast strip and thorn, and the stuffed tail is roasted on embers and eaten forthwith, or smoked and put by for future use. 252 262 251

Young hornbills being full of fat are a special Vedda delicacy; nor is the helpless imprisoned mother spared. Even more cruel is the treatment by these merciless epicures of the young of the edible-nest swiftlet. I asked Kauwa what he did with these when out nesting. "Eat them," he said; "the eggs are small but tasty; and so are the young which cry 'ki-ki-ki' as we put them in the fire." 262

The Vedda custom of preserving venison in honey is well known. This is how it is done: Into a hollow in a rock a little honey is poured; to this is added a few pieces of venison cut up small (pork is unsuitable as the fat prevents permeation); more honey is then poured on, and more meat added; and so layer by layer, till honey and meat are well intermingled. A protecting slab is then placed over the mouth of the hole. 251

Boa fat is said to be good for fractures; the broken limb being wrapped in *riti* bark or cloth saturated with the heated oil. They say it takes a month and a half for a fracture to heal; and in this, show more good sense than certain credulous Sinhalese who assure one that their *vedaralas* can cure a fracture in the time it takes a pot of rice to boil! 752

Kauwa had many charms against wild beasts. The one for buffaloes made them bleed from mouth and nose and fall dead! If you saw a bear you should *think* the appropriate charm and tie a knot in your hair; only if the animal attacked should you shout the words. For the leopard, he had no charm: "Cha, what's the use of that," he said; "the animal is more frightened of us than we of him." 777

Of Vedda heroes, there was Yapal whose voice could be heard a hundred miles; and Balagala-seya whose arm was like a tree, who carried a bow the girth of a man's thigh, and whose arrow would go through anything; in yonder Balagala rock he lived. 773

Their dead they cover with leaves and abandon where they die, or deposit in shallow graves covered over with earth and thorns to keep the pigs away. 764

Kauwa never bathed; he confirmed the assertion by rubbing rolls of dirt off his abdomen. "Does your wife not complain," we asked. "If she did," was the characteristic reply, "I would strike her with my axe-head, and ask her why she did not think of that when she came to me." 515

Vedda nuptials are not burdened with ritual: A prospective husband, having gained the consent of the girl's parents, returns a few days later, it may be with a friend, and perhaps a monitor or two. Placing his bow and arrows on the roof of the hut, he enters. All partake of the feast of lizards and yams; the girl, seated next to her man, doles out his food, not partaking of a morsel until he has fed, and she has given him a chew of betel and water to wash his hands. The man usually throws in his lot with his father-in-law, but sometimes he takes the girl away, leaving a couple of arrows behind in exchange. The girl's parents may accompany them some distance saying by way of adieu, "Take our child and keep her well." In custom we may differ from these wild and simple folk, but in affection and solicitude are one. 583 585 591

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *warage* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *kangalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kolamaduwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 213.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

considerable part of Vedda possession is a fraud, deliberately conceived and perpetrated, for knowing, as many Veddas do, of the frequency with which the Sinhalese see "devils" and "spirits" of all sorts, nothing would appear easier, if fraud were intended, than for a shaman to assert that he could see the spirits which every Vedda believes are constantly around him.

Arrows play a considerable part in the Vedda religion, two forms of arrow being used. The first is the ordinary arrow used for shooting game, the second a ceremonial arrow called *aude* with a blade 8 to 18 inches long, which is usually but not always hafted into a handle often considerably shorter than the blade[1]. Both forms of arrows are used in the possession dances described in Chapter IX, but in addition to this the shooting arrow is used as a protection to infants, being commonly thrust in the ground by the side of a sleeping child when its mother is forced to leave it. We heard of this custom in several communities, and at Sinda Wamiya, where arrows were scarce, were shown a wooden bladed arrow which was said to be used in this way (figure 7 (*a*)); *aude* might also be made of wood when an iron blade was not available, and figure 7 (*b*) shows a wooden *aude* made for us at Hombaddo. These facts are important as showing that the power of the arrow lies in itself and not in its iron blade.

The protective power of the arrow was noted by Nevill, who stated that the Nilgala Veddas "regard the symbol of an arrow, placed by their babe, as efficient protection for it. They leave they babes upon the sand for hours together, with no other guard than an arrow stuck in the ground by their side. Their belief in the efficacy of this has received no shock. They never know such a child to be attacked by wild beasts, pigs, leopards, jackals, etc. or harmed[2]."

With regard to the long-bladed and short-handled ceremonial arrows, the handles of these are sometimes covered with bandages so roughly executed that they do not form a pattern and can hardly be decorative even in intention, so that probably they only serve the useful purpose of preventing the hand from

[1] These ceremonial arrows are doubtless identical with the large blades described by various authors as formerly used in shooting elephants.
[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. 1, p. 184.

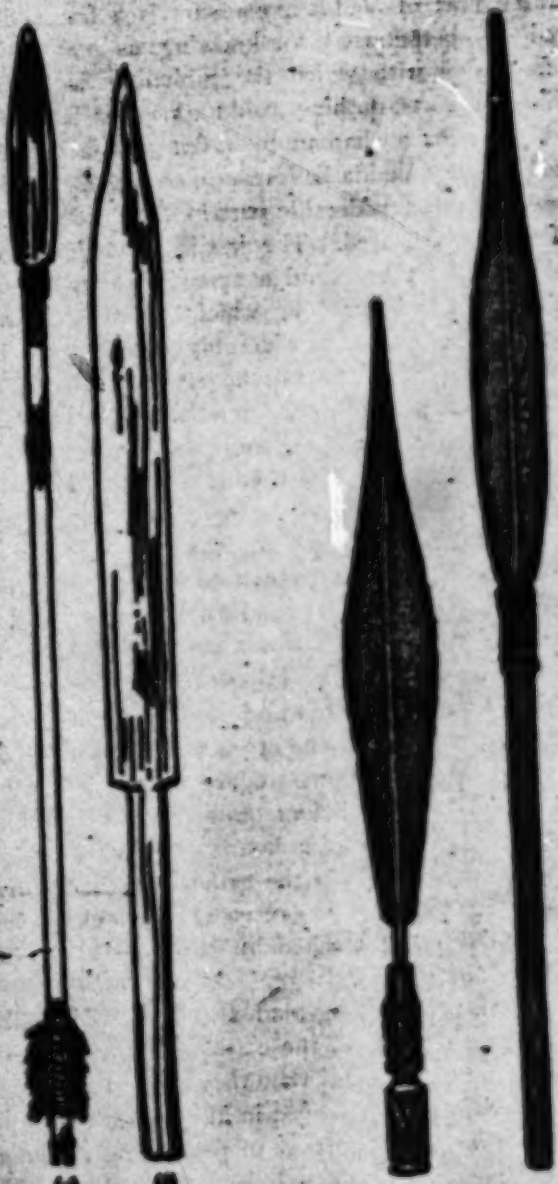


Fig. 1.
Arrow with wooden blade and wooden shaft.

Fig. 2.
Shaft, x ½

C.Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX3 Veddas AX3

411 7/8 [503 428]

clipping. Such ceremonial arrows are generally heirlooms, not necessarily passing from father to son but rather being handed down by apostolic succession from shaman to shaman, and among the village Veddas of Bintenne I have handled one such blade with a history running back for five generations.

Figure 8 shows two ceremonial arrows which we were able to collect. Besides these we saw similar *anda* at Omuni and were told at Sitala Wanniya that Haaduna had formerly possessed one. Rutimeyer has figured one of these ceremonial arrows about 14 inches long, obtained from Kaira the "senior" of the Danigala Veddas. These arrows are carefully preserved by the shaman, and just as he himself observes certain dietetic rules, avoiding eating pig and fowl which are supposed to be particularly repulsive to the *yaku*, so among those more sophisticated communities who believe in the periodical uncleanliness of women, special precautions are taken to avoid the possible contamination of the *anda*[1]. This is generally done by keeping them in some comparatively remote spot such as a cave or in the roof thatch. It is necessary that the shaman should hold one of these arrows in his hand when invoking Kande Yaka; he should also have one for Billindi Yaka, though as a matter of practice Kande Yaka and Billindi Yaka were often invoked using the same *anda*, another *anda* being reserved for invoking the *Nae Yaku*. Both arrows were, however, commonly held in the hands during the whole of the *Nae Yaku* ceremony, but in spite of this no confusion seemed to arise nor had the onlookers the least difficulty in saying which *anda* belonged to Kande Yaka whenever they were asked.

[763]

The offering of rice in the pot would be stirred with the *anda*, and betel leaves might be ceremonially transfixed with it. Among the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula the testing of the quality of the food provided for the *yaku* was performed with the help of the *anda*, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka using the *anda* to remove from the pot a few grains of rice which the *yaku* in the person of the shaman several times examined before expressing his approval of the offering provided.

411 7/8 [782]

[1] The belief in the periodical uncleanliness of women has been borrowed from the Sinhalese. It did not exist in the "wildest" group we met with, on the other hand we found it among all the more sophisticated Veddas, excluding a remnant where there had come under foreign influence.

Seligmann & Seligmann Z-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

God." He is one of the four gods who protect Ceylon, said to have come from India, and is worshipped chiefly by Tamils, who coming from the north-east frequently pass through the territory of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas on their pilgrimage to the temple of their God in the south of the island.

The following information concerning Kataragam is taken from Mr Herbert White's *Manual of Uva*.

Although the present temple is of brick and of no architectural pretensions it is the lineal descendant of the temple erected some 2000 years ago by Dutugamunu, King of Mogam, as a thank-offering for assistance in overcoming the Tamil King Elala[1]. But Kataragam was a holy place before this, for the Mahavamsa describes how the princes of Kataragam assisted at the planting of the shoots of the sacred Bo tree and how one of the miraculously produced offshoots was planted at Kataragam itself[2].

"The aspect and natural features of the country surrounding the temple of Kataragama are not calculated to make a favourable impression upon the eye when they first meet it. There is nothing in them to attract and invite it. Everything, with the exception of the temple and the river on which it stands, at the village of Kataragama and its vicinity looks wild, dreary and monotonous....

"The population of the village may be estimated at forty, including women and children; but it is liable to fluctuation at different periods of the year, from the influx and efflux of the pilgrims who resort to the temple. And I need scarcely add that the village, its adjacent hills, and the surrounding country, are all temple lands, and their occupants are attached to the temple service as its tenants[3]."

The guardian of the temple and its lands, the latter including a domain of some 60,000 acres, is a Buddhist headman resident at Bubbile, and although there are now no Veddas near Kataragam, tradition states that there were formerly many Veddas in

[1] Kataragam is situated at the south-east of the island, on the left bank of the Manikganga, at a distance of more than forty miles north-east of Hambantota and about forty miles south-east of Bubbile.

[2] Mahavamsa, Chapter xxx.

[3] *Manual of Uva*, p. 43.

1,Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1811
AXE Vedda AXE

the temple forests who in some sense served the temple and were known to the Sinhalese as the Kovil Vanamai Veddas. Concerning these Nevill says: "This name means Vaeddas of the Temple wilds, and they were from time immemorial guards of the Katthiragam temple. Their district was from Kumbukan Ara to the Temple precincts, and north as far as the settled villages of Butala and Maha Vaedda Rata....They are said traditionally to descend from the Vaeddas who found the noble babe Valliamma left in the forest, and reared her as their child." Writing in 1886 Nevill points out that he had himself met the last remnants of these people most of whom were, however, "too reduced by want and disease to retain any memory for old customs."

At the present day the sanctity of Kataragam is reputed to be due to the tradition that the god halted on the highest of its seven hills on his return homeward from the conquest of the Asuras. "The particular spot...where Kataragama first met Valliammal in the guise of a hungry and thirsty *pandaram*, or mendicant, and begged of her to appease his hunger and quench his thirst, when she was watching her *chena* cultivation as the adopted daughter of a Vedda chief, and preparing cakes from a composition of honey and *sawi* or milled flour, is pointed out at a distance of more than four miles from the temple. The precise spot again, with footmarks of an elephant on a rock, where she had suddenly encountered the ponderous brute and entreated the *pandaram* to protect her from its attacks, is also shown to the enthusiastic pilgrim[1]."

Now Valliamma was the daughter, or the adopted daughter, of a Vedda, and to this day such Veddas as those of Bandaraduwa who have come under the influence of Hinduism, although acknowledging that the Kataragam God, whom they do not call by any other name, is greater than the *Nae Yaku*, nevertheless hold him in less awe and treat him with less formality than do the Tamils and Sinhalese.

These Veddas know nothing of the other three great gods who protect Ceylon, and they regard Valliamma as a Vedda and speak of her as their elder sister (*akka*), while the Kataragam

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. 1, p. 182.

[2] *Manual of Uva*, p. 50.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the offering is placed. The dance is held at night and continues until morning when the whole community eat the offering though only the men dance. We were shown a pot in a small cave near the settlement which was said to be kept there purposely, and which it was stated was used for boiling rice for the ceremony.

We may now consider the religious beliefs of certain communities in which the third stratum of belief already alluded to is dominant. Such communities are the village Veddas of Uva Bintenne and those of the Eastern Province and Tamankaduwa among all of whom the *Nat Yaku* were known and reverenced but the great Vedda heroes have all disappeared, their place having been taken by numerous Sinhalese gods and demons. Some of the village Veddas even build temples, rough bark or mud huts like their own habitations in which the various symbols of the *devijo* and *yaku* are kept and in which the shamans dances.

Such a temple was seen at Yakure dedicated to Ganga Bandar Deyo, here also were two rough stones leaning against a tree on the *bund* of Yakurewaewa which were held sacred to Gane Deyo (Ganesa).

At a place called Nadena, where there were said to be Veddas until a few years ago, on the road running inland from Patrippu in the Eastern Province, there is a temple containing an image of Ganesa and this is looked upon as a Vedda shrine. Other temples or shrines in the Eastern Province are traditionally associated with Veddas though none survive at the present day, except, we believe, at Portiv near Patrippu and at Mandi.

Village Veddas of the Bintenne.

At Dambani and the neighbouring settlements of Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the *Nat Yaku* are held to be of great importance. Reference has already been made on p. to the difficulty of working with these village Veddas, and the information concerning the religious beliefs of the Dambani Veddas was obtained from the Arachi of Belligala; with regard to Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle the little information we possess was obtained at first hand and carefully checked,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

were generally associated with rocks and were not the spirits of the dead. There is however an exception, namely, Dehigole Yaka, whose history is as follows. A man from Dehigole, a Vedda, went to Kandy to see the king, probably Sri Vikram Rajah Sinha, the last of the Sinhalese kings, who was dethroned early in the last century. On his way back he was killed by an elephant, and now his spirit looks after the chena and prevents elephants breaking into and destroying the crops. A leafy branch is tied to a pole or dead tree in the chena, and Dehigole Yaka and other spirits are invoked, an offering of sweetmeats, jaggery, coconuts and rice cooked in coconut milk being made and subsequently eaten by the owners of the chena. There was said to be no invocation of the *yaku* of the recent dead, nor before taking honey which is obtained from trees.

LINDEGALA.

The "Veddas" described on p. 76 from Lindegala in the neighbourhood of Kallodi worship a large number of male and female spirits including the Bo Gaha Yaka and the Na Gaha Yaka[1].

As already indicated the people of Lindegala are Veddas in scarcely more than name. The most important of them, an old man with his son and son-in-law, visited us at Kallodi. The old man who is tall and presented typical Sinhalese features is a renowned *vedarala* (medicine-man) and is employed by the Sinhalese for miles round. He brought with him to show us two ceremonial arrows with which he invoked the spirits. One of these arrows is of the shape of a Hindu trident, the other is of the usual Vedda shape and is notable on account of the silver *bo* leaf with which the blade is inlaid. This *anda* is shown in Plate XXV. Both of these had been presented by the Sinhalese king to one of his ancestors, apparently about 100 years ago.

[1] Although these *yaku* were spoken of in the singular there were many individuals of each species. Some of the other more important *yaku* which were worshipped were named, Wataguia Wanniya, Gala Degala Wanniya, Gurugala Wanniya, Maldampahe Yaka, Lepat Yaka, Eheragala Yaka, Meheragal Yaka, Kumal Yaka, Walmat Yaka, Hitthagala Yaka, Mihmal Heida Yaka, Kahdpatagala Yaka, Mawaragala Yaka, Horang Yaka, Inhaagala Wanniya, Mulahaagala Wanniya, Gara Rajah Wanniya. These were only an insignificant fraction of the total number of *yaku* known to our chief informant.

Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1911) 1911
AH8 Vedda AX8

411 The story told us was that when this ancestor, who was a Vedda
• 778 headman and a shaman of great fame, gave up his jungle life
173 and began to cultivate, the Sinhalese king sent him the two *aude* as tokens that he granted the land on which he settled to him and his descendants for ever. It seems that previously to this they had led a more or less unsettled life, or had perhaps been dispossessed of their own territory during the troubles of the period. The arrows were in fact "selain" and were considered the equivalent of a *sannasa*, the inscribed metal plate or rock face on which grants of land were formerly recorded. Inquiry showed that it was by no means uncommon for a man to be given a ceremonial example of an implement of his trade or profession as a *sannasa*. Thus, in the Kandy Museum there is a beautifully worked Bull's bell (*gonminiguliya*) given as *sannasa* to Rantun Mudiansé of Walala head of the Pattiya or Nilamakkara people by King Narendara Singhe of Kundasale who reigned 1706—1739. We may also refer to a ceremonial weaver's shuttle in the Colombo Museum and to the lacquered arrows described in Chapter XI.

776 The *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Wanegata Yaka are con-
775 sidered less important than the tree *yaku* and the host of *yaku* alluded to above. Indigollae Yaka and Rahu Yaka are recognised but not considered very powerful, though it was said that all these were formerly invoked to give success in hunting. The *bolamadiwa* ceremony is known, very many spirits being invoked including Unapane Kiriamma. The *Nae Yaku* become attendants on some of the *yaku* mentioned in the above list and these are invoked first and bring the *Nae Yaku* with them, but it appeared that it was no longer the custom to hold a *Nae Yaku* ceremony within a few days of a death. Among the *Nae Yaku* mentioned was the spirit of the man on whom one of the last Sinhalese kings had bestowed the land of which the inlaid *aude* shown in Plate XXV is the *sannasa*. Another *yaku* greatly venerated is that of Kimbul Otbe, an important individual living a few generations ago concerning whom Nevill has written at some length[1].

[1] Nevill, who says that he could find no clue to his identity, still regarded Kimbul Otbe as "a great historical personage," for "The Sinhalese of the Eastern Provinces

411
7118

Plate XXV

Aude with inlaid silver Bo leaf

[facing p.172]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered. 776 755

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding. 231 776 769

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *auds* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo. 778 346

Rotawaewa.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaks*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams, 776 753 776 234 776 775 787

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 787 springing away and shouting "Ah! Ah!" while taking short deep breaths. The natural outcome of the *yaka's* gratitude is a promise of favours to the community. When prophesying good luck, the shaman places one or both hands on the participant's shoulders, or if he carries an *aude* or other sacred object, the shaman holds this against the latter's chest or, more rarely, presses it on the top of his head. His whole manner is agitated and he usually shuffles his feet, speaks in a hoarse somewhat guttural voice taking short deep breaths, and punctuates his remarks with a deep "Ah! Ah!"

787 With regard to the arrows and other special objects which are used when invoking the *yaku*, in which class we include such 778 bower-like structures as the *alutyakagama*, the *ruwala* and the 535 *kolomaduwa*, all described in this Chapter, we must point out that these simply act as conductors and resting places for the *yaku*. It was stated that Kande Yaka could not and would not come when invoked, unless his arrow were held, and the same idea accounts for the arrow dance, performed round an arrow struck in the ground in order to obtain game. Again the leaves in the bower-like structures with the aid of which the *yaku* were invoked were considered the resting place of the *yaku* which they left in order to enter the shaman. The number of *yaku* who came to the bower was not thought to be limited to those who possessed the shaman, on the contrary, important *yaku* were thought to bring their attendants (*piriwari*), who remained among the leaves which their lord left to possess the shaman, and it was to drive away the *yaku* who might unduly prolong their stay in the bower prepared for them, that the leaves were beaten and more or less stripped from the bowers at the end of the ceremony.

778 Before leaving the subject we would point out that though *yaku* might be spoken of as arrow-yaka (Itale Yaka), bow-yaka (Dunne Yakini) and so forth, such names do not imply that the *yaka* in question is immanent in the object or is believed to stand in specially close relationship to all objects of that class. In the case of Itale Yaka the idea was "the *yaka* who is invoked by means of an arrow"; in the case of Dunne Yakini the name simply refers to the skill of the nameless heroine who killed the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

boar wounded by the companions of Bandura, as is related in the Bambura Yaka dance.

The Henebędda Veddas washed before performing or assisting at the *hirikoraha* seen by us, and every Vedda who invoked the *yaku*, either let down his hair before beginning to dance or while dancing, in the latter instance presumably as he felt "possession" coming upon him. Many Veddas put on the *hangala* before dancing, this being a length of white cloth worn round the waist as is shown in many of the photographs reproduced in this chapter. Presumably this was not worn for the arrow dance, which is especially performed by unsuccessful hunters without any special preparation. We do not think that a leaf girdle was ever worn as a ceremonial garment when dancing. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya said that at some time, which he put more than three generations ago, there were Veddas, whom he called *Attukola Veddo*, who lived so remote from the Sinhalese that they had no cloth and so always wore leaf girdles, but he was quite confident that no Veddas who had cloth ever wore such girdles especially to invoke the *yaku*. This agrees with Nevill's conclusions[1] and does not conflict with the experience of the Sarasins.[2]

The Roman numbers in parentheses after references to invocations in the accounts of the ceremonies described in this chapter refer to the invocations given in Chapter X.

The Arrow Dance.

This, the simplest of the Vedda dances, has been described at length by the Drs Sarasin who saw it danced by "Veddas of the Nilgala district[3]." We have already quoted Bailey's account of the arrow dance as he found it danced by the ancestors of these Veddas two generations ago, and Monsieur Emile

[1] "I have especially questioned the best informed Vaeddas whether leaves were worn, either at ceremonies or otherwise. They all say yes, they were worn once, when cotton cloth was hard and dear to get, by those who lived where there were no Rii trees. They were only worn by the poorest, and from necessity, not choice. The leaves chosen were those of shrubs, the branches of which ended in rather pendulous sprays of foliage, and these were tucked under the waist string as a sort of apron." (*Op. cit.* p. 188.)

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 387—389.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 312—314.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

THE DOLA YAKA CEREMONY.

222 937 Collecting honey is almost as important to the Vedda as hunting, for not only is honey valuable as food but it is one of the most important articles of barter, and every year at the end of the honey season the Moormen pedlar[1] penetrates into the wildest parts of the jungle with iron, cloth, pots and beads to exchange for the highly prized jungle honey.

222 776 796 Nor is honey collecting without risk, for the "Little People of the Rocks" can be very angry, and their sting is deadly. Hence the Veddas ask for success in honey collecting from their natural protectors the *yaku*, and Dola Yaka is especially invoked for this purpose. Although there is no tradition concerning his actions or his dwelling place his aid is invoked for success in collecting *bambara* honey from trees, and for the more dangerous task of cutting the combs from the craggy hill tops and rock faces in which the colonies of the rock bee make their homes. The successful invocation of Dola Yaka can only take place in the early afternoon at the time when the bees are most active in visiting flowers.

796 978 A *maesa* with a single platform about 4 ft 6 in. from the ground was built, and two arrows were fixed in the centre of the space cleared for the dance (Plate XLVII). A betel leaf was placed on the top of each and pressed down on the shaft so that it rested on the feathers, and a small bead necklace was looped over the head of each arrow and rested on the betel leaf. These leaves were said to represent the large bundles of leaves which the Veddas use to smoke the bees from the comb, and the necklaces represent the creeper by which the twigs would be tied together and by which it would be lowered over the cliff edge. It was noted that one arrow was taller than the other, and we were told that the taller arrow was the one which would be used in cutting the comb, and that when the honey was taken it would be thrust through the withy binding the bundle of leaves used

[1] The term Moormen is applied to the numerous Mohammedans who make their living as shopkeepers and pedlars. Many of them are proud of their alleged Arabic descent, but it is only in a minority that skin colour or features suggest Arab blood, and the appearance of the majority of Moormen scarcely differs from that of the Tamils of the East Coast, among whom their most considerable settlements are found.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XLVII

796
778

Dola Yaka ceremony, the offering to the Yaku (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p.252]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

as a smoker; the other was "just an arrow" and did not appear to fulfil any specific purpose. Small leafy twigs from the surrounding trees were placed on the ground round the arrows, and on these a number of betel leaves and areca nuts were placed as an offering, the twigs being a device for preventing the offering to the *yaku* from touching the ground. 796 778

All the adult men of the community decided to take part in this dance, as only those who become possessed by Dola Yaka would derive benefit from the ceremony, that is, obtain special favour and help from him in gathering honey. In order to provide a supporter for each man, the dance was performed in two parts, Nila, Kaira and Pema taking part in the first performance. The ceremony began by these men walking several times round the arrows singing an invocation (No. XXXI) as they moved clockwise and occasionally salaamed to the arrows. Soon they began to dance and at times passed their hands, palms downwards, over the top of the arrows. This was the old custom; the reason for it was not known. After a little while Nila fell and was supported, soon all three dancers became possessed and bending forward shook their heads over the arrows. Then Nila taking the lead, they all moved to one end of the dancing ground, where they assumed the strained attitude of men listening attentively for the distant hum of bees, with body bent forward, one hand to the ear and the other raised as if to impose silence on their companions. Suddenly they all leapt back to the arrows and danced round them wildly, and shook their heads low over them; again they listened for the bees and beat their chests with joy, crying, "We hear many bees, there will be plenty of honey." 796 535 787

Returning to the arrows they danced round them again, at times falling back into the arms of their supporters, and again springing forward to dance. Nila gave each of us a betel leaf as a sign of favour from Dola Yaka, and then spoke in a gasping voice to Handuna who answered him. All beat their bodies with both hands, driving away imaginary bees. Again they listened for the bees, and this time picked up some leafy twigs and pretending they were alight shook them beneath the *massa*, which now represented a comb, but they soon sprang back and 796 535

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The story relates that there was once three brothers, and one day the youngest was very angry and quarrelled with his wife. He left her in his cave and went out hunting, and when he returned he found a strange man in the cave with his wife. The stranger escaped so quickly that the angry husband could not shoot him; but he then beat his wife, and though he did not kill her he jumped into the fire and was burnt to death and became Gini Rahu Bandar or Yaka. When they died his two brothers became Rahu Yaku also.

A post was placed in the centre of the cleared dancing space, the upper end was split and bound so as to form the support for a pot containing coconut milk, a few areca nuts and betel leaves. This was called the *wilkovaka* (lake pot), for once in the old days water was required to make the coconut milk for an offering to the Rahu Yaku, and as there was no stream near by it had to be fetched from a lake; hence the name *wilkovaka*. A *massa* (well seen in Plate LXVIII, fig. 1) about 4 ft 6 in. high was built of sticks at one side of the dancing ground, and two pots of cooked rice and coconut milk were put on it as an offering to the *yaka*. A piece of bark to represent a necklace was put on the *wilkovaka*; it was not known why it was necessary to offer a necklace to the Rahu Yaku, but it was always done[1]. Wooden *kadawa* (swords) were used when invoking Rahu Yaku; these were two flattened sticks about 18 ins. long decorated with bands of red and yellow pigment and with guards made of twigs of fresh green leaves. One of these *kadawa* without its guard is shown in fig. 11.

The use of the sword (*kadawa*) and the objects themselves are both curious, for Veddas have never used any weapon but the bow and axe, and Handuna explained that though these were called *kadawa* they really represented ceremonial arrows

[1] It was quite clear that Vedda men never wore necklaces, but *yaka*, especially dangerous *yaka*, as the Rahu Yaku were declared to be, were sometimes offered necklaces or pieces of bark to represent them. Thus at Unuwatura Bubula, Indigollae Yaka was considered especially dangerous, and the shaman kept a particular string of old and highly valued beads and used it only when making invocations to this *yaka*. These and other instances strengthen the idea expressed in Chapter VIII that beads are prized among the Veddas for their magical properties, the idea of ornament being quite secondary.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AX5

796
535
978.
177

or *aude*, yet *ran kaduwa* the "golden sword" is mentioned in many of the songs and invocations, so that it seems that the whole of the Vedda ceremony of the invocation of the Rahu Yaku has been taken over from the Sinhalese, among whom the cult of Gini Rahu Bandar occurs. This borrowing must have occurred in ancient days, perhaps as long ago as the time when the Sinhalese invaded the Vedda country and carved the drip ledges on the caves, for as already mentioned the Sinhalese Rahu Bandar has become identified with three Vedda brothers whose spirits have retained only traces of the fierce nature of the Sinhalese demon. Once having borrowed the idea of a sword (*kaduwa*) and invocations in which it was mentioned, its name would remain, though in course of time the implement would become assimilated to the Vedda *aude*.

796
535

Fig. 11. *Ran kaduwa.* ×½.

Handuna and Kaira put on *kangala* and stood in front of the *wilkoraha* with the *kaduwa* in their hands, and Handuna began to recite the invocation to the Rahu Yaku (No. XXXV). Kaira took up the words and repeated them, always a few words behind Handuna. Soon they began to dance slowly round the *wilkoraha* holding the *kaduwa* in the same way as the *aude* is held in dances, i.e. right hand on point and left hand at the base of the handle, and as they danced they twirled them slowly in their fingers (Plate XLVIII, fig. 1). After a short time they both swayed their bodies more and the dance became more vigorous; then they began to shiver and shake their heads and became possessed by the two elder Rahu Yaku. They shouted, leaped and raised their *kaduwa* in the air, twirled them round with their

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

When later we asked Handuna for the *hadirus* as specimens, the request was not granted until something was given in exchange to the Rahu Yaku, as Handuna said they might cause trouble if their property were taken from them. 796

WANAGATA YAKU.

The story of the Wanagata Yaku was that once a family became imprisoned in their rock-shelter by the fall of rock which blocked the entrance to the cave, so that the whole family died and their spirits became Wanagata Yaku, who are now invoked for help in hunting. In spite of this the ceremonial with which these *yaku* are invoked did not appear to have any reference to the story. 776 713

A sapling rather more than six feet high with its head and branches was stripped of its bark and thrust into the ground in the centre of the space cleared for dancing; its upper end had been split previously so as to form a support for small objects, and long strands of bast were tied to it. A handkerchief was thrown over the top and pressed down between the split ends, and some betel leaves were placed on this. 796 535 778

The shaman wearing a *hangala* danced slowly round the post with a handkerchief in his hand, while the invocation was sung. The handkerchief was soon exchanged for an *aude*, and it was noted that this was not the same one that had been used when invoking Kande Yaka in a previous dance. In order to avoid putting the handkerchief on the ground the shaman tied it round his shoulder. Then taking some betel leaves he danced with these and the *aude* in his hands, then transfixing the betel leaves on the point of the *aude* he raised them to his head, thus offering them to the Wanagata Yaku (Plate XLIX, fig. 1). Soon he became possessed and bent his head, shaking his hair over his face as he clung to the post with one hand while his whole body quivered and shook. With a shout he seized two *aude*, and holding one in each hand came to one of us (C. G. S.) and holding both *aude* over his shoulders said, as he quivered and shifted from one foot to the other, "You have called us, what do you want?" He returned to the post, when a rice 796 535

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XLIX

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman offers betel leaves to the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Wanagata Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Yaku (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 260]

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the beginning of the invocation (Unuwatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman and his supporter at the *alutyakagama* (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 261 a]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

785
535
177

the spirits of people who frankly were not Veddas, such as Peradeniya Bandar; others, spirits of men like Panikki Vedda already referred to, famous for catching elephants and buffaloes, who were Veddas in little more than name. Others, if Veddas in name, yet behaved like Kandyan chiefs, if we may judge from their deeds quoted in the invocations, such as building dagabas and bringing paddy fields under cultivation. Some of the Maha Yakini are regarded as the wives of such chiefs, and Unapane Kiriamma is in this community regarded as the wife of Unapane Wanniya, the chief who first brought the paddy fields at Unapane under cultivation.

The Kolamaduwa Ceremony at Bendivagalge.

796
535
778

This was admittedly not a full ceremony. Although the bower was built the correct offerings were not made nor were all the *yaku* invoked, and a disturbance which took place the next evening was said to be due to the anger of the *yaku* on account of the lack of offerings (see p. 125). Plate LIII, fig. 1 shows the *kolamaduwa* with bunches of leaves hanging from the horizontal bars of the framework and a circle of leaves called *kolawgena* suspended from the centre, that is, the crossing of the horizontal bars. The shaman, Sita Wanniya, Randu Wanniya and Kaira, holding bunches of leaves in their hands, walked round the circle within the upright posts while they sang an invocation to the *yaku* to come to the leaves of the *kolamaduwa*. Soon they began to dance (Plate LIII, fig. 2) with the usual step, gently at first, but gradually swaying and bending more and more they brushed the leaves of the *kolamaduwa* with those they held in their hands at each step.

A basket covered with a cloth had been placed on a tripod in one corner of the bower, and this should have contained various offerings for the *yakini*, including flowers and beads; not having either to offer, a few leaves had been put in it. Sita Wanniya seized this basket called *pakudama*, and danced with it in both hands, then after a short time he shouted "Ah, ah!" and became possessed by the Maha Yakini. When the Sita

796
535

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Kolamaduwa ceremony, the *kolamaduwa* (Hemabadda)

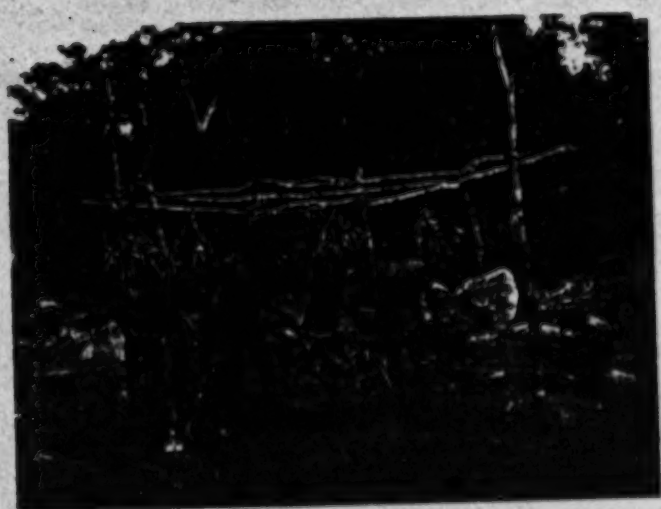


Fig. 2. Kolamaduwa ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Hemabadda)

[facing p. 268a]

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Kolamadowa ceremony, the shaman and Sita Wanniya become possessed (Henebodda)*

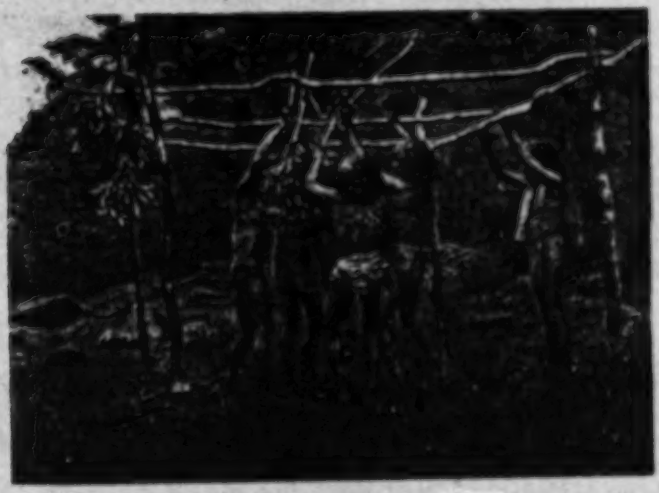


Fig. 2. Kolamadowa ceremony, slashing the leaves from the kolamadawa (Henebodda)*

[facing p. 268]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

There are a few Verdas at Panichchenkeni, while near Vakaral still further to the north there is a Verda settlement of considerable size. Some eight miles beyond this are two Verda settlements Parchenai and Nargantonai situated close together. We heard of other smaller settlements of Coast Veddas in the neighbourhood of Batticaloa, but these were not visited as time was short and it appeared that those Verdas we did not see differed in no respect from those we met. We were told that formerly there were Coast Veddas south of Batticaloa and we later discovered that there were, and still are, certain shrines or temples within a few miles of the coast (e.g. at Mandur), which were generally recognised as Vedda shrines at which Veddas especially worshipped. This matter has been alluded to in Chapter VIII, and here it is only necessary to point out that the religion of the Coast Veddas is strongly tinged with Tamil customs and beliefs; indeed, many Verdas had Hindu sect marks upon their foreheads.

Some, but not all, of the Coast Veddas know the names of the *marugv* to which they belong, and a few also know the names of some of the more important *marugv* of the Veddas inland. Uru *marugv* appears to be the *marugv* to which most of the Coast Veddas who remembered their ancestral *marugv* belonged, but a few men stated that they belonged to Ogatam, Kavatam, Umata or Umatam, Aembalaneduwe and Aembale *marugv*: the last named and the one before it probably being the same as the Aembela *marugv* found inland. Some of the Coast Veddas whom we questioned said they had heard of, and still knew of certain of the old Vedda *marugv*, and such men were generally able to mention Morane *marugv* while fewer also knew of Unapane *marugv*.

The Coast Veddas have become expert fishermen and make and use various forms of nets including a cast net. They also spear and shoot fish, using a bifid iron spear-head which they have adopted from the Tamils. For shooting fish they use the usual Vedda bow, but the arrow has become a harpoon with a shaft as long as the bow into which the iron with its running line fits loosely. One of the nets used by the Coast Veddas is seen drying behind the house in the background of Plate LXIX,

L.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

346 springing from the upper end of this limb had been removed with the exception of three which were left to support between them a rough earthenware pot. The remains of a *kudaram* also existed somewhat to the south-east of the doorway about the spot marked *X* on the plan. The post supporting the weight of that portion of the roof extending beyond the door had tied round it a fringe of dried shredded coconut leaves. Within the temple stood a *kudaram* (marked *K*) behind which in one corner of the temple was a model of a sailing boat about two feet long partly square-rigged and clearly meant to imitate a European ship. The temple was for the worship of Kapalpei, Ammal and

778
776

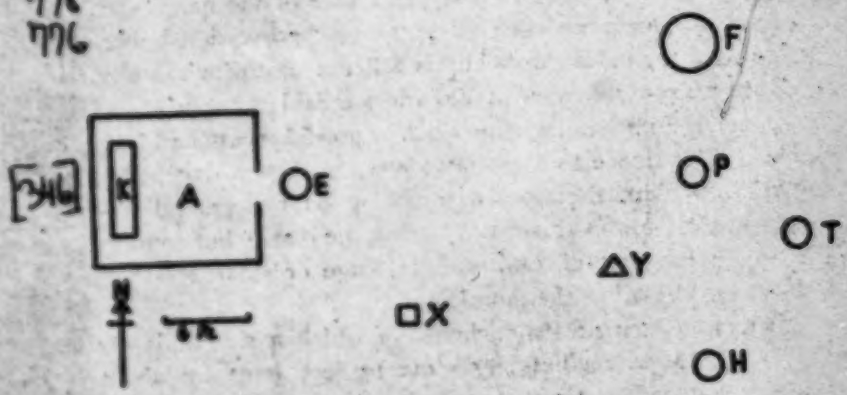


Fig. 14. Plan of Vanla temple and its surroundings.

Komara Devam. The name Kapalpei means ship-demon. We could only discover that he is regarded as the most powerful of the beings worshipped and that he is a foreigner who reached the country in a ship. Ammal is a Tamil Goddess who sends smallpox and skin disease[1].

776 We could at the time discover nothing concerning Komara Devam, though doubtless he is the same as Kumara Deva, an immigrant deity, whose characteristic weapon is a silver sword, who was one of the chief spirits invoked to remove sickness by

[1] Mr A. Ber Kumarakulasingha tells me that there are temples to this Goddess at Jaffna, but that there are none in Batticaloa though possibly there may be some in the neighbourhood.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1].

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe.

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated.

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*.

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarale*.

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

3. YAKKURE

This be the verse you grave for me;
Here he lies where belonged to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

R. L. STEVENSON

THOUGH a lush meadow studded with fragrant wood-apple, we entered Kalakolu Eba a hamlet of some twenty huts nestling in the picturesque dishabille of a *chena* rank with maize, vegetables and chillies. Here as elsewhere in the Vanni there was much evidence of parangi (framboesia). Fully three-fourths of the people showed active or quiescent traces of the disease. A boy had a necklace of loathsome papules; a woman covered with nodes in practically every bone of her body was boiling a decoction of dry leaves as a salve; another was stewing monitor flesh in chilli-water.

The first sign of our nearness to Yakkure was a cattle-penstamped clean, where half a dozen boys were securing cows and yearlings for the night. Scratching around the stockade with the tameness of domestic fowls were a jungle cock and his dames, and from every side came the jerky cries of wild chanticleers. A cairn of tumbled stones marked the site of an old *vihare*. Blue in the distance, across a wide lagoon bordered with sedge, lotus and dead trees, stood the long rock called Gunner's Quoin, with a bare patch, high on its tree-mantled flank, pointed out to us as the Maraweethiya, a historic cave.

Yakkure itself was a negligently palisaded hamlet nestling ina grove of tamarinds, in full view of a beautiful tank. We were unfortunate in our choice of a camping place. Five days of seclusion in the forest had made us forget that the immediate proximity to a village always meant flies, smells, and embarrassing attentions from forward men and coy but curious women. There were other draw-backs too. At sunset, from a pool near by, came a low, ominous hum auguring ill for our night's rest. We lit fires, bestowed meticulous care on bed curtains, and bedaubed ourselves with mosquitol. The lapwing's desolate cry, the doleful music of water fowl, the booming of great owls, the distant trumpeting of elephants, and more than all, the baffled mosquito murmur around, soon lulled me to sleep. But my companion who had failed to stop up betimes several holes in his curtain, the inside of which was found at dawn to be plastered with a blood-sodden host, tells a different story!

Three miles from Yakkure are the well-known falls of the Mahaweli. At flood-time their thunder is heard at the village. Once in a decade the waters creep up to and submerge the huts, sending the people up trees, and their cattle into the forest to be drowned or killed by leopards. With a *kapua* (priest) for guide, for the place is held eerie, we set out to visit the falls. Skirting an ancient aqueduct (*yoda alla*) which tapped the river a mile above the falls, we came to open jungle bordering the banks, that allowed us free passage through its colonnades of giant

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133 timber. Such places are the favourite resort of sambur, of which on this morning we saw no less than six. From great tree-heights came the whirring of strong wings as gibbous-beaked hornbills took alarm. We were perhaps a half-mile from the falls when we first heard them like a pervasive hum of swarming bees. Soon we lost the noise; and turning to our guide for an explanation, learnt, inconsequently enough, that "the water does not cry after the morning; it cries loudest when the cock crows at dawn!" The sound swelled suddenly again as there opened before us, not the turbulent cascade we expected, but placid murmuring rapids that swirled in a wide sheet around and over a thousand sunnied boulders. Such were the falls as we saw them; but on occasion they could be a roaring power leaping over the granite to a wild cataract melody, surging widely to the outskirts of Yakkure itself, and bestrewing the jungle with great wrack that even now lay stranded high on forked tree-trunks. What wonder the place is held in awe and that men have a care how they journey to it, lest they be lost on the way or fall a prey to beast or demon.

172 A smooth rock on the bank bore the frettings of ancient craft; the tutelary god's *devale* (temple) it was said to be. Here we were irreverently 0718 seated, while our guides sat apart whispering at the profanation. The surface of the rock was socketed presumably to hold strong stanchions which in the old days supported a bridge across the water; while small [782] oval pools, reputed to contain a mint of wealth from the accumulation of years of propitiatory and votive offerings, showed to our pagan vision nothing more than a few potato-like pebbles and sportive water beetles.

0000 A few months before our visit, Yakkure was the setting of a gallant episode:—On the bund of the Polonnaruwa tank stands a shanty for forest-officers on circuit. Here one evening a wiry man of forty-five was amusing himself with his rifle. Placing a rupee against a tree fifty yards away he fired, holing it in the centre. He next made his targets a variety of live things that flecked the smooth surface of the tank, such as a cormorant or the barely visible head of a submerged crocodile. Every time his aim was true. The shots attracted a friend. "Testing your nerves as usual before an adventure?" he asked, walking up. "What is it this time? The Yakkure rogue* I'll bet."

"Yes, to-morrow I hope to get him," was the confident response. "You haven't seen *this* before, have you?" said the hunter handling his new rifle.

"You know best," said his friend; "but I should have brought a tried weapon if I were you, especially against such a beast as the Yakkure rogue is said to be. Only yesterday he smashed a boy to pulp. The villagers are too scared to leave their homes."

"This gun is all right. I've tested it. See," said he, indicating his hits, "I've been warned time and again against the use of light arms for elephants, but they have never failed me so far. Once, though," he continued thoughtfully "I had a near shave..... You know, I sometimes wonder whether the villagers appreciate what I do for them."

"They look on you as their greatest benefactor," replied his friend.

"It is good to know that," said the hunter. "For the last fifteen years, whenever I heard of a rogue in my province, I've gone after him; often at great trouble and expense."

*A dangerous elephant ostracised by the herd, and a menace to human life and property.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the goe-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Maraweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

787 To ignore such warnings would be to court failure or even disaster. When a *kotaha* (large gekko) quaintly cries "krok, krok," a Vedda will seriously lean towards it and ask, "Shall we shoot a monkey to-morrow?" "Krok," says the *kotaha*, and the questioner's face falls, for here no answer is good news. Then there is that subtle thing the *hille*, an evil 778 influence possessed by certain kinds of meat when eaten under circum- 262 stances too involved to explain. The flesh of pigs, peafowl, langurs and a species of fish (*urang*, *monerang*, *wandoorang*, *magurang*) are said to have this property; but here it would seem that the rhyming of the names has something to do with their evil association.

776 There is an interesting little spirit, belief in which (as with many of the other superstitions already mentioned) is as universal among the Sinhalese as the Veddas. *Bothili*, *Vilirany*, or *Kunnu-yakkini** (dirty she-devil) is its name. It is said to have a nasty nack of grasping one's leg in the dark, and so making it wither to the thinness of an *illuk*-blade. The incarnation of a woman who died in child-birth it is thought to be, and comes moaning at night in the form of a light. The story is best told in the words of a solemnly sworn eye-witness:—Kalu Banda (the narrator) and his sister Balahamy were occupying a watch-hut in a *kurrukhan* field one dark night when they heard a moaning as of one in pain—"*andoa*, *andoa*, *oo oo oo*." Kalu Banda, suspecting what it was, told his sister not to speak—for the *villirany* is shy of women and vanishes at the sound of their voice. He then charmed a little oil, and placing it some distance away, called out, "If you have a stomach-ache, come, rub some oil, and go away." A shadow appeared at which Kalu Banda [825] fired. On going to the spot, what should he find but a green blood-sucker, with a red head! This is said to be the invariable discovery when the *bodili* is killed. The same is said of the devil bird; but here apparently the rule has exceptions; for I have met several people who shot at devil birds, and had a bird to show.

825 The identity of the devil-bird—*ulama* or *ulalena*——is still a matter of doubt; and it is a pity that those who have had the rare fortune to shoot this bird have not thought it worth their while to send it up for identification. Much of the mystery surrounding it is due to the fact that it cries only at night and has wide and sporadic circuits. That it has some sort of a crest, I think, there can be no doubt; also that it is a large bird mottled in its breast feathers like a jungle-hen. These particulars all my reliable informants (who shot the bird as it cried at night) have independently confirmed. It is supposed to be the brown wood owl (*Surnium indrani*) by some, the *Huhua nepalensis* by others. The theory that different birds are capable of uttering the devil-bird's cry, is, I think, quite untenable. Its note is too invariable and distinctive for that.

825 The cry of the *ulama*, like that of the owl (*bakumuna*) and *hanga*, is 787 said to be a portent, varying according to its direction. Should it come from the west, it forbodes rain; from the east, good luck; from the north, the visit of a relative or friend; from the south, a death. One of these birds hovered about our camp one night uttering its blood-curdling calls, now from this direction, now from that, baffling the ingenuity of 825 its interpreters! Its "hoo-oo" is most eerily human; but it has an even worse note, a gurgling chuckle, strongly suggestive of a person

*This is perhaps none other than the Ceylon loris.

λ [a species of lizard.— Ans/pt]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

shorter ceremony *ruwela*, this being an older name than *kolamaduwa*[1].

It appeared that the invocations at present in use among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas were those used in the old man's youth, for although he had not, as he stated (truthfully we believe), been closely associated with the Veddas for many years he recognised a number of Vedda invocations which were sung to him, as identical with those sung in his youth, and named the occasions on which each was used. *Maligi* was recognised as sung when honey was taken; the invocation at the beginning of the *kirikoraha* ceremony (cf. p. 285) was promptly named, and the occasions of its use pointed out, but the charm used when driving monkeys was not recognised. A song sung for amusement by the Veddas beginning *Mamini mamini ma deyo* was immediately recognised, as were two of the invocations of the Kolamaduwa ceremony, but considering how Sinhalese in substance this ceremony is this is perhaps not of much importance.

At the present day the number of Veddas living their natural forest life is necessarily few, for their territory has been gradually encroached upon by the Sinhalese who are inveterate poachers. The Veddas, who were never numerous within recent historic times, are now rapidly dying out, while many have settled among the Sinhalese and so lost their identity. We met with only four families who still led the life described by Bailey in 1863, and these were not among the Nilgala but among the Nuwaragala Hills. At Nilgala itself there are no Veddas at the present day, though the local peasant Sinhalese doubtless have much Vedda blood in their veins. The Henebedda and Danigala Veddas are the descendants of those recorded by Bailey in 1863, and the Kovil Vanamai Veddas are the descendants of those known and described by the old Kandyan who visited us at Bandaraduwa.

Hennebedda. At Hennebedda we met a number of families living together in the Bendiyagalge caves. They had come to this their largest cave, from several settlements all within a few hours' journey. The genealogies show that at least

[1] Those ceremonies are described in Chapter IX.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

slipping. Such ceremonial arrows are generally heirlooms, not necessarily passing from father to son but rather being handed down in apostolic succession from shaman to shaman, and among the village Veddas of Bintenne I have handled one such blade with a history running back for five generations. 411 778 [523 428]

Figure 8 shows two ceremonial arrows which we were able to collect. Besides these we saw similar *aude* at Omuni and were told at Sitala Wanniya that Handuna had formerly possessed one. Rutimeyer has figured one of these ceremonial arrows about 14 inches long, obtained from Kaira the "senior" of the Danigala Veddas. These arrows are carefully preserved by the shaman, and just as he himself observes certain dietetic rules, avoiding eating pig and fowl which are supposed to be particularly repulsive to the *yaku*, so among those more sophisticated communities who believe in the periodical uncleanliness of women, special precautions are taken to avoid the possible contamination of the *aude*[1]. This is generally done by keeping them in some comparatively remote spot such as a cave or in the roof thatch. It is necessary that the shaman should hold one of these arrows in his hand when invoking Kande Yaka; he should also have one for Bilindi Yaka, though as a matter of practice Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were often invoked using the same *aude*, another *aude* being reserved for invoking the *Nae Yaku*. Both arrows were, however, commonly held in the hands during the whole of the *Nae Yaku* ceremony, but in spite of this no confusion seemed to arise nor had the onlookers the least difficulty in saying which *aude* belonged to Kande Yaka whenever they were asked. [763]

The offering of rice in the pot would be stirred with the *aude*, and betel leaves might be ceremonially transfixed with it. Among the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula the testing of the quality of the food provided for the *yaku* was performed with the help of the *aude*, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka using the *aude* to remove from the pot a few grains of rice which the *yaku* in the person of the shaman several times examined before expressing his approval of the offering provided. 411 778 782

[1] The belief in the periodical uncleanliness of women has been borrowed from the Sinhalese. It did not exist in the "wildest" group we met with, on the other hand we found it among all the more sophisticated Veddas, attaining a maximum where these had come under foreign influence.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX8 Vedda AX8

715 Besides the important part in the Vedda cult of the dead played by the propitiation of the *Nat Yaku*, and of the *yaku* of certain other Veddas such as Kande Wanniya who as *yaku* have attained to special importance (approaching that of culture heroes in other forms of belief), there is a certain feeling of reverence for a host of unnamed *yaku*. Little attention is paid to these but, since it is stated that they too were once men, the suggestion may be hazarded that they represent the *yaku* of the forgotten dead. These *yaku*, although all around in the jungle, are in some instances thought of as vaguely attached to special localities, especially to glades in the forest, unusually large trees, and above all large rocks and rocky hilltops. The *yaku* of rocks and hilltops, indeed, tend to become named, taking the name of the hill they inhabit; even among the less civilised Veddas they are sometimes identified with the *yaku* of Vedda headmen who have lived on or near the hills. On the other hand among the more sophisticated Veddas these *yaku* tend to become less and less the spirits of dead Veddas, and finally, under Tamil influence, are thought of as dangerous spirits, immigrants from beyond the Ocean, each of whom with a female of his own species haunts the hilltops and sends disease. Somewhat akin to these *yaku* in their less dangerous forms are the *kiriamma* (literally milk mothers, i.e. grandmothers), the *yaku* of Vedda women, generally the wives of Vedda headmen or chiefs, many of whom are thought of as haunting the sides and tops of hills where there are rocks and springs. They are sometimes jealous of people gathering honey—indeed there is a [222 tendency to avoid rocky mountain tops on their account—but 769] may be placated by a charm, though occasionally a little honey is left for them with a muttered *kapau kiriammala*—Eat O [253] Kiriamma. Although they retain the fondness for children which they felt in their lifetime they not infrequently send sickness, at least among the more sophisticated Veddas.

A few *kiriamma* have become rather important *yaku*, notably an old woman of the Unapane clan now known as Unapane Kiriamma, but such *kiriamma* do not appear to be especially associated with rocky or hilly sites.

761 We are now in a position to discuss the possible evolution of
762

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
782

such specially important *yaku* as Kande Yaka and Bambura Yaka who may without exaggeration be said to have attained the position of heroes. It has been stated on p. 126 that according to certain Veddas not all the dead become *yaku* but only the spirits of specially important men or those who during life have the power of summoning the *yaku* to them. Further, the general impression we gathered was that the stronger the personality of the dead man, the more powerful and important was his *yaka*, and it may well be that the *yaka* of a particularly strong or skilled individual may be remembered by name and continue to receive offerings, even after the death of those near relatives to whom the spirit is one of the most important of the Nae Yaku on account of the blood bond between them. This appears to have happened in the case of Panikkia Yaka invoked at the present day by the Henebedda Veddas, and we shall now attempt to trace the history of this spirit.

It was stated in the first chapter that a number of the Veddas were politically organized in the 16th century and that one of the most important of their chiefs, described in a contemporary manuscript as Panikki the Vedda, was appointed to the high office of Bandara Mudiyanse. Further, it is recorded that Panikki the Vedda caught elephants and took them to the king. Now at Henebedda at the present day Panikki Yaka is invoked in the Kolomaduwa ceremony to avert sickness alike from man and cattle, and to confer prosperity on villages and cattle-folds. Those Veddas, a minority, who know anything of this *yaka*, state that he is the spirit of a long dead Vedda who was especially skilled in capturing buffalo, and who on account of his great knowledge of jungle craft is still able to confer safety and jungle favour on those invoking him.

In Chapter 1 we have mentioned that the Vedda cult of the dead has infiltrated the beliefs of the Sinhalese, and we will now give some details of the Bandar cult to which we there alluded. Concerning this Mr Parker writes: "It is a common practice of the Kandian Sinhalese of that part of the country to make offerings to the spirits of the deceased chiefs and important ancestors.....

"They are all classed as Yakas by the Sinhalese and are

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

ADDENDUM.

The following translation of the invocation of Godegedara Bandara has been prepared by Mr Parker from a manuscript given me in Ceylon by the Arachi of Potuliyadde. 782 539

The Song of the God Godegedara.

1. He is a god of a distant country in the Uva region,
   Having come to this side in the Wellassa region,
   Having raised my joined hands to my head I worship (him) that there may be good luck.
   He is coming, I shall say, the God of (this) region.

2. Is not every one staying in (some) place?
   Having died in its heart what pulse will ripen?
   The God sleeps in the upper heavens.
   The God Godegedara is coming.

3. For an endless time being on the watch we utter songs to the God.
   Should there be mistakes (in them) in the name of charity (or merit) pardon the mistakes.
   Endlessly songs are sung accompanied by beating of the five (kinds of) tom-toms.
   The God Godegedara is powerful (enough) even to give a tusk elephant.

4. When it rises the dusk of the moon lights up the round universe and Dambadiva (India).
   The God Godegedara appears like an inextinguishable lamp (lit. a lamp with its fire enduring by (divine) orders for many years).
   The hair of his head sports in the midst of his back like the play of golden rays acting as his retinue.
   Should King Godegedara come to the seat I shall now receive the betel altar (i.e. the offering will be made, and the officiator will then get the betel which has been offered).

"In the last line there is some doubt about the title of Godegedara; either the expression *deru(ma) devi* means king, that is literally 'god of the earth,' or *deru* has been written by mistake."

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

621 To illustrate and prove these propositions we must examine
771 in detail the beliefs of some of the communities in which each stage is respectively dominant. The Veddas met at Godatalawa and Sitala Wanniya form the best example of the first stage of belief. In comparing their beliefs it must, however, be remembered that the Godatalawa family have drifted away from their hunting grounds and are in dire want, and that their oldest man and leader (now quite infirm though still mentally vigorous) was never a shaman and consequently could give only the lay opinion of his group on religious matters. It must then not be assumed that no spirits beyond the *Nae Yaku*, Kande Yaka, and Bilindi Yaka were known to the shaman of the Galmeda community, although the fact that the laymen only knew of these spirits shows how vastly more important they were than any other.

The Sitala Wanniya people, on the other hand, were living in a condition which must have been general from ancient times up to about 70 years ago. Four of the five families had never made even rough chena or built bark houses, but lived on game, honey and yams and wandered about from rock-shelter to rock-shelter within their territory.

776 At Godatalawa Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were both
782 known though they were not recognised as brothers, and Kande Yaka was said to be greater than all other *yaku*. They are the two principal *yaku* invoked in order to obtain game, but with them there are invoked three other *yaku*, who, it was stated, are not the spirits of the dead but have existed as *yaku* from the beginning. These were, however, of little importance, and our informant, an old man the senior of the group but not a shaman, did not remember their names. Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka would be invoked in order to obtain game at the
[224] *hiriberaka* ceremony, or simply when dancing round an arrow struck in the ground. These dances were not in gratitude for game already killed, but when the hunting had been successful, pieces of flesh from the neck and chest of the kill were cooked on the ashes and Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked to come to this offering which a few minutes later would be consumed by the Veddas. If part of the meat were not thus

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

presented to Kande Yaka the hunters would expect bad luck in future, and might even be bitten by snakes or attacked by bears.

The *Nae Yaku* are the spirits of the dead, they must report themselves to Kande Yaka as the chief of all the *yaku* and from him obtain permission to help the living and accept their offerings. Kande Yaka comes to the *Nae Yaku* ceremonies since the spirits of the dead could not be present without him. It was definitely stated that the spirits of the dead did not become *yaku* until the fifth day after death, but my informant knew nothing of the state of the spirits during this period though it was surmised that at least part of the time would be passed in seeking Kande Yaka or in his company, though there was no idea as to where Kande Yaka had his being. It was however stated, that the spirits of the dead were in hills, caves and rocks. The *Nae Yaku* including the spirit of the dead man are invoked on the fifth day after death. An offering is made of coconut milk and rice, if these are obtainable, but if not one consisting of yams and water is substituted. The shaman dances, holding in his hand a big ceremonial arrow for which no special name could be elicited, while the remainder of the community gather round. The shaman invokes the *Nae Yaku* and also Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka. The shaman becomes possessed and is supported lest he fall while the spirit of the deceased promises that yams, honey, and game shall be plentiful. He then sprinkles coconut milk or water from the offering on the relatives of the deceased as a sign of the spirit's favour. One or more of the relatives of the dead man may also become possessed. The shaman gives the relatives water and yams, putting their food into their mouths himself while he is possessed, and it appeared that this might cause the relatives to become possessed. At the end of the ceremony he asks the *Nae Yaku* to depart to where they came from and the spirits leave the offering.

Nothing was known concerning the Kataragam God or the *Iolamadua* ceremony, though our informants said that they had heard of other Veddas performing this ceremony. Gale Yaka was not known, nor yet Wanagata Yaka.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 At Sitala Wanniya the principal *yaku* are Kande Yaka,
773 Bilindi Yaka, Bambura Yaka and the *Nae Yaku*. According to these people Kande Wanniya killed his younger brother Bilindi when the latter was only an infant. The story is that their parents were out hunting when Bilindi, feeling hungry, began to cry and would not desist in spite of the endearments lavished upon him by Kande. At last Kande threw the child on the ground in despair and so killed him.

776 It appeared that as a hunting hero Bambura Yaka is on the whole as important as Kande Yaka, though he is certainly not looked upon as so benevolent nor so loved as the latter, who helps men to kill deer and never sends sickness. Bambura Yaka is a somewhat grim spirit who although he gives yams and helps men to kill pig, also sends sickness and must be invoked to remove it, and he is also invoked when dogs are lost or taken by leopards. Because of his giving yams he is sometimes known as Ale (yam) Yaka, and yams are offered to him together with other vegetable food when this can be obtained.

224 The *kirikoraha* ceremony is performed to obtain game, in
776 gratitude for which the head and a portion of the flesh from
762 the breast of every deer killed is cooked as an offering to Kande Yaka and is afterwards eaten by the community. If this were not done Kande Yaka would be angry and little game would be killed.

The *kirikoraha* seen at Sitala Wanniya is described on pp. 223 to 226, and the ceremony at which Bambura Yaka is invoked on pp. 237 to 245.

775 The spirits of the dead become the *Nae Yaku* and with
782 Kande Yaka are invoked for success in hunting; a description
769 of this ceremony will be found on pp. 230 to 233. A few days after a death the dead man is invoked for assistance in hunting, being addressed as *mal paenae wanna*, and when the relatives or the group leave the cave to look for game they repeat the invocation as they move along. After this, if they are successful, they know that the spirit of the dead man has become powerful as a *Nae Yaku* and invoke him at the *kirikoraha* among the *Nae Yaku* called upon. The *Nae Yaku* must obtain permission

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to accept offerings from Kande Yaka, and Kande Yaka must be invoked before the *Nat Yaku* to come to the offering, which should consist of coconuts, rice, areca nuts, betel leaves and, when obtainable, bananas.

We consider that the beliefs so far described represent the first stratum or basis of the Vedda religion and to be of its original substance. This is not the case with the remaining portion of the religion of the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya, which relates to certain foreign spirits who have become naturalised Vedda *yaku*. The Rahu Yaku are spirits of this sort. A fire ceremony occurs in the dance by which they are invoked and there is no doubt that these *yaku* are derived from the Sinhalese demon Gini Rahu Bandar. Yet in spite of this they have acquired a Vedda history, being regarded as long dead Veddas quite unconnected with the Rahu Bandar of the Sinhalese. The story concerning them is that long ago three Vedda brothers occupied a shelter together and one day one of them returned from hunting to find a stranger in the cave with his wife. The unknown rushed away and made good his escape, but the injured husband made up a big fire and in his rage and despair jumped into it. His *yaka* is one of the Rahu Yaku, the other two being the *yaku* of his two brothers who did not, however, burn themselves to death.

The help of the three Rahu Yaku is asked to cure sickness, to obtain success in hunting, and in collecting rock honey. Hunting and honey collecting both have their true Vedda patrons Kande Yaka and Dola Yaka, therefore the Rahu Yaku seem superfluous in these capacities. Further evidence as to their foreign origin is afforded by the fact that they carry "swords" (*haduwa*), a weapon unknown to Veddas except in incantations[1], and that all three are considered somewhat dangerous, and cause sickness.

Indigollae Yaka, a foreign spirit (whose origin will be considered at length in Chapter VII), is looked upon as an attendant upon Kande Yaka in this community.

The names of certain spirits residing on various hills and

[1] Even these swords, one of which is shown in figure 11 (p. 156), had been naturalised and were said to represent *ambu*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Yaku, while at nearly all the village Vedda communities Indigollae Yaka was said to bring the *Nae Yaku*. Certainly Gale Yaka, Indigollae Yaka and Kande Yaka were all known by name, but there seemed much confusion between them all: perhaps Gale Yaka had become Lord of the Dead as he was invoked before the *Nae Yaku* in the same ceremony; Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were invoked at a separate ceremony. No hint was given us that Gale Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were names for the same spirit, but of course this may have been so. The information that Indigollae Yaka was extremely powerful both to bring evil upon man and to help them to get game was, however, volunteered and, as already mentioned, some old, specially valuable beads were kept to be offered to him.

Gale Yaka was also invoked to give success when gathering honey; he appeared to be associated with a certain rock near Mahaella, and we were told that beads were worn during the ceremony.

The Maha Kiriamma was said to be one of the most powerful of the *Maha Yakino*, a class of female spirits who were said to send sickness[1]. Unapane Yakini (Unapane Kiriamma) was another *yakini* of the same class who was thought to live at Omunigala. Here as among many other groups of Veddas the *Maha Yakino* were associated with hill tops, and it was the custom for people collecting the honey of the rock bee to leave a piece of the comb *in situ*, saying, "Eat, O Kiriamma[2]."

When the *Maha Yakino* are invoked to cure sickness a basket is used in which are put a bead necklace and bangles and the leaves of a *na* tree. The shaman becomes possessed and raises the basket above the patient's head and prophesies recovery. The leaves are subsequently thrown away, but the beads and bangles are preserved for the *Yakino*. Presumably this is the origin of the similar or identical use of these objects in the *kolamadwu* ceremony which, however, appears to be of Sinhalese origin.

[1] Nothing was ever said to cause us to suspect that she was connected with Gale Yaka or Indigollae Yaka.

[2] Kiriamma is in the plural in the Sinhalese, showing that all the *Maha Yakino* in the neighbourhood were invoked to partake.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Gange Bandar, unknown among the wilder Veddas but worshipped by all village Veddas, was known at Unuwatura Bubula. 73 [184]

OMUNI.

The history of this settlement dating back to the first half of the last century has been given on pp. 45 and 46. The Omuni folk believe there are spirits (*yaku*) everywhere in the jungle, but none have seen them; further, there are many *yaku* of each kind or species such as the Indigollae Yaku, the Dadayan Yaku and many others including the Gale Yaku called the Jungle Yaku, who do not, however, frequent the jungle around Omuni. It was said that Ganga Bandar Deyo who lives in rocks in the river is greater than any of these. Omuni was one of the first Vedda settlements we visited, and as the importance of Sinhalese and Tamil gods and demons was not then appreciated no questions concerning these were asked. It is, however, reasonable to suppose that the Kataragam God and other mighty *devige* are worshipped. The spirits of the dead (*Nae Yaku*) are believed to be associated with rocks; on the whole they are kindly spirits, but it is necessary to invoke and propitiate them. [775]

A *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some little time after a death has taken place, at which the shaman dances with an *aude* before a *maesa* on which is placed an offering of cooked yams and other food, and the *maesa* is decorated with special clothes kept for that purpose. The *aude* is held in the smoke arising from gum-resin thrown on glowing charcoal, and then pressed on the head of all the male members of the community. If this were not done little game would be killed. 769 782

We have an account of another ceremony performed to cure sickness and when the chena had been reaped, but it is not clear what spirits were invoked at this; presumably the most important of these were certain of the *yaku* other than the *Nae Yaku*, though the *Nae Yaku* may have played a subordinate part. A shed or very rough house is built and hung with special clothes reserved for this purpose, those shown to us being rather old and worn pieces of linen woven at Batticaloa. A roughly made shelf forming a sort of altar is built in the shed on which 755

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

though incomplete we have no doubt of its substantial accuracy as far as it goes. We had considerable doubts as to the reliability of our Dambani information, but these have been removed lately as far as they affect Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaku* owing to the kindness of Mr Hartshorne who allowed us to look through a number of notes collected among these people thirty years ago. And since the information obtained from the Arachi of Belligala was correct on these points, there seems to be no reason to disbelieve the rest of his information.

According to the Arachi, who, it must be remembered, as stated on p. 49, knows the Dambani folk well, there are three important classes of *yaku*.

The first of these are the *Nae Yaku* who do not go to Kande Yaka but to Indigollae Yaka, who lives on a hill (*kande*) called Indigollae Kande which never has been seen. Indigollae Yaka is first invoked at the *Nae Yaku* ceremony and with him come the *Nae Yaku*. An *aude* is used in calling upon Indigollae Yaka in this ceremony, while the *Nae Yaku* are invoked by means of a cloth and beads; as among other Veddas an offering of food is made.

We could not discover with certainty at Dambani what was the relative importance of the *Nae Yaku* and the two other classes of *yaku*, but at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle our informants made it quite clear that the *yaku* of recent ancestors were the most important. Thus Kuma stated that he considered his father's *yaku* to be the most important of all and that this spirit was invoked alike to send game and in thanks for game killed.

Bandia of Wellampelle said the most important *yaku* he knew was Punchi Badena, his father's father; his mother is dead but her *yaku* is not so important[1]. Punchi Badena is invoked to get game and honey or when people are sick. At all three villages a structure, which from the description given to us resembles an *alutyakagama*, is built for the invocation of the *Nae Yaku*, to whom the customary offerings are made before

[1] We have no note that the father of Kuma was dead; although we do not remember definitely inquiring about this our impression is that both parents had been dead for some time.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

being eaten by the community. A man becomes a *yaku* directly he is dead, nothing is buried with him and the contents of his betel pouch are used in the ordinary way. The *Nae Yaku* ceremony is held some days after death, one, or according to another informant two, *anda* being used.

At Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle neither Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka was known, and these two *yaku* were also unknown at Dambani where, however, the Belligala Arachi said that Kande Yaka gives luck in hunting. This has been confirmed by Mr Hartshorne's notes, so that although our informants at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle stated that they did not know this *yaku*, too much stress must not be laid upon this.

The other two classes of *yaku* invoked at Dambani are tree and rock *yaku*. Both send sickness and are invoked with dancing and offerings to remove it, the stone magic described on p. 143 being used to determine which *yaku* is responsible for the disease. The most important rock *yaku* are Mawaragala Yaka, Rerangala Yaka, Barutugala Yaka, and Mehaluku Yakini. The latter is associated with a rock Batugala near Alutnuwara, the others with the peaks whose names they bear.

Two tree *yaku* were mentioned, each having a number of attendants. These tree *yaku* are named Na Gaha Yaka (Na tree Yaka) and Bo Gaha Yaka (Bo tree Yaka), that is to say they are called after the trees with which they are associated, and the Arachi pointed out that tree *yaku* habitually lived in trees of the species after which they are named. We could not discover any facts suggesting that these tree *yaku* were considered to represent the life of the tree.

HORABORAWEWA.

The surroundings and physical characters of the Veddas of Horaborawewa have been described on p. 53. The shaman is the local Sinhalese headman, who stated that the same *yaku* are invoked by Veddas and Sinhalese alike. Seren (Riri) Yaka is the most important *yaku*, Wiloya Yaka and Kalu Yaka are also known, and it was stated that the latter spirit was also called Wangata Yaka. Our informant had not heard of Kande Yaka or Bilindi Yaka, and it was certain that the worshipped *yaku*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

KALUKALASBA.

The most important spiritual agencies are the following:— Gange Bandar Deyo, Kataragam Deyo, Indigollae Yaka, Rerang Yaka, Riri Yaka (Sinhalese), Maruiu Yaka, Rahu Yaka, and Elle Yakini. 776

In spite of the fact that the people of Kalukalasba keep cattle and are predominantly agriculturalists Gange Bandar Deyo, who lives on the hill Yangala beyond Hemberewa and gives luck in hunting and honey gathering, was said to be especially important. He is invoked when game is scarce, but it is the Kataragam God who gives increase of yams and vegetable food. They do not dance to him but make offerings of cooked brinjal and pumpkins, which are left for half-a-day on a rude altar and then eaten. Chena are also under the protection of the Kataragam God to whom offerings are made after the produce has been reaped, some of every kind of fruit being cooked and exposed in the chena for some hours before it is eaten by the people. 776 782

At Kalukalasba Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Bambura Yaka were unknown. The spirits of the dead are recognised as the *Nae Yaku*, but they are certainly thought of as far less important than a number of other spiritual beings to be immediately considered. They are however invoked, but it seemed that this was not done habitually immediately after a death, but at quite uncertain intervals to remove sickness. The father of 775 755

and Bizeman, and Nilgala, alike agree that he was a great and powerful prince. They speak of him often, and call him Berengala Kimbul-Hawa mudiyanse Rajapat Wannimaba. From the name Hawa it is manifest he headed some great political movement.... Raja-pat probably means king-maker, and the whole title may be translated as 'His Excellency the General Kimbul-Otbe of Berengala, the king-maker Lord-of-the-Marches,' or else the 'King-made Lord-of-the-Marches,' wanni, literally a forest or waste, being used exactly as we use the term 'marches,' of Wales or Scotland. The respect of the Sinhalese, and this elaborate title of highest honour, show that this great Vaddda Chieftain headed an army that replaced one of the Sinhalese kings upon the throne of his ancestors. I think it is more probable he figured in a comparatively modern war than in a very ancient one....It is perfectly likely that Kimbul-Otbe was a prince of the Sinhala royal family, who married a Vaddda....

"The supposition that Kimbul-Otbe was a Sinhala, and that he married either a Bandara or an Uruppana lady, would then account for the otherwise unexplained fact that the Sinhalese say some of their oldest and best families also descended from Kimbul-Otbe, though they did not know whether he was really a Vaddda or was claimed by the Vaddas in mistake, having been their prince." *Op. cit.* Vol. i, p. 156.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann I-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[782] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

776 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka is known. The *Nae Yaku* are of the company of Indigollae Yaka, and with the latter are invoked after a death, but the *Nae Yaku* are not asked for good luck in hunting. The *Nae Yaku* are invoked after every death; coconut, jaggery (palm sugar), and rice are placed on a *maesa*, offered to the *yaku* and afterwards eaten by the shaman and other members of the community. While invoking the spirits the shaman holds a cloth in his hands but no *aude*.

ULPOTA.

The Kataragam God, Gane Deyo and Vihara Deyo, are worshipped, as probably are many others. These spirits are all considered more important than the *Nae Yaku*, and it is to their aid that success in hunting and in honey getting is largely attributed, nevertheless it was clear that the *Nae Yaku* were thought of as helpful in these activities. Our informant stated that they had never heard of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka, nor had they heard of the gods of the coast Veddas Kapalpe or Kadupe.

The spirits of the dead become *Nae Yaku*, and it is customary for a ceremony to be held eight days after a death, at which the spirits of all the recent dead are invoked. It was said that these spirits of the deceased joined the other *Nae Yaku* without asking permission from any other spiritual being and that the *Nae Yaku* came when they were invoked unaccompanied by any other spirit. The shaman does not hold an *aude* in his hand when invoking the *Nae Yaku*, but some rice and cooked pumpkin are put upon a *maesa* before which he dances. At the side of this is a pot of rice covered with a cloth supported on a rice pounder. The shaman faces the east whilst dancing, and appeals to all remembered *Nae Yaku* by name. It was said to be rare for any but the shaman to become possessed.

The *Nae Yaku* give honey and luck in hunting, and it is in order to obtain their favour that they are invoked, for if they were not they would give bad luck. When collecting tree honey the name of a dead man is called and he is requested to accept a little honey which is left at the foot of the tree for a short time, after which it is eaten by the honey gatherers. After killing game

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

a piece of flesh is offered to the *Nae Yaku* who are called by name, and then the Veddas eat it themselves.

Vihara Deyo is considered to send sickness, and he is invoked to make men whole again. Rice is cooked with milk usually obtained from the Tamil village of Horawila, and this with betel and areca nut is put upon a *maesa*. Only the shaman dances, and after the ceremony the offering is eaten by the whole community, including the sick man. Our informant did not know how the *yaka* or *deyo* causing the sickness was discovered, that being left to the shaman.

YAKURE.

The important spiritual agencies are:—Gange Bandar Deyo, Genikandia Deyo, Palugamman Deyo, Vihara Deyo, Mangara Deyo. Our informants knew of Indigollae Yaka but did not know if he ever was a man or had always been a spirit. Nothing was known of Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, or Bambura Yaka. Dead shamans are thought to become *yaku*, and it is the spirits of these people who are the *Nae Yaku*: the fate of the spirits of ordinary folk is uncertain, but they do not become *Nae Yaku*. The *Nae Yaku* are danced to and invoked with the other *yaku* in order to cure sickness, but apparently they are not considered particularly important. A *maesa* is made and a cloth put over it, and on it are laid flowers of many kinds, betel leaves and areca nuts. Incense is burned before these offerings, in front of which the shaman dances facing the east. In some instances the *maesa* is built inside the temple, the shaman holds a cloth in his hand and a pot of rice cooked in milk is placed by the *maesa* on a rice pounder[1]. This is not tasted during the dance, but is eaten afterwards by the shaman and the sick man and other individuals of the community[2].

Kataragam Deyo is invoked especially to protect the chena, and at harvest an offering is made which is afterwards eaten as at Elakotaliya.

[1] It must be remembered that Yakure is a great cattle breeding centre.

[2] This is an interesting contrast to the practice which Mr Parker informs us prevails in the south of the island, where food given to spirits is not eaten at all but is exposed in the jungle or some deserted place. The fact that at Yakure food offered to spirits, many of whom are of Sinhalese or Tamil origin, is eaten, is clearly a remnant of the Vedda belief that the spirits invoked are in the main beneficent.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

301 among the wilder Veddas at the present day. It therefore appears that although beads are worn as ornaments by the members of certain communities in the Bintenne there is no [184] evidence for their use as such among the Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road.

301 751 We may next consider certain facts which seem to indicate that beads may be sometimes treated as amulets, or at least as having magical power. At Bandaraduwa where there has been a great deal of Sinhalese influence, one woman wore a piece of knotted string round her throat which had been charmed and put on by a Sinhalese to cure her of some ailment. When we gave her a string of beads she was very pleased and immediately broke the old charmed string and put the beads round her neck in place of it.

At Bendiyagalge all the women were particularly anxious for us to give beads to their children and immediately put these round their necks, but those given to themselves were not usually put on in our presence. In both these cases there is only the suggestion that beads were regarded as anything more than ornaments, and this also holds good as regards the beads of bear's bone worn by Kaira of Bingoda already recorded, but in the following cases the relation of beads to the *yaku* is perfectly clear. The women of Unuwatura Bubula, though they possessed beads of the same kind as those worn by the 301 women of Omuni, were afraid to wear them, and gave them 791 to the shaman to keep and use in *yaku* ceremonies. In this village we found that women would not accept red beads as presents because "they were afraid," though they readily took the white beads offered them, and the shaman when dancing to the Alut Yakini wore cross shoulder straps of old beads, and similar beads were kept for Indigollae Yaka.

There is equally strong evidence of the definite association 301 of beads with the *yaku* in other communities, though the reason 782 for this association could not be determined. At Sitala Wanniya a band of bast was placed upon the offering to the Rahu Yaku, and our informants said that they would have used beads instead of the bast had they possessed them. At the same place when preparing for the dance to Dola Yaka, who gives

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

success in honey gathering, the shaman asked us for two strings of beads. These beads he placed over betel leaves upon two arrows thrust in the centre of the dancing ground which were surrounded by betel leaves offered to the *yaka*. These beads were said to represent the rough rope of creeper with which the green twigs forming the smoker were secured and the rope by which the smoker was lowered to the comb.

When it is remembered that Veddas do not tattoo or paint themselves, and have never been seen wearing any kind of seeds as ornaments, it seems reasonable to assume that where beads are sought after by the Veddas they are valued for their supposed magical properties.

In conclusion we may give the only perfectly clear instance of a Vedda wearing an amulet with which we are acquainted. The shaman of Bandaraduwa wore on his wrist a small silver cylinder such as is commonly used to contain a written charm. The cylinder was empty and had never contained a charm, but the shaman told us that he wore it in order to be cured of an illness from which he had suffered formerly, and that presently he would give the cylinder to some pilgrim proceeding to Kataragam in order that he might deposit it in the temple there.

The Eating of Human Liver.

Every group of Veddas except the most sophisticated village Veddas believe that it was formerly the custom for a man to carry in his betel pouch a small piece of dry human liver. But the majority of our informants were not clear as to the exact reason for doing this, though they were all agreed that it had something to do with raising a man's valour and making him strong to bear trouble. It was essential that the liver should be taken from a man killed by the individual who proposed to carry a portion of the dried liver in his pouch. When a man had been killed the slayer would open his belly and take out a small portion of his liver which he would dry in the sun in a secret place. This custom appears to have ceased about three generations ago, but the following instance, said to have occurred about fifty years ago, was given us at Bandaraduwa.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the Henebedda *kirikoraha*) it is usually poured on the ground without any ceremony. 796

A description of the phenomena of "possession" of the Vedda shaman by the *yaku* has already been given in Chapter VI, so that nothing need be said on that matter in connection with this dance or any of the ceremonies described in this chapter, in all of which "possession" occurred. 796 787

The essential features of the *kirikoraha* are two in number. The first of these is the offering of coconut milk and generally of other food to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka and sometimes other *yaku* regarded as their attendants. Secondly the pantomimic representation by the shaman, while possessed by Kande Yaka, of Kande Wanniya tracking and shooting a sambar deer. This pantomime seems to occur only when "possession" by Kande Yaka takes place, for whenever any pantomime of this sort was enacted, even in the most shortened and conventional form, as in the Nae Yaku ceremony (described on pp. 233 to 237 of this chapter), the shaman was held to be possessed by Kande Yaka. [782]

We witnessed four *kirikoraha* ceremonies during our stay in the Vedda country. One was performed by the Henebedda Veddas in thanksgiving for a fine buck which one of them had shot, and the other three were undertaken at our request, but we have no doubt that they were accurately performed; for the Veddas were always pleased to perform any ceremonial dance provided the correct offering were given, as thereby they gained the favour of the *yaku*, and it was seldom that they were able to offer such food as we gave them for the purpose. The *kirikoraha* ceremony appears to be held equally as a thanksgiving for game killed and in order to obtain success in the future. 796

The Kirikoraha at Bendiyagalge. A fine buck was killed late in the afternoon of the 7th of February, 1908, and was carried to a flat rock between our camp and the Bendiyagalge caves and rapidly skinned and cut up during the short tropical twilight. A *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed the next morning, before taking part in which all the men went to the neighbouring stream and bathed, and afterwards made an offering of food to the *yaku*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from his previous fatigue, invoked Walimabagala Yaka and Yakini. The dancing of these *yaku* exactly resembled that described at the beginning of the ceremony, and is therefore not further recorded.

796
535

THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

It seems very doubtful whether the *kolamaduwa* as it exists at the present day should be described as a Vedda ceremony at all, though as it was danced by the Henebedda Veddas at Bendiyagalge it merits a description. It is in any case certain that the *kolamaduwa* is not often performed, as the amount of food and other properties necessary could scarcely have been found by one small Vedda community[1]; also its main objects, the curing of disease in cattle and epidemic sickness among men, would not appeal greatly to small communities of hunters dwelling in healthy surroundings. At the present day the Henebedda Veddas make rough chena and herd cattle for the Sinhalese, but the cattle have not yet become an important factor in their lives, and the people themselves do not suffer from epidemics. Further, at Bandaraduwa, on the borders of the Eastern Province, the only other place where this dance was known among Veddas, we were told that they would perform it for the Sinhalese, and that each dancer would be paid Rs. 5 for his trouble besides being given his food. Our aged Sinhalese informant, mentioned on p. 31, told us that the *kolamaduwa* was not danced by these Veddas when he was a boy, and that he considered it had arisen as an elaboration of the *ruwala* ceremony which used to be performed in those days. The *ruwala*—already described in this chapter—itself shows signs of having been introduced from the Tamils of the east coast, though probably at a comparatively remote period. Great numbers of *yaku* and *yakini* should be invoked at the *kolamaduwa*; some,

755
535
177

[1] According to Tissahami all the following offerings were necessary for a full ceremony. Eight measures of rice and two large pots in which to cook it, 10 coconuts, 5 bundles of yams, 50 plantains, 2 sugar canes, 200 betel leaves, 12 candles, 1 lb. sandal wood, 100 balls of jaggery, ½ lb. turmeric, 1 lb. of resin, 4 coloured cloths, 5 yards of white cloth, 4 necklets of beads, 8 small baskets and 8 cloths to cover them, 4 pairs of metal bangles, 1 bottle of ghee and flowers of various kinds.

[782]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

THE AVANA CEREMONY.

796 The *avana* ceremony which we saw at Henebedda may be described here. Mr Bibile told us that he had heard of it having been performed in his father's time by Sinhalese in the neighbourhood of Bibile, and the former Korala of Bakiella in the Eastern Province, a man particularly versed in magic and spiritual matters, knew all about this custom, while on the other hand many Veddas did not know of it. Our impression is that we are here dealing with an original Vedda custom, consisting of an offering of part of the game killed, which has been modified by the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedda country, and again adopted from them in its modified form by the Veddas.

The following account of the *avana* custom records what we
796 actually saw done on the night of February 7th, at Henebedda
224 on the occasion of the death of a fine buck. The stag, which
782 had been shot a short distance from Bendiyagalge caves, was carried to a convenient slab of rock between our camp and the caves and there cut up, an arrow being most skilfully used to skin and disjoint the animal; the throat was opened low down in the front of the neck, one or more big veins being severed, and three double handfuls of blood were smeared upon a heap of *mora* leaves which had previously been laid on a rock. Then six long narrow pieces of muscle called *anda malu* (eel flesh, because the strips of muscle are long like eels) were cut from the root of the neck as well as two morsels from the tongue, the nostril and the ears. These twelve pieces of meat, constituting
796 the offering called *avana*, were put on the blood-smeared leaves
782 for the Kadawara Yaku, who were said to be the spirits of eleven
773 Veddas who were named and described as follows:

Avana Vedda, the first Vedda who instituted the rite.

Lē Vedda, the first man who smeared blood on the heap of leaves.

Mas Vedda, the first man who laid meat upon the heap of leaves.

Buta Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who sent the animal whose blood and flesh were used at the first *avana* ceremony.

Atu Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who makes noises in the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

forest near the hunter to make him believe that the game he is following has run away. 796

Bedi Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who breaks sticks and causes dead branches to fall and so frighten game away. 782 773

Kili Mas Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who cut up the animal whose flesh and blood were used at the first *avana*.

Polu Mas Vedda, who smoked part of the meat of this animal.

Melihi Vedda, the *yaka* who blinds hunters so that they cannot track the wounded game.

Ahuru Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first snapped his fingers to call his dogs.

Ihurun Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first whistled to his dogs to come hunting.

These eleven *yaku* are considered strong enough to kill folk and to send sickness; it appeared to us that the individuals of this group were not carefully differentiated but rather regarded as one power. [753]

The Korala of Bakiella who has already been mentioned said that a leaf cone (*goṭuwa*) containing blood was placed on a heap of leaves with flesh from the throat, tongue and ears of the kill and the whole offered to the 64,000 Maralu Yaku and 64,000 Kadawara Yaku. The leaf cone is a distinctly Sinhalese feature and the ceremony described by the Korala had become entirely Sinhalese in character. This is borne out by the invocation which was written down for us by the Korala. 796 782 177 539

Atu awanā lē dena mantraya Kaḍawara Riri Yakaṭa Yakinniṭa.

Vītāla uwara sināpoti bisawun wahansēge hradaya palā bihi uwu Kaḍawēra Riri Yakshayā Yakshiniṭa atu awanak aetun koṭu awanak aetun, amu mas amu riri aetun.

Adat mama anḍagasā kaepa kera dennī. Mama yana issaraṭa rubera an mumayak genādiṇ, ellē pāḍu kera dīlā, veḷī munī is(sara)ṭa kera dīla, amaren giyat (a) marey piṭat wilā, marana pathera dīlā, waessī langaṭa mīden ennā wāgē, kambe kanuwaṭa magul aetek baenda palikera wāge, ella pāḍu (ka) ra denḍa Kaḍawera Riri Yakshayā Yakshigen warami.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
782
177
539

"The invocation to Kaḍawara Rīri Yakā and Yakinī, when presenting blood in the shelter (made) of branches.

"There was (on a former occasion) an (open) shelter of branches, there was an enclosed shelter, there were fresh meat and fresh blood for the Kaḍawara Rīri Yakshayā and Yakshinī, who having guarded (?) the pool of the General Queen at Vetāla Nuwara (the Goblin city) became demons.

"To-day also having summoned (you) I present the (same) offering. Before I go I solicit from the Kaḍawara Rīri Yakshayā and Yakshinī that they will bring a head with beautiful horns (to me), that they will make good all deficiencies, make my shots unerring [lit. present (the game) before the point of the shot], should I get into difficulty that they will overcome it, decree that I shall kill (game), (enable me) to approach a calf (fem.) like the buffalo cow comes up (to it) [i.e. without alarming it], rope a lucky tusk-elephant to the post, as though defending it (?), and that they will make good all deficiencies."

The above transliteration and translation have been prepared by Mr Parker who points out that the written invocation is full of errors, and therefore difficult to translate, but it does not contain any "Vaedi expressions" and "only a few difficult words." We have consulted Mr Parker in the hope that he might be able to throw some light on the matter of the origin of the *avana*, but although his remarks are in many ways interesting and suggestive, they do not really explain the origin of the ceremony, though he is inclined to agree with us that the ceremony is of Vedda origin[1].

[1] Mr Parker writes: "The Sinhalese have also some Vaedi Yakas though these have no connection with the eleven spirit yakas of your ceremony, who are chiefly protective. There are also 'Vaedi' Kadawara who are minor subordinates of the Kohomba (Margosa) demon or Yaka. *Kaḍawara* is a compound Tamil word meaning according to a story that was related to me both in Ceylon (N.C.P.) and at the Tanjore temple, 'the celestial who escaped' compression by Siva the Indian god, when he clasped in his embrace six others created by his wife, and thus made them into the Kataragama God Skanda, the Indian war God, called also Kanda Kumara, with six faces and twelve arms."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER X

INVOCATIONS

THE translations of the invocations given in this chapter have been made by Mr H. Parker who has spared no pains in working out very complicated and often incomplete material. The invocations themselves were written down by our interpreters to the dictation of the Veddas, and thus naturally contained a certain number of mistakes and contractions. These are noted and explained by Mr Parker, and it should be realised that the philological and mythological explanations appended to many invocations are entirely his work and are therefore placed between inverted commas. 782 126

Neither the Veddas themselves, nor our interpreters, could give a translation of some of the invocations or even explain the meaning. In others no translation could be supplied and it was noted in the field that the meaning was probably only correct in a broad sense. In yet other invocations more or less accurate translations of the words themselves were given, but the significance could not be determined. Under these circumstances we have thought it best to give Mr Parker's translation in every case, indicating how this differs in sense from the version given us in the field in those instances in which we have reason to believe that our field version peculiarly expresses what our informants believed to be the meaning of the invocation.

These invocations fall into two main groups; the first, distinguished by their simple form, are straightforward requests to the spirits of the dead to provide game and yams, or to show their loving kindness by partaking of the food provided by their descendants. The second group although embracing a con- 782

C.Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782 siderable range of beliefs are all longer and more complicated, and often contain references to events which happened before the spiritual beings to whom they are addressed attained their full power as *yaku*.

For convenience the invocations are consecutively numbered and grouped according to their purpose, for we believe that this arrangement, though not ideal, is on the whole the most suitable[1]. In each group the invocations progress from simple to more complicated.

782 It will be noted that in many if not all of these invocations
192 animals and articles of food are not mentioned by their usual
198 name, but are called by some other name or described by a periphrasis. A special vocabulary, largely but not entirely the same as that used in invoking the *yaku*, is used by the Veddas when hunting and indeed whenever travelling through the jungle. The relation of this jungle language to the other languages of the island will be discussed in Chapter XV, meanwhile it is only necessary to note that in one form or another it is spread over a great part of the island and that it is known by the name *kaele basa* "jungle language." The object of the *kaele basa* has been well explained by Mr Parker who has allowed me to take the following quotation from the proof-sheets of his work *Ancient Ceylon*. "Strange to say, the Kandian Sinhalese and the Wanniyas apparently imitate the Vaeddas while they are hunting in the forests,...and use another series of expressions...for many...animals, to the exclusion of the usual names for them. They have acquired a belief that unless a

[1] An alternative arrangement would have been to group these invocations geographically; the following list will enable the reader to do this with ease.

List of Invocations and the localities from which each were collected.

Bandaraduwa. Nos. 7, 15, 26, 34.
Bulugahaladena. Nos. 9, 10.
Dambani. Nos. 2, 12, 13.
Godatalawa. Nos. 3, 5, 20, 24.
Henebedda. Nos. 14, 19, 21.
Kalukalaeba. No. 6.
Sitala Wanniya. Nos. 1, 11, 16, 18, 23, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36.
Uniche. Nos. 8, 17, 22, 28.
Unawatura Bubula. Nos. 25, 37.
Wellampelle. No. 4.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

special dialect be employed while they are in the forest, they cannot expect to meet with any success in seeking honey, or hunting, or in avoiding dangerous animals. 782 192 198

"This dialect...consists of the employment of new words not only for animals but also for a few other nouns, and for verbs used to denote acts most commonly performed on such trips. In addition, all negative (that is, unlucky) modes of expression are totally debarred from use on such occasions, as well as the words meaning 'insufficient' and 'too much,' which are inauspicious as indicating dissatisfaction with the number or quantity to which they are applied."

Although in some instances the word used when addressing the *yaku* is not the precise word used by the same Veddas while hunting it is convenient, and we think reasonable, to regard the *yaku* language as a part of the *kaele basa*.

The only other linguistic feature of these invocations that requires comment is the abundant use of the adjective *ran* "golden." The significance of this in a particular and somewhat puzzling instance is discussed in a footnote to invocation No. XXI, so that it suffices here to record our belief that among the Veddas the expression is laudatory and is the equivalent of "excellent," "admirable." In invocations used while collecting honey the expression "jewelled" is used with almost equal freedom, e.g. "golden jewelled cord" in invocation No. XXVI, and is simply to be understood as a laudatory expression.

Invocations to the Nae Yaku.

782 539

Sitala Wanniya.

I. *Āyu bōwā. Āyu bōwā. Nae hoṭṭaewā*[1], *nae sindāwā.*
Hudu hambā welafa adagaha dunnā haewā bunnā.
Kisi waradak sitanna epā, apit hanawā bonawā.

Salutation! Salutation! Part of (our) relatives!
Multitude of relatives! Having called (you) at the (right) time (we) gave (you) white sambā (rice); (you) ate, (you) drank. Do not think any wrong (of us); we also eat (and) drink.

[1] *Koṭṭaewā* for *koṭṭāsya*, a part, section.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Dambani.

782
539

II. *E lowa giyu apu appā mi lowa wara. Dapaṭullan aṇā hālāpiṇ. Hiṭa mangaccapawu kaukunā boṭa dammanna, kabaraya boṭa dammanna. Mī paṇgiri kola aṇā hālāpin. Hanā kanikaṭa mangaccapawu. Awmalaya aṭṭin kaḍaṭa mangaccapawu. Dapaṭullan aṇā hālāpiṇ, gal miccak aṇā hālāpiṇ, paṇgiri kola aṇā hālāpiṇ. Kaukunā boṭa dammanna, kabaraya boṭa dammanna mani kaniyaṭa mangaccapaw.*

Our father who went to that world come to this world. Take the rice. Come quickly to place (for us) the sambar deer, to place the spotted deer. Take this betel leaf. Come very quickly. Come quickly my mother's people. Take the rice, take the rock honey, take the betel leaf. To place the sambar deer, to place the spotted deer, come very quickly.

"*Dapaṭullan* from *dapaṭa*, 'double' and *ula*, 'point.' Rice is the grain with two points, not rounded like millet.

"*Mangacca* from *man*, 'path,' and *gassanawā*, 'to strike (with the feet),' hence to proceed in either direction, that is, to come or to go.

"*Kaukunā boṭa*, 'the dirty-eared beast,' the sambar. The long ears of some animals are liable to become dirty inside with the wax, etc. and ticks often collect in them. Hence the application of the term 'the dirty-eared beast' to the sambar.

"*Kabaraya boṭa*, 'the spotted beast,' the axis.

"*Paṇgiri kola*, 'sour leaf,' may include any leaf of acid taste for chewing, but the expression is especially applied to betel, as in the *kaele basa*. The commonest word for 'sour' is *aembul* but *paṇgiri* is also often used.

"*Aṇā hālāpiṇ* for *anna* (*aran*) *karāpan*, 'take.' In another invocation (No. IV) we have *aṇā hālāṅka*, 'I will make another's,' that is, 'I will present.'"

Godatalawa.

III. *Ayu bōwā! Mal paṇnal wannā. Ada rakshāwak nai. Bin baṭawwa ada denṭa ōnaṭyi. Hatarak pā aṭṭanṭa gayun allā denṭa ōnaṭyi. Eyin paṇyin puṭṭā anguru mas yahaṇak appu-kara drunayi. Ada rakuma rakshāwa balā baendala denṭa ōnaṭyi.*

Salutation[1]! Driver away of Vaeddas[2]. Today (there is) no livelihood.

[1] Lit. may life be long.

[2] *Mal paṇnal wannā*. "The word *mal* in another invocation of the *Nai Yaki* is evidently applied to the Vaeddas, and therefore there cannot be much doubt regarding the meaning, here and elsewhere, of the expression *mal paṇnal wannā*, when

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Today you must give wild brinjal; you must allow the four-footed persons[1] to catch iguanas. Having roasted (part) of them in an hour[2], I will make and give (you an offering of) an altar (furnished with) meat (fried on) charcoal[3]. Today (you) must furnish (and) give protection (and) livelihood by (your) power.

Wellampelle.

IV. *Depatullan aene hālāṅṅa, paengiri hola aenā hālāṅṅa, gal micciyak aenā hālāṅṅa appalaye aettanna meri yānak aene hālāṅṅa. Kankunā mayi shapa aenā hālāpa adana iti hapa damā.*

I will present rice, I will present betel leaf, I will present rock honey, I will present an altar for the dead to (my) father's people. Make over as mine the sambar, having placed (for me) the wearing-spikes beast (i.e. the porcupine).

"*Aene hālāṅṅa* for *Anya karaṅṅa*, I will make another's, that is, I will present or make over.

"*Meri*, from root *mri* (Skt) to die.

"*Yānak* for *Yahanak*."

Godatalawa.

It was stated that the following invocation was said to determine whether the deceased had attained power as a *yaka*.

V. *Hāmadurwā, Alut mal paennae wannā, hashan tiyenawā hashae nam eha wal mandiyak wal warāgapa ena wēlāpa mapa gawara māgallek hambowenpa ānae. Mē unhiri dalwapa, mal paennae Wannā, eli bānawā.*

Lord, New Driver away of Vaeddas, if it be true that there are miracles[4], killing one wild iguana in the jungle at the time while coming I must meet with a sambar deer. (Be pleased) to drink[5], Driver away of Vaeddas, this young coconut[6].

applied to the spirit of the recent dead. Dr Seligmann learnt that the cave in which a Vaedda has died is avoided by his relatives as a residence for several years afterwards; and this appears to afford a satisfactory explanation of the expression."

[1] Dogs, a *hadi bāsa* term.

[2] The Sinhalese unit of time here translated "hour" has a duration of twenty minutes.

[3] Lit. charcoal meat altar.

[4] "The words *hashan tiyenawā hashae nam* 'if it be true that there are miracles' were explained to Dr Seligmann as signifying 'if it is true that you have attained power (or become powerful) as a *yaka*.'"

[5] "*eli bānawā* means 'having thrown down (the throat), to swallow.' In the *hadi bāsa*, *heja bānawā*, which means 'to eat,' is literally 'having chopped, to swallow.'"

[6] "*Unhiri dalwa* is 'the bud deficient in milk,' that is, the young coconut before the 'milk' is formed in it."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Kalukalaeba.

782
539

VI. *Ayiyō hamuwanāsi rakhima rakshāwa lasheṇna ēnas yanna heṇaṭa ena heṇaṭa eka hiri daḷu ithireṇna wāgē maha mandē[1] wāruhaw enā wāgē rakhima rakshāwa diyunu diyunu harala dunna ēnas.*

Hail. You must (cause us) to receive protection and means of support while going and returning. As the young shoot springs up from the eye (of the seed), as the south-west wind comes (causing) great delight, you must bestow two-fold two-fold protection and maintenance.

Bandaraduwa.

VII. *Willin mārāl nangī siṭā, gangin mārāl nangī siṭā, ṭeliyen ṭeliyaṭa williṭa no bin no bin kiyanna. Ayiyō Deyyā.*

From the pool the Brahmany kite has risen, from the river the Brahmany kite has also risen, from line to line at the pool (i.e. flying round it in circles) saying "no place, no place." Alas! O God.

"*Mārālu* is a *hatti bāsa* word for the Brahmany kite. Its cry is said by villagers to be *no bin, no bin*, one meaning of which is 'improper,' which does not appear to be suitable in this invocation. 'There is no place for me now' seems to be the meaning. The spirit of the deceased is compared to the kite which is accustomed to circle round high above the water, uttering this cry."

Uniche.

VIII. *Pelaha nagā marāṇa gat, ṭelaha gangī marāṇa gat williṭa siṭaguna no bin kiyālā.*

Wanni allaṭu dunu haṭu ilal simin simiṭat no bin kiyālā.

Me gaḍawala goḍa taraṇa mal haḍanna haḍanna mal aḍu wela. Ayiyā, Deyiyā.

The part (? of the dead) whom the cobra killed, (and) the part whom the river killed, having said "(There is) no place (for us)," are stopping at the pool[2].

The bow-sticks (and) arrows[3] seized in the Wanni (the forest), having said "(There is) no place (for them," go) from boundary to boundary (? in other people's possession).

(Through) continuing to break, in these lands, the Vaeddas[4] that pass over the land, the Vaeddas[4] have diminished. Alas, God!

1 *Mandē* is the genitive case of *manda*, "pleasure," "delight," "rejoicing."

2 "The context may possibly imply that the spirits of those who die of snake-bite or drowning are left to fly about like the kites, as homeless shades, that is as *pēta*."

3 "This doubtless refers to the bows and arrows of the deceased."

4 "The word here translated Vaeddas usually means 'flowers.' It is however quite clear that it is also used to mean 'Vaeddas,' cf. invocation No. III."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Bulugahaladena.

IX. *Demaṭamali Demaṭamalā Koṭakaccī uccumbaye mākaccamā, uccumbaye mākappā dāpaṭullan pajja mālā wada māl pucccal tapanja ammā hālan ni tapanni bapallawa.*

Demaṭamali and Demaṭamalā, excellent Great Mother (and) excellent Great Father of Koṭakacciya, (we) having washed rice in a pot (and) having roasted meat shot with the arrow, may they be made over to you. Eat ye also.

"*Uccumbaye* for *uttaba*, excellent.

"Kotakaecci appears to be the name of a place.

"*Pajja* for *pacca*, pot.

"*Wada* for *vaidya* or *vidha*.

"*Mal* for *mālu*, meat.

"*Puccal* for *pulussalā*, roasted."

"Demaṭamali and Demaṭamalā are two flower names, which like numerous others in Sinhalese are used as personal names. Demaṭamalā means flower of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) the last vowel being lengthened by the addition of *a*, as is usual in personal names. Demaṭamali is simply the feminine form."

X. *Demaṭamali uccumbaye mā ammā, Demaṭamalā Koṭakaccī uccumbaye maha appa hambuntwa, hakarya, hacca dikkā, wandi, peruwā, gayi hakka mā mada ammā halapa ayya baccapa.*

Demaṭamali, excellent Great Mother, Demaṭamalā excellent Great Father of Koṭakacciya, make over (and) take (and) send down (to us) the sambar, the axis deer, the pig, the iguana (fem.), the large buffalo (?), (and beehives) inside trees hollow (and) large.

"*Hacca dikkā*, 'the long-snouted one.'

"*Wandi* is the fem. of *wandā*, the nooned one.

"*Peruwā*. This word is doubtful. It has the form of a *hallī bāsa* word like the others, and thus must be descriptive of the animal; it may mean 'the large Great one.'

"*Gayi*, pl. of *gā*, tree.

"The word for beehives, *mackikarli gam*, has been omitted."

Sitala Wanniya.

XI. *Arā rajā Kappan selliya pepena, nillin andaru dayiyā Alutu Wanniyā, tamāgā hapaṭa tapaṭi hanā hapakkan hanamandiran ā dilunnow halanna dewana wawu, Alutu Wanniyā.*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Kapunselliya (Monkeys' Hill) appears (like) the king of health (?), the god dark with verdure, O New Wanniyā. The ear-rings made for his ears shine[1] like fire-flies. Come running to look (at it), O New Wanniyā.

Mr Parker writes: "This invocation is a poetical description of Monkeys' Hill, on which the fire-flies remind the reciter of shining ear-rings. The speaker of the invocation hopes by his glowing description to attract the 'new spirit.'" Our informants at Sitala Wanniya stated that Kapunselliya was a hill on the far side of Walimbagala (Friar's Hood) where their ancestors gathered honey. They said that the invocation first stated that Kapunselliya was dark, and they informed us that this was due to mist or fog. The invocation then appealed to the spirit invoked as "new Wanniya," asking that he should come running to see the ear-rings which had been prepared for his ears and which shone like fire-flies. In spite of the more practical appeal made to the *Nae Yaku* according to the Vedda version, this account coincides in essentials with Mr Parker's translation, since both agree that the object of the invocation is to attract the spirit of the deceased.

Dambani.

XII. *Urēgamai gama Asmbulēgamai gama wē aṭa hakeiya watti, ḍada hakeiya watti wattiya de wattiṭa hola wilindumana parakkumayi. Mē parakkumai ullaṭa ullā i Kamburā galaṭa wanḍalā pilunuwan pāla idiyā wāla.*

On some occasions (lit. from occasion to two occasions) in the wild plantain garden and the house (i.e. cultivated) plantain garden at both Urēgama village and Asmbulēgama there is delay in the unfolding of the leaves. On account of this delay will the chief Nilā having proceeded to that Kamburā-gala, by the great amount of (his) skill cause the trees to fruit and the fruit to ripen?

We give this invocation with all reserve. As stated elsewhere in this volume the Dambani folk are village Veddas accustomed to parade their "wildness," and it was difficult to work with them, so that it is not improbable that this formula has really nothing to do with the *Nae Yaku*. These remarks apply equally to the following invocation (No. XIII). Mr Parker suggests the possibility that it implied "that as the chief Nilā could twice preserve the plantain trees he might have preserved the Vaeddas if he wished."

[1] "Wrongly put in the Imperative mood."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

XIII. *Aet ādāna gaṇana nodenat Ākāsakāli Devi vāsin tanak, pahenat mālā haṭa gaṇana nodenat pahenat Mihikhat Devi vāsin tanak, hiri haṭa wasuṇu hanna nodenat Kanda Ahat Devi vāsin tanak.*

Sai wadā ē diri ādu mā diriya ennāsin nalak pahiguṇa ha hāl ena wādinak, ādu ādyan hamdāgaṇa wadu ādyan hamdāgaṇa ennanna na wāgē. Ēng anduwa ādu turup ād ādanat wart dewa rada ādāgaṇa ennanna. Ēhawan ādanna gennurup ādan hasu dikhā ādanna ennā nuwa.

To take the hidden treasure of the sky is not permitted by the Goddess (of the sky) Ākāsakālī herself; on the earth to take the gems of the earth is not permitted by the Goddess of the earth, Mahīkāntāwa herself; the milk drinking calf is not permitted to drink, by the new Goddess of the hill herself.

Are you coming from that country of the Seven Seas to this country, having split the forehead (i.e. made your appearance out of the forehead), and shaking violently at the very time when you come? You will not come (Unless we) have tied clothes overhead and have tied side cloths (at the shot or *anduwa*). Come and hold in your hand ornamental arches (*turup*) in which is suspended a golden chain. You will come holding a divine wheel (?). Goat catchers, sambar deer catchers, pig catchers will not come (i.e. to ask your assistance on this occasion).

"*Aet* for *ākāsē*, in the sky.

"*Kaṭa* appears to equal *Kāntak*, a gem; or it is derived from the root *khan*, dig, excavate.

"*Wacca* for *wasā*, calf.

"*Anduwa* for *andu*, chain.

"*Rada* may be *ritāya*, a wheel, but it does not occur elsewhere, and the meaning is doubtful.

"*Hassa dikhā*, 'long snout,' a *kaelī bāsa* word for pig."

With the possible exception of the reference to the "New Goddess of the Hill," which may refer to one of the Maha Yakini (Kiriammā), there is nothing in this invocation belonging to the Vedda form of belief, and we do not doubt that the whole formula has been taken over from foreign sources. Mr Parker writes that he has "no knowledge of Ākāsakālī, the Sky Goddess," but that "Mahi-kāntāwa is well known as the personification of the earth, literally 'Earth' (*mahi*), 'woman' (*kāntāwa*)."

The appearance of divine children by other means than birth *per vias naturales* is a common Hindu belief of which Mr Parker cites the following instances: "Ayiyanār, the son of Mōhinī,

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

an incarnation of Vishnu, is said in Ceylon and India to have appeared from Vishnu's hand.....there is the well known story of the production of the four castes from the body of Brahma[1]."

Henebedda.

The heading of this invocation *Paṭṭiwelaṭa Panikki Yakā makuṭa kiyana kavi* signifies "Song sung for the cattle herds to Panikki Yaka the Chief." The *yaka* invoked is the spirit of the sixteenth century chief Panikki Vedda, whose history is given in Chapter I. To some extent this invocation bridges the gap between the nameless *Nae Yaku* and the Vedda heroes, though it is obvious that the worship of Panikkia Yaka is allied to the *Baṇḍara* cult to which we have alluded elsewhere. Our informants, however, did not regard Panikkia Yaka as a Baṇḍāra.

XIV. *Asa guru kapayi, Bola tāpā yāluwā.*
Poli guru kapayi, Bola tāpā yāluwā.
Gasannīt sulanmayi, Bola tāpā yāluwā.
Igalunnīt pa(a)daralmayi, Bola tāpā yāluwā.

Kasā irupa pitu iru hindi ādinnawu ādinnawu,
Muna wuna pārubhada, Nilami Nilā?

Kuḍā naṇḍi ralā narwatuṇ, bālaṭṭhada, bālannada?
Kuḍā naṇḍi raalat hodimayi, Bola tāpā yāluwā.
Mahā naṇḍi ralā narwatuṇ bālaṭṭhada Bola tāpā yāluwā?
Madā naṇḍi raalā hadi Bola tāpā yāluwā.

Duuna gatat senda widaman, Panikkiyā.
Polla gatat senda narwatuṇ, Panikkiyā.
Manda gatat senda bandaman, Panikkiyā.
Ada matanata ayi, Gambara Panikkiya.

[1] This is given in the Purana as follows (Wilson's translation, p. 44): "Formerly, the eighth best of Brahmans, when the truth-meditating Brahma was desirous of creating the world, there sprang from his mouth beings specially endowed with the quality of goodness; others from his breast,...others from his thighs,...and others from his feet...."

The Vishnu Purana records (p. 50) that when Brahma found that his mind-born progeny were unsuitable for peopling the world, "he was filled with wrath capable of consuming the three worlds, the flame of which invested, like a garland, heaven, earth and hell. Then from his forehead, darkened with angry frowns, sprang Rudra, resplendent as the noon-tide sun, fierce, of vast bulk, and of a figure which was half male, half female."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

The sky is becoming purple, O thou Friend!
The earth is becoming purple, O thou Friend!
Blows even the wind also, O thou Friend!
Even the small birds are flying also, O thou Friend!

From behind the yellow sun, draw, draw the sun's rays.
What is the (reason of the) delay, Chief Nilā?

Shall I look, shall I look if a small heifer has stopped in the herd? (that is, is in the herd).
Even a small heifer is not in the herd, O thou Friend!
Shall I look if a large heifer has stopped in the herd, O thou Friend?
A large heifer is also not in the herd, O thou Friend!

Should he take the bow, he is able to shoot well, the Panikkiya.
Should he take the cudgel, he is good at stopping (the buffaloes), the Panikkiya.
Should he take the noose, he is able to tie well, the Panikkiya.
Today he will come here, the speckled Panikkiya.

Invocations to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka.

With a single exception (No. XXIII) all these invocations are recited in order to procure game. No. XV was sung whilst dancing round an arrow struck in the ground as is described in Chapter IX. [224]

The remainder (with the exception of No. XXIII already noted) are sung at the *kirikoraha* ceremony. Although the invocations used at the *kirikoraha* ceremony present almost every stage of development, and some invocations such as Nos. XVIII and XXII are obviously composed of fragments belonging to different strata of belief, in every case the *yaku* called upon are the spirits of Kande Wanniya and his brother Bilindi.

No. XXIII is especially interesting, as it shows that such powerful foreign spirits as Riri Yaka and Indigollae Yaka when adopted into the Vedda system assumed Vedda characteristics, and so became subject to Kande Yaka.

Bandaraduwa.

XV. *Kanēt sīpa Kandahapē nā hela andan*
Bā hela andan-ilala tunā
Sonda sonda gal gawarungē piyan piyana
Ōṇ yanā maya handē mul pola Wanniyā.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Having made arrow-heads of the shape of Na leaves,
Of the shape of Bô leaves, from hill to hill,
From foot-(print) to foot-(print) of excellent sambar deer,
There (he) goes, my Wanniyâ of the Chief Place of the hill.

Mr Parker explains that the "chief place of the hill" is its crest or summit, but in every case in which the expression *Kandê mul pola Wanniyâ* occurred in an invocation our informants explained that the expression was one of the names of Kande Yaka, and they clearly regarded these words as constituting a proper name. *Wanniyâ* is a common constituent of Vedda names, and has something of the significance of chief or leader. Mr Parker points out that it means "he of the Wanni" or "he of the forest track," and that it is a title given to Vedda chiefs in former times. Mr Parker considers this invocation important, "since it shows that the arrow heads were of two shapes, a narrow one with nearly parallel sides (resembling the leaf of the *nâ* tree or ironwood) like some Sinhalese arrows, and a broader one (resembling the *bô* leaf"). At the present day the heads of Vedda arrows are long and relatively narrow, that is, roughly of the shape of a leaf of the *nâ* tree. We have not seen any arrow heads whose shape recalled the leaf of the *bô* tree.

[411]

Invocation to Kande Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

XVI. *Kandaha sipa handahaṭa yanna yanna handu nirindu wasi wasinnow. Rêranné damaṇé sipa handé damunefa sonda sonda gal-gawa-ruṇné pîyen pîya kuripp̣i elayanna handé mul pola Wanniyâ.*

King of the Hills, who continues to go from hill to hill, cause rain[1]. (He is) the Wanniyâ of the Chief place of the hill, who causes to fall the hoofs of excellent sambar deer, from foot (print) to foot (print), from Rêranné Damané (the grass plain of teals) to Kandé Damané (the grass plain of the hill)[2].

"*Nirindu* from *nara* and *indra*, a poetical expression meaning 'chief of men.' It is never used colloquially by Sinhalese.

"*Kuripp̣i* = *kuṛippu* (Tamil) 'mark,' 'traces.'"

[1] "Lit. rain rain."

[2] "These names signify respectively 'the grass plain of the teal' and 'the grass plain of the hill.' Dr Seligmann was told that these hills teemed with game though on inquiry it appeared that no man had visited them or knew their situation."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782●
539

INVOCATION TO KANDE YAKA AT THE KIRIKORAHA CEREMONY.

Uniche.

XVII. *Mē kandu pīta yanna yanna nē kandē mul poḷu Wannīyā. Mē guru poḷu uḷē poḷu wassē wahinna wahinna kondu kondu māgulānnē pīyan kē lēvē yannē kandē mul poḷu Wanniya.*

It is the Wanniyā of the chief place (crest) of this hill who continues to go esta this hill. The Wanniyā of the chief place of the hill, who continues to cause (lit. to rain) this rain of great drops, drops from a dense (cloud), makes out foot-print by foot-(print) of excellent sambar deer.

INVOCATION TO BILINDI YAKA AT KIRIKORAHA CEREMONY.

Sitala Wanniya.

XVIII. *An asti ātē nan nasti gānā atin alla dena asti Bilindi Rajā. Tandena tānina tāna tandena tānine. Mast māyā mudu madēdi ē ran hapiyahi suwamini.*

Like (one) catching with (his) hand and giving the nameless sambar deer in the country where there are horns, (is) King Bilindi. Tandena tānina tāna tandena tānine. There is a golden flag in the midst of the sea full of fish, O Lord!

We consider that this invocation is certainly corrupt; further there can be no doubt that it should refer to an unnamed country and a horned sambar, as in invocation No. XXII, where, as pointed out by Mr Parker, the "unnamed country" is the applicant's own country which it was unnecessary for him to name.

DEDICATION OF FLESH AND RICE TO KANDE YAKA AND BILINDI YAKA[1].

Henebedda.

XIX. *Ayibōbōwā, ayibōbōwā. Kandē hasta hat haṭṭuwahaṭa māyahowā Kandē mulpoḷu alut dayiyannānshṭa Kandē Wanniyāta; Kan Mīran Wanniyāta, Mīray alut dayiyannānshṭa; Dalumura Wanniyāta, Dalumura*

[1] This was recited at Henebedda over the food the dedication of which we have described on p. 200. Plate XXVIII, fig. 1 is a reproduction of a photograph taken while the shaman dedicated the food.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

alut deṭiyannānshṭa; Ru aḍukku Wanniyāṭa, Ru aḍukku alut deṭiyannānshṭa; Daḍayan Wanniyāṭa, Daḍayan alut deṭiyannānshṭa; Bilindi Wanniyāṭa, Bilindi alut deṭiyannānshṭa. Adāt man mē oppu haradena ru aḍukkuwaṭa tamunnānsīlā tharen weḍiharin kohāharen ḍiyāharen diwas karunā haragena mē daḍa weḍdāṭa asli gawaruṇ gal gawaruṇ atin allā di tmunṭa weḍimunṭ awu karawā denḍa yahapoti. Ayibōhōwā, ayibōhōwā.

Long life, long life to Kandē Wanniyā, to the new god of the chief place of the hill who has become the chief of the Group of the Sixty-Seven of the Hill; to Kan Miran Wanniyā, to the new god Miran; to Dalumura Wanniyā, to the new god Dalumura; to Ru aḍukku Wanniyā, to the new god Ru aḍukku; to Daḍayan Wanniyā, to the new god Daḍayan; to Bilindi Wanniyā, to the new god Bilindi.

Today, also, granting your divine favour to the beautiful cooked food of this offering which I give, as quickly as an arrow, as quickly as a gunshot, as quickly as an egret, as quickly as flying, having caught with the hand and given to this hunting Vaedda axis deer and sambar, may it seem good (to you) to arrange them at the point of the arrow, at the point of the gun-shot, and give (them there). Long life, long life!

"The 'Group of the Sixty-seven,' the *Haṭa-hat Kaṭṭuwa*, is well-known in the North-western Province. These are nearly all Baṇḍāra or deified chiefs. Though still called 'the Sixty-seven,' their number is now well over a hundred.

"Kan Miran Wanniyā and his three associates are the subordinates or the attendants on Kandē Yaka. I cannot explain the duties of Kan Miran Wanniyā; Dalumura Wanniyā is the one who presents Kande Yaka with betel; Ru Aḍukku Wanniyā presents him with cooked food, and Dadayan Wanniyā kills game for him.

"*Weḍi* is the word always used for a gun-shot by Sinhalese and Tamils; also for the explosion of the charge when blasting."

Godatalawa.

XX. *Hat Bilindivatawa anguru mas yahana balāgalla.*
Kandē Wanniyā anguru mas yahana balāgalla.
Dalumuru Wanniyā anguru mas yahana balāgalla.
Puluṭṭā anguru mas yahana balāgalla.
Riddē Wanniyā anguru mas yahana balāgalla.

Seven Bilindi godlings, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Kandē Wanniyā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Dalumura Wanniyā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Puluṭṭā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.
Riddē Wanniyā, look at the altar of meat (fried on) charcoal.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

This formula was given us by an old man Handuna of Godatalawa, both as a dedication of food to Kande Yaka, and an invocation asking for game. We cannot explain the expression *Hāt Bilindīvatāwā*; to Handuna it was a synonym for Bilindi, and he assured us that the first line was addressed to Bilindi Yaka. Mr Parker points out that Puluṭṭā may mean "fried meat Wanniyā" and Riddē Wanniyā, "the Wanniyā who caused pain." If this be so Puluṭṭā must be regarded as the Wanniya who fried meat for Kande Yaka[1]. We can offer no suggestion as to the significance of the expression "the Wanniyā who caused pain."

Invocation to Bilindi Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Menebedda.

Sung while the shaman dances with a coconut and *ande* as shown in Plate XXIX, figs. 1 and 2.

XXI. *Tandana, tānina, tāna tandana; tandana tānina tānina.*
Appuge wayasat bas wel(ri)di nati, sāt awurudāyi pasu wāh.
Sāt awurudāpu ādē wela gos e ran Bandara, Sāmina.
Tandana tānina tāna tandana; tandana tānina tānina.

Appuāmāpu wāyapu hasiya pāyun dāsayi, Sāmina.
Appuāmāpu wāyapu gapuwa pāyun dāsayi, Sāmina.
Ekamal āru ma aendapu hasiya sina gaṅga rasli vāhāmi.
Tandana tānina tāna tandana; tandana tānina tānina.

Kawi hiyanāsat bayi basri mapu, udahasnā wasi wāda? āyiyā!
Nan nasti baddē ay asti gāna ātin allā dona Sawāmi.
Kanda upin dasma sulan uillapu wawat handalen tona mini.
Kust upan mahma malayā maawwa mama tanthamapada, Nayidē
Kust upan mahe malayat atagama ellan harapan, Nayidē
Ay asti gawara allā dona hāti Maanik-talawa Bilindi devivā.

Tandana etc.
The age of the Chief's Son was not many years; seven years had gone by.
A time equal to seven years having gone (he became) the Forest Chief,
O Lord.
Tandana etc.

[1] There is another possibility; on the analogy of the *aruma* ceremony described at the end of this chapter it may be suggested that Puluṭṭā was held to be the first Vedda to offer fried meat at this ceremony. We do not consider this probable however.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
639

There were a thousand flowers on the cloth woven for the Chief's Son, O Lord!
There were a thousand flowers on the seat plaited for the Chief's Son, O Lord!
The cloth he wore, worked with *alamal* flowers and the parrot (?), like the waves of the river is spread out.
Tandama etc.
Through fear I cannot sing songs (properly). Will there be any anger (on account of it)? Alas!
The (rain) wind which he sent down from above the hill to the verdure is wetting with tears the face
(Of) the Lord who in the nameless jungle catches with his hands and gives the sambar deer possessing horns.
For what (fear of) solitude did (you) kill your own younger brother born of the same mother, O Nayidē?
Taking your younger brother born of the same mother play games (with him), O Nayidē.
(Addressing Bilindi) You are able to catch and give sambar deer possessing horns, O God Bilindi of Maenik-talāwa.

The words *ran Baṇḍāra* which are here translated Forest Chief might also mean Golden Chief. As already stated it appears to us that in the majority of these invocations the adjective "golden" is used to signify "excellent" or "admirable," but concerning this Mr Parker writes:

"*Ran* as an adjective almost always means 'golden,' but in such a case ought to be spelt with *ṇ*. I inserted preferentially 'Forest' in this case, as there is no reason given why he should suddenly become golden. I should generally understand 'golden' to mean 'of a golden nature or colour'; I do not think it would ever be applied to a person or deity who is dark coloured, however excellent he might be. I have heard a path termed 'like gold' by way of emphasising its excellence, but it is very unusual to employ it with this meaning."

In spite of the weight that must be attached to Mr Parker's opinion we do not agree with him in this matter, and in support of our opinion adduce the expression "golden jewelled cord" in invocation No. XXVI. We may also mention that in the invocation to Kosgama Baṇḍāra, the hero's corpse is described as "golden[1]."

[1] Cf. *Man*, 1909, where is given the translation of the invocation used in calling upon Kosgama for assistance.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Mr Parker points out that in line 7 *nā* may stand for *nahā* or *nanā*, sewn. Line 12 may be understood in two ways according to whether we read "For what (fear of) solitude," etc., or "For what need of solitude," etc. According to one account Kande Yaka killed his younger brother Bilindi because he felt lonely as a *yaka* and yearned for his company. This was the legend we heard at Henebedda, but another version makes Kande Wanniya kill his infant brother in a fit of temper because Bilindi being hungry annoyed him by constant whining. The thirteenth line, in which Kande Yaka is addressed as Nayidē, suggests that the Henebedda version of the legend is here referred to in the preceding line. We were told that Nayidē was here used as a name for Kande Yaka but could not discover the reason for this. Mr Parker points out that in Sinhalese *nayidē* simply means artificer.

Invocation to Bilindi Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Uniche.

XXII. *Kapā maṇik gal ebā, bāpaha lelo-dēdī tamā, ela hirala aendapu hacciya ātma rasiḷapa vikī-dunā. Appugē*[1] *wayasat bahā halak asti tun emuruddayi pasu wunī. Nan nasti desī, an asti gāyā alla dunuwada Bilindī Rajā.*

Having cut the Gem-rock thereby himself removing the command (regarding it), like the folds of the waves are spread out is the bleached cloth he wore. It will be a long time since three years of the Chief's son's age passed. In the unnamed country will you catch and give a sambar deer with horns, King Bilindi?

This invocation obviously consists of two parts, embodying ideas belonging to very different strata of thought. The last sentence requires no more than a reference to invocation No. XVIII, to explain "the unnamed country." The sentence before this refers to the belief that Bilindi was three years old when Kande Yaka killed him. Probably these two sentences belong to the same stratum of belief, and certainly the Veddas understood what they meant. It was otherwise with regard to the first part of this invocation, our informants could not tell

[1] Appa for Appuhāmi, the former title of the son of a chief.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

us what this meant or even translate it, though our interpreter stated that he thought it had something to do with the dress of the *yaka*. Clearly this part of the invocation is foreign, and Mr Parker suggests that since Bilindi means "the child" there is "a possibility that he is Ayiyanār, the guardian Forest Deity of Ceylon, who is represented at Tanjore as a youth. Bilindi is said by Nevill to be the son of the (Indigollaewa) Kiri Amma, who is identified by the Sinhalese as Mohini, a female personification of Vishnu; and Ayiyanār is the son of Mohini." This is supported by the reference to the Gem-rock, for as Mr Parker writes "the Kiri Amma split the sapphire gem at the sapphire mountain." Thus in the later part of the invocation, Ayiyanār may have been assimilated to Bilindi Yaka.

Invocation with bow to determine what Yaka has caused illness.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXIII. *Ayibōwā, āyibōwā. Tummaṇkaḍa suwāmin wahansa gal pīnata, dunu pīnaṭa, suba pīnaṭa ahu harala deṇḍa ōnaṭ. Mayī pīnaṭa eṇḍa ōnaṭ. Kandī Wanniyā boru pīna at-haera leḍa kala yahā maṭa ada ahu harawaṇḍa ōnaṭ. Rīri Yahā Indilegolle Yahā, Rāhu Yakun, Paṭṭa Yakun, mī suba pīnaṭa ahu harala deṇḍa ōnaṭ.*

Long life! Long life! Lord of Tamankaduwa, through (my) stones' soothsaying, through bows' soothsaying, through auspicious soothsaying, (you) must catch and give (him). Through my soothsaying, (he) must come. Kande Wanniya, having laid aside false soothsaying, (you) must cause me to seize today the Yaka who caused the sickness. (Whether) Riri Yaka, Indilegolle Yaka[1], Rahu Yaku, or Patta Yaku, through this auspicious soothsaying (you) must seize and give (him).

Rīri Yakā or Sīri Yakā is the blood demon of the Sinhalese. The Rahu Yaku appear to correspond to the Sinhalese demon Rahu Yaka[2]. We consider this invocation important as it definitely expresses what we found to be the general opinion among the

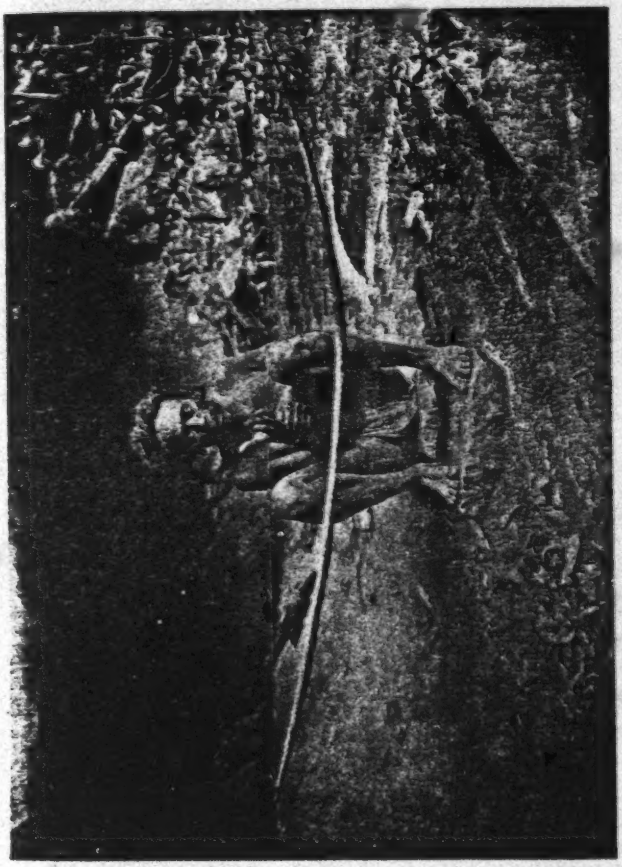
[1] Clearly a slip for Indigollae Yaka.

[2] He was originally an Asura who surreptitiously drank some of the *amrita* produced by the Gods and Demons. Mohini cut off his head, but it had become immortal and was transformed into the planetary sign (personified) which causes eclipses by trying to swallow the sun and moon because they drew the attention of Mohini to him. For the substance of this note we are indebted to Mr Parker.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
411
516
142
787

Plate LV



Nila holding bow while reciting invocation No. XXIII. When the name of the *yaka* causing the illness is spoken the bow swings to and fro

[facing p. 290]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

wilder Veddas. Kande Yaka is called upon to help, he is the spirit of a dead Vedda, one of themselves, and would never be suspected of sending sickness. It is only the stranger who brings evil things. But Kande Yaka is more powerful than the foreign *yaku* and by his help it is discovered which of them has caused sickness. In the field we found reason to believe that Indigollae Yaka and Riri Yaka and the Rahu Yaku were foreign in origin, we did not however suspect Patta Yaka, but Mr Parker says, "The Patta Yaku are diseases personified, and are male and female. The Sinhalese enumerate twelve or eighteen called Garā (m.) or Girī (f.); of these two are Paṭṭa Garā and Paṭṭa Girī. They especially afflict women and children."

Invocations used while collecting Honey.

Godatalawa.

XXIV. *Alut divi hāmuduruwō, mochiholi gamak penanpa ēnai ada. Kapala hangati yaliyan.*

Lady New Goddess, (you) must show (me) a bee-hive today. Having chopped (it out) I will hide (it) and go.

Mr Parker suggests that the honey gatherer "hints to the Goddess that he and she will divide the honey between them, unknown to the other Vaeddas and that thus she will obtain a larger share than usual." This would be quite contrary to Vedda ethics, and it seems to us more probable that the honey is hidden in order to prevent the bees carrying it away. The gatherer might well be fatigued after his exertions and would certainly not attempt to rest in the immediate neighbourhood of the bees he had robbed, nor would he leave the honey exposed where it would attract the bees.

Unuwatura Bubula.

XXIV A. *Raja Omungalliyā*
Mī guruwen Ammā.
Guru halī rahipā
Mī wawwal hapāla hassala
Dum paliyan pannala
Kapuwen hapāla

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Paliyaṭa damāla
Mītrae uṭriya paṭni gepaedin
Geṭen geṭen baḍagiṭi
Aerenna hanna.

O Omungalla Sovereign!
Mother—by this respect (paid to you)—
Who protects (us) by (your) great authority!
Having cut and lowered the (ladder of) great cane,
Having driven off (the bees) by the shield of smoke,
Having cut (the comb) with the sword,
Having put (it) down into the vessel,
Having fetched the sweetest honey[1]. Bring (it),
Bring (it) (for us) to eat, to lay aside (our) hunger.

Nevill has recorded a very similar invocation which he obtained from a Vedda of Walimbagala (Friar's Hood)[2]. He also records the following invocation which was given him by a Vedda of Omuni.

Maehi-keli Waniyā
Gal naewili Waniyā
Maehi kelanne maehi urāl
Hinā-maten keli kōpayen
Oppu ganawā tobā deyiyen.

Bee Wanniya,
Wanniya of rock worship!
(Of) the honey-comb of the bees,
Laughing at the anger of the bees,
Be pleased to take the offering,
O thou from the Gods!

The above translation has been prepared by Mr Parker and is rather more literal than either of Nevill's translations, for he gives two. That printed below shows "the sense that the construction and words of this invocation convey" to a Vedda.

"Oh Lord of the Bees!
Oh Lord of the Rock!
Honeycombs of honey bee,
With laughter and with merriness,
I offer them to Thee."

[1] Or "sweet honey like toddy."
[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 167.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Nevill records that "after each line" his informant "threw a little honey, the first cut from the cliff, to the Spirit of the Rock, and then proceeded to take the rest of the combs. He told me it was an ancient custom his ancestors followed, called 'paeni adina yadinda,' or to 'charm the drawing of honey.'"

Henebedda.

XXV. *Bori, Bori, Wanniyē.*

Nilwan pāliya neden kiyā, ē kimaṭa kāṭā ipal wēlen gāsā widinnāyi kiyā daelen daelaṭa. Aendun waeṭi enni māyē kumala Wanniyē.

Ehē mākat kādeyi kiyā, daelen daelaṭa katu ipal gāsā widinni widinni.

Diya aendūn waeṭigena yandōmē yanni nan yanni.

Mal aendun waeṭigena yanni nan yanni.

Guru aendun waeṭigena yandōmē yanni nam yanni.

Ela aendun waeṭigena yandōmē yanni nam yanni.

Aengu wāṭi baendigena yandōmē yanni nam yanni.

The translation of the heading of this invocation is "Stanza said by Veddas when cutting *bambara* on a hill or tree."

(Their sound is) *bori, bori*, O Wanniya[1]!

When (I) said[2], "(I) will not give (you) the dark-coloured vessel[3]" (containing the honey), at that remark company by company (of bees) said, "From (this) time, having beaten (you as if with) thorny rods, (we) will pierce" (you with our stings). (My) clothes are falling off (on account of the stinging), O my dear Wanniya!

When (I) said "There is nothing in it" (the vessel), company by company (of bees) having beaten (me as if with) thorny rods are piercing, are piercing (me with their stings).

(My) watered clothes (i.e. cloth with waved pattern) falling off, (I) am indeed setting off to go, (I) am going.

(My) flowered clothes falling off, I am indeed going, I am going.

(My) dark clothes falling off, I am indeed setting off to go, I am going.

(My) white clothes falling off, I am indeed setting off to go, I am going.

Tying (the clothes) round (my) body I am indeed setting off to go, I am going.

"*Maligi* is presumably *mālini*, a form of stanza.

[1] *Bori, bori* is onomatopoeic of the humming of bees.

[2] Lit. "having said."

[3] Mr Parker considers that *nilwan paliya* should be translated "blue-coloured" but that it may also mean "black" or "dark-coloured." As the result of our examination of the colour sense and colour names of the Veddas detailed in Chapter XIV we are convinced that in the present instance "dark-coloured" is the correct reading.

782
539

"*Pattu*, a vessel. The word occurs with this meaning in another invocation.

"*Kumala*, that is *kumala*, tender.

"*Yandunu yanni* for *yanduna yanni*, a common expression in Sinhalese.

"*Aendun* (properly *aendum*), 'clothes,' is in the plural, and means much more than a loin cloth. A European's dress—the various articles collectively—is called *aendum*.

"*Guru* often applied to a purple sky may also mean 'excellent'; perhaps it might here mean dark."

This is one of the invocations of which we obtained no satisfactory translation in the field. Mr Parker holds that "the whole invocation is devoted to explaining to the Wanniya the suppliant's urgent need of his assistance, without which he will be compelled to abandon the work."

We consider it far more probable that the honey collector is essentially talking at the bees while apparently talking to the Wanniya and his companions at the top of the crag[1]. While helping himself to the honey he explains—for the benefit of the bees—that having heard their determination to sting him, he was hurrying away in such haste that his clothes are falling from him, notwithstanding that he has told the bees that there is nothing, i.e. no honey, in his collecting pot.

INVOCATION BEFORE TAKING BAMBARA HONEY, SUNG BY A MAN AS HE IS LOWERED OVER THE CLIFF.

Bandaraduwa.

XXVI. *Tobā deyiyani, tobā deyiyani, alut mala upān narwini sināwa hiten, hamādiyen, machibellanni mashi ural eppu aragana, issara ashi machicci alut mala upan narwini sināwa, passi ashi machicci mala upan narwini sināwa, machibellan amma appā wāgē hella, mi ran mini hendaṭa diwa diwas pāla, tobā deyyani, tobā deyyani, tobā deyyani.*

Ara maya, ara maya, aluta Wanni Hurun, daelen daelaṭa hātu ipal gasā yanni, aluta Wanni Huruniyā.

[1] There is nothing to show who is the Wanniya addressed. If—as appears certain—the honey gatherer speaks to another Vedda on the cliff above him, this formula scarcely comes under the heading of this chapter (Invocations), but it is undoubtedly convenient to keep this with the other invocations sung while collecting honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Ara maya, ara maya, tellun bada mangt padama hewudat adun padun kodayi kiyalt, tuda haraga piyu duwé yanlt, ähta Wannt Hurunyé.

You Gods, You Gods! By the good will and superiority (?) of the newly dead and reborn new host (of spirits), taking (there) offerings of honey-comb of the bees, you who may be the first destroyed of the newly dead and reborn new host (of spirits, and) you who may be the subsequently destroyed of the newly dead and reborn new host (of spirits),—having caused the bees to sport (round me) like a mother or father, protect this golden jewelled cord (i.e. the ladder of creepers) by (your) divine eyes, you Gods, you Gods.

That (honey) is mine, that is mine, New Wanni Lords. Company by company, (as if with) thorny rods, (you) keep beating (me), O New Wanni Lords (i.e. the bees).

That (honey) is mine, that is mine. (Regarding your) hard (or excessive) blows on the very feet that ascended (the ladder of creepers), no one having said there are deficiencies, (yet) you are going running from my back to my head and neck, O New Wanni Lords (i.e. to give still more blows or stings).

"This invocation contains several expressions not met with previously, and I can only give doubtful translations of part of it.

"*Naewini* probably *newina*, 'fresh' or 'new.' I think it has nothing to do with *nätt wenawä*, to become a relative, the first word of which is always pronounced with a long vowel by both Vaeddas and Sinhalese.

"*Hamädiya*, from *sama* 'all' and *ädiya* 'first,' or *ädika* 'great.'

"*Ötpu* for *appu*, proofs, evidence; but used by Vaeddas and Wanniyas for offering.

"*Mashicca*, from v. *mahanawä*, 'to obliterate,' 'to destroy.'

"*Kella*, from v. *kelinawä*, 'to sport.'

"*Aehi* for *hashi*, possible.

"*Ara maya* is unlikely to be *aruma*, verbal noun of *arinawä*, 'to leave,' or 'to let go.'

'*Tellun*, pl. of *tallima*, v. noun of *talanawä*, 'to beat.'

"*Bädä* may be *bäda*, 'hard,' 'solid' or *bädhä*, 'promise' or 'much,' 'excessive.'

"*Adun padun*, pl. of *adupädima*, 'deficiency.'

"*Ködayi* means 'it is not,' or 'there is not,' from *hodama*, 'not.' In the last paragraph of this invocation the negative is expressed thus: 'some having said there are not deficiencies.'"

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

This is one of the invocations of which we could only obtain an explanation in part, but luckily our informants were perfectly clear as to the meaning they attached to the first part of the invocation, and we feel confident that the following lines give the significance attached by them to this part of this invocation.

You spirits, you spirits of the recently dead and of the old dead, you *nae* (relative) spirits, take this offering of honey comb and protect me as a father and mother. Protect this rope.

Concerning the word *upan* which in this invocation Mr Parker translates "reborn," this authority writes, "*Upan* which I have translated reborn, literally means 'born'; but the other word more correctly expresses the meaning....The view I should take of the matter is that the person died and was buried. Then when the Vaeddas find him or his spirit in existence again they term it a re-birth in the world of spirits. This kind of expression is common in Buddhism; compare *kelawara devlowa upannīya*, 'he was (re)born in the final god-world' (Dhātuvansa)."

Although the Veddas of Bandaraduwa have come very much under foreign influence we feel convinced that they have no such carefully formulated ideas of re-birth as Mr Parker suggests, and we believe that the words of the invocation and the significance that the Veddas attach to it, can be harmonized without doing violence to Vedda modes of religious thought, by considering the translation as being from the comparatively unimportant *preta* to the full powered *yaka*, though as pointed out by Mr Parker, this would not be re-birth in the usual Sinhalese (Buddhist) sense.

With regard to the expression *nāī* (relative) spirits in the Vedda version, Mr Parker writes: "If *naewini* were a mistake for *nāī wena*, the translation of the first part after 'Gods' would be, 'By the goodwill and superiority of the newly dead and *reborn host who are becoming* (*our*) *relatives*.'" The words in italics indicate only the meaning of the words *alut mala upan naewini sīnāwa*.

Nāe wena sīnāwa is *nāī*, "kinsfolk," *wena*, "becoming," and *sīnāwa*, "host," "multitude."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Invocations to Bambura Yaka.

The invocations to Bambura Yaka are the most puzzling of all those we collected. None of our informants understood them and the translations given were fragmentary, or else we were told that although the words of the sentences could be translated so as to make some sort of sense, the significance of the invocation was unknown, or if appreciated did not necessarily agree with the meaning of the literal translation. Further, although it is certain that Bambura Yaka especially gives success in searching for yams and hunting pig, Mr Parker's translations make it quite certain that these invocations really apply to honey collecting. The reference to the "golden creeper," i.e. the ladder made of jungle creepers and used in taking honey, lowered across the face of the Inginiya rock makes this certain. Nevertheless both at Sitala Wanniya and Uniche, invocations with these expressions in them were recited as invocations to Bambura Yaka to send pig, and none of our informants regarded Bambura Yaka as having anything to do with honey. It may be suggested tentatively that the resemblance in sound of Bambura the home of the *yaka* and *bambara*, the word for the rock bee, may have brought about this confusion.

782 539
[222 417]

Sitala Wanniya.

XXVII. *Mē magē Bamburaṇi, Bamburaṇi. Magē Bamburō bat haddē nadew nadow gala gala suniyanīyē.*

Mē masā muratafa godu madani madubat hāpu hafafa sindu dendō hapa no kīyandō. Mē kudā Inginiyā galafa hāpu ran wasela galat gala gala mē wara wasē golō.

This is my Bamburā, Bamburā. While my Bamburā is eating rice make a sound, make a sound, "gala, gala"—save, save (him)—by magic.

At this very instant destroying the mounds (on the face of the rock) be pleased to give to the mouth that has eaten honey (the power to sing) songs (correctly and) not to speak nonsense. Save, save (both) the golden creeper that has been lowered down this little Inginiya rock and the rock, (or otherwise) this time the rock will fall.

"Bamburō (pl.) and Bamburani are honorific forms of Bamburā. Compare *Maharajani*, used in addressing a king.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

1782
539

"*Nādaw* for *nāda karapan*, or perhaps *nāda weyan*, 'may there be a sound.'

"*Gala gala*. Compare *galawanawā*, 'to save,' 'deliver.'

"*Mazā*, probably *mṛila*, from root *mṛil*, Skt. 'to touch.'

"*Murata* for *muhūrta*, a moment.

"*Goḍu*, pl. of *goḍa*, a mound.

"*Maḍāne* for *madaṇu*, from root *mṛid*, Skt. to crush, destroy.

"*Bāpu* from v. *bānawā*, to lower.

"*Bana kiyanda*, 'to repeat the Buddhist Scriptures,' is used colloquially with the meaning here given.

"*Golō* for *galo*, 'rock,' as in another invocation addressed to this *yaka*."

Mr Parker writes: "This is a prayer for the protection of the ladder of creepers down which the honey gatherer descends, and also to prevent the fall of loose pieces of projecting rock on his head. First the suppliant asks for magical words to arouse the attention of the *yaka*. The rest of the invocation is evidently addressed to the *yaka* himself."

Uniche.

XXVIII. *Mī Inginiya galata bāpu raṇ wasla waslat wael mī wara wasflyā. Mī apa Bamburō bat kaṇa raṇ mandī. Mārtu mal andan sanī galō. Mī apa Bamburō bat kadāī nādaw, nādaw gal gala suniyanā.*

The golden creeper and the jungle creepers lowered down this Inginiya rock will fall this time (unless protected by the Yaka). This (rock) is the golden plate off which our Bambura eats rice. It is a rock made in the form of the Marut flower. While this our Bambura is eating rice make a sound, make a sound, "gal, gala"—save save (him)—by magic.

"*Waslat* is probably *wala* plus *t*, forest or jungle.

"*Mārtu* for *marut*, a plant.

"*Andan* for *andama*, manner, state.

"*Galō* for *gala*, rock.

"Apparently it is the rock which is expected to emit a noise that will arouse the attention of the *yaka*. The suppliant praises it in order to propitiate it."

This invocation was not understood by our informants, nor could we ascertain that it was sung to any *yaka* other than one who was called Mulpola Hitiye Yaka, "the *yaka* who stopped a

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the summit of the hill[1]." Unfortunately we omitted to ask whether this was a synonym for Kande Yaka who, in other invocations, is addressed as Kande Mulpola Wanniya, but the tone of the whole invocation with its reference to the "sword called Golden" is as unlike any other invocation to Kande as it well can be. This invocation is thoroughly foreign in form and sentiment.

782
539

Sitala Wanniya.

Invocation addressed to Mulpola Hitiye Yaka, "the yaka who stopped at the Chief Place," i.e. the summit of the hill, at the Bambura ceremony.

XXIX.

Rap nan hafuwt nawa dunitet
Apalt Wanniye nawa no hiyā.
Apalt Wanniye nawa dunitet
Rap nan hafuwt nawa no hiyā.

Angaru nartun nafapa Wanniye
Sonda sonda bera pada gantpow.
Sellan nartun nafapa Wanniye
Sonda sonda bera pada gantpow.

If you know the eulogy of the sword called Golden
Do not say the praise of our Wanniya.
If you know the eulogy of our Wanniya
Do not say the praise of the sword called Golden.

To the Wanniya who dances gesture-dances
Beat excellent tunes (lit. verses) on the tom-tom.
To the Wanniya who dances sportive-dances
Beat excellent tunes on the tom-tom.

Our informants, though providing a translation of the words of this invocation which approximates to the translation given by Mr Parker, could not tell us the significance thereof. Indeed they were only clear on one matter, that in spite of what the invocation said they had no drums and never had had drums. Handuna stated that the translation of the second verse should be:—

Sing loudly to him who dances the *angaru* dance.
Sing loudly to him who dances playful dances.

None could say what the *angaru* dance might be.

[1] Or perhaps the *yaka* to whom the Mulpola Hitiye belonged. Hitiye whatever else it may signify is also the ancient name for a particular form of painted weapon.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Mr Parker suggests that the meaning of the first verse "may be that the Wanniya is too important a personage for anything else to be praised in the same breath (even his golden sword), and that 'at the same time' is to be understood at the end of the second and fourth lines of the translation."

Mr Parker also suggests that Mulpola Hitiye Yaka may be a synonym of "Gale Yaka (Yaka of the Rock) who danced on hills, and whose worshippers dance on many hills or crags of the Vaedi-rata as well as the North-western Province. *Hitiye* is a participial adjective derived from *hitinawa* to stay or stop; the literal translation of *mulpola hitiye Yaka* is 'Chief-place-stopped-Yaka!'"

Invocation at Pregnancy Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

Us Mukkāliya[1] Song, at pregnancy dance.

XXX. *Us mukkāliya wafa, maeda mukkāliya wafā, bāla kaṇuwa wafā paṇa daewafā ennau, dēvatāwayi.*

Having jumped round the high tripod, round the middle tripod, round the small post, come, wrapped up. (He) is a Dēvatāwa (godling).

This invocation was recited by the dancers at the pregnancy ceremony described on pp. 247 to 251. We do not understand to whom the last sentence "(He) is a Devatawa (godling)" applies. On receiving Mr Parker's translation we suggested that this might refer to the unborn child, but Mr Parker pointed out that he would not expect a child to be called a *devatawa*, and that "it is of the worst augury to speak in terms of praise of any child." Mr Parker therefore understands "the word *devatawa* to refer in a complimentary manner to the spirit which is asked to come." This idea agrees with the information we obtained in the field, where a somewhat doubtful translation of this invocation was given as follows: those who jump between the *us mukkāliya*, the *meda mukkāliya*, and the *balakanuwa* are *devatawa* (pl.). It was explained that the invocation referred to the performers, and that the expression "are *devatawa*" was the

[1] *Mukkāliya* is formed from two Tamil words, *mūndu* "three," and *kāl* "legs."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

equivalent to saying "are possessed of *yaku*," since to Veddas of Sitala Wanniya *devatawa* was a synonym for *yaka*.

1782
539

Dola Yaka Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

Invocation to Dola Yaka.

XXXI. *Kaḍat haḍa Doliyā. Mal bandinā taepa anḍagēlā sadhanayi. Bindēlī damanna damaqua bindēliyā, mal bandinā panawayi.*

Our informants could not translate this invocation or even state its meaning. Mr Parker supplies the following "doubtful translation":

Bit by bit, O Dolyā. At the place where the flowers (or necklaces) are tied there is a noise of calling (for us). The fixing of the demon offerings (*dola*) on the ground, the fixing of the demon offerings on the ground causes delay in tying the flowers (or necklaces).

"*Doli* is usually a swing, but apparently this cannot be the meaning here. *Dola* is especially an offering to evil spirits who are demons, such as Riri Yaka.

"It is uncertain if the first *doliyā* should be translated 'O Offering!'

"In Clough's Dictionary one meaning of *haḍa* is 'arrow,' but it is very doubtful if the Vaeddas ever use it with this signification, indeed, I have never known *haḍa* used for arrow. Everywhere the Vaeddas and Sinhalese say *i, iya, iguha, itala*. The translation—'arrow by arrow'—would, however, suit the ceremony."

Invocation to Indigollae Yaka at the Kirikoraha Ceremony.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXII. *Itiriya-kanda Madara gala wāḍiyā. Ī dahasak gana aruwāḍu dunu ḍiyā, Indigollā devi wasḍiyat sabā wiyā. Mini riri eruwahaḍa thamiy hemiy lamā.*

Madara-gala at Itiriya-kanda (is your) lodging. Having brought a thousand arrows (and) decorated bowstrings, God of Indigolla, should you

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539
[177]

come may (you) be fortunate. While putting (your mouth) to a boat (shaped vessel) of human blood (and) while drinking (may you be) delighted[1].

At Sitala Wanniya Indigollae Yaka was regarded as an attendant upon Kande Yaka. It is therefore obvious that this invocation did not arise at Sitala Wanniya or among any Veddas retaining their original *yaka* beliefs, and it is in fact an excellent example of the foreign element in the Vedda religion, and is especially interesting because it is possible in this case to indicate how an invocation of horrific nature has been introduced.

This matter has been discussed in the addendum to Chapter VIII; we may, however, suggest that the boat-shaped vessel of blood may refer to the murder of the 60 priests.

What we have written on p. 165 concerning the attributes of Indigollae Yaka among the village Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula shows that he has entered their beliefs as a powerful but beneficent spirit, though revengeful of neglect or insult. At Sitala Wanniya he is a *yaka* attendant on Kande Yaka. He may have attained this position immediately on his adoption, in which case his terrifying invocation must have been subsequently introduced and carelessly attached to the friendly *yaka*. Or the invocation, which is clearly only a fragment of a long formula, may portray something of his character when first adopted, and though his attributes have been softened to the usual friendly quality of Vedda *yaku*, a portion of the invocation appropriate to him may have lingered. We consider the first of these hypotheses the more likely, but in any case the existence among the Veddas of Sitala Wanniya of the foreign Indigollae Yaka as a beneficent attendant on Kande Yaka, who is nevertheless invoked with a formula typical of a bloodthirsty Sinhalese demon, is a most interesting example of the foreign elements that we now find in the Vedda religion.

Invocation to the Maha Kiriamma.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXIII. *Sorambara waewē sonda sonda nelun aeti. Ewā nelunnaḷa sonda sonda liyō yati, eka muṇu baḍu*[2] *baendana yati senaga ḷam ba-*[2] *Sorambara ḷasu haraṇa yati Pangara-gammanā.*

[1] Deriving *lamā* from *ram*.

[2] *eka muṇu baḍu* for *ek-emunu baḍu*, things strung together.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

In Horabora tank there will be excellent lotus. To gather them excellent women go; tying on strings of beads they go. The multitude who cherish affection, leaving Horabora behind, go to Pangara gammana.

782
539

The Veddas of Sitala Wanniya told us that they did not invoke the Kiriamma with offerings for the cure of sickness though they had heard that the Veddas of the Bintenne did so and Handuna gave us these lines as part of the Bintenne invocation, which he said he had learnt from his father. He only understood the first few words which he translated "There are fine lotus in Horaboraweva and fine women go to pluck them." A variant of this invocation—if such it be—has been published by Mr Louis De Zoysa[1] as a song of the Veddas of Horaborawewa.

Sorabora wewé sonda ofu nefum ę
Mtwá nelannafu sonda liyé e
Kalu haralá hudu haralá wyá de
Ofu sálé bat kannafu nófu nę.

Fine, fine water-lilies and lotuses grow in Sorobora tank!
These to gather come fine, fine women.
They make them into black and white curries;
To eat the water-lily-seed rice there are no curries.

Obviously both versions are corrupt and have been derived from an invocation (No. XXXIX) sung at the *kolamaduwa* ceremony.

INVOCATION TO THE KIRIAMMA OF INDIGOLLAEWA ASKING FOR SUCCESS IN HUNTING.

Bandaraduwa.

XXXIV. *Irt handa Menara galada wāḍiyā*
I dahasak wida taru haraṭu dunu ḍiyā
Yanda enda diya pā man balāpiyā
Indigollā Devi waṭiyot subā wīyā

Aeli gigiran piṭa inda walu kaṭina lamā
Diya gigiran piṭa inda diya damana lamā
Naddunnā dunu diya atu kudā lamā
Riri oruwa piṭa sakman haruna lamā

[1] Note on the Origin of the Veddas, with a few specimens of their songs and charms. *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1881, Vol. VII, Part II, p. 102.

[113]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Oba tula rajuṭa oba tula wāṭi asraṭu la
Meba tula rajuṭa meba tula wāṭi asraṭu la
De piti rajuṭa de piti wāṭi asraṭu la
Tama mama sidida? Dan tula raju marāpuka la.

Iri-kanda (Sow-hill) and Monara-gala (Peacock-rock) are (her) resting-places.
(She has) a thousand arrows, and bow-strings made with strength to pierce.
Look at the path on which her watery feet come and go.
Should the Goddess of Indigolla proceed (along it) there will be good luck.

(She is) the Lady who spins the clouds (in order) to sit behind the thunders of the waterfalls,
The Lady who subdues the water (in order) to sit behind the thunders of the water.
The Lady whose hand is small for the bow-string of the sounding bow (?),
The Lady who walks behind the boat (shaped vessel) of blood.

To the great king on that side that great resting-place was given up, it is said;
To the great king on this side this great resting-place was given up, it is said;
To the kings on both sides the resting places on both sides were given up, it is said.
What (opportunity was there) still for sleep? The wealthy great kings were killed, it is said.

"*Oba* and *meba* are Sinhalese or Elu words for 'there' and 'here' according to Clough; but are never used colloquially by Sinhalese, whereas they are in common use by the Vaeddas, and I was told by them they meant 'on that side' and 'on this side,' *otta* (Sin. *ohaṭa*) and *metta* (Sin. *mehaṭa*) being used for 'there' and 'here.'

"The penultimate *la* of the last line appears to be pleonastic.

"The translation of the third line of the second verse is doubtful. It may mean 'the little lady whose hand (guides) the bow-string of the sounding bow,' and this would agree with her title *Lamā*, but as she is not elsewhere referred to as being young or small I have not inserted this translation in the verse."

This invocation was written down for us by Tissahami the Vedda Arachi. It is therefore not surprising to find that it contains little that belongs to the Vedda stratum of thought. The invocation is headed *Indigollae Kiri Ammā daṭayamaṭi*

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

natana kavi "Song danced for hunting to Kiriamma of Indigollae." We did not have the opportunity of discussing the meaning of this invocation in the field, and indeed knew nothing of its contents until Mr. Parker translated it. With regard to the significance of this invocation Mr Parker writes: "Indigollae Kiriamma is here treated as the Huntress Goddess of the waters, who sends the rain which enables the hunters to track the deer. The boat of blood is referred to in an invocation of her husband, the Indigollaewa Yaka.

"Apparently two other Yakas endeavoured to take from her the two hills which she haunted, but in the end she killed the intruders and regained these resting-places[1]."

782
539

Invocations to the Rahu Yaku.

These are invocations to a Sinhalese demon who has been taken over by the Veddas and assumed Vedda attributes. The most striking alteration that the demon has undergone is that instead of the single Rahu Yaka of the Sinhalese the Veddas speak of three Rahu Yaku (Sitala Wanniya) or of male and female spirits Raku Yaka and Yakini (Bandaraduwa). The Sitala Wanniya story of the Vedda brothers who became the Rahu Yaku has been given in Chapter VII, but we do not know anything concerning the origin of the Yaka and Yakini who are completely foreign in character.

Sitala Wanniya.

XXXV. *Ran ahalin ataruwa, ran hada ataruwa, gas mada ataruwa, hada hamba ataru hara dunna. Yāni antarāyak wenda epa. Oppu gatin.*

Together with golden cooked food, with golden swords, with toddy (lit. tree spirit) we gave white samba rice. We do not want any danger to occur to us. Take the offering.

With Handuna's help a translation of this invocation was prepared which is practically identical with that provided by Mr Parker. Handuna explained that in this invocation *gas mada*, lit. "core of a tree," stood for "coconut."

[1] "Her origin has not been mentioned in any of these invocations; the Sinhalese state that she is Mohini, the beautiful incarnation of Vishnu, and mother of Ayiyanar, the great Patron God of Ceylon."

1;Sangiläna & Sangiläna 2-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782 539

XXXVI. *Nirusayt saduna, hirusayt saduni. Gini Rähu Bandara ana vilaka hadu hiruhamah saali ga.*

The Na tree is made, and the Bö tree is made. At the time when the chief, Gini Rähu, comes, a fight with swords will be made.

The Veddas could neither explain the meaning of the words of this invocation, nor state the significance of the whole.

Unuwatura Bubula.

XXXVII. *Gini wahalah sadala, ray hala pandamah sadala, ray i iji sadala, Gini Rähu Bandara ray i iji sadala mi magul maduwata wadinna ray mähat balanna.*

As we have constructed a Fire Palace, as we have made a light (resting) on a golden support (?), as we have made with wax golden arrows, O Chief, Gini Rähu, as we have made with wax golden arrows, be pleased to proceed to this festival shed and to look at the golden mortar also.

The Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula understood this invocation in a somewhat different sense.

Gini Rähu Bandar come to this shelter, look upon the golden mortar. The shelter has a roof of fire, within it is a golden torch and golden bees'-wax.

Invocations sung at the Kolamaduwa Ceremony.

782 648

We were told that the *kolamaduwa* ceremony was performed until recently with considerable pomp and circumstance by the Veddas of Bandaraduwa. Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, gave us the following invocations as some of those that he learnt to sing when as a youth he lived among the Veddas. Tissahami wrote down these invocations after the partial rehearsal of the *kolamaduwa* ceremony which was arranged for our benefit at Henebedda, a description of which is given in Chapter IX.

When discussing the *kolamaduwa* we were told that Veddas were sometimes sent for by the peasant Sinhalese because of the superior protection afforded to the cattle fold by their invocations and dances. The tradition as to this practice was quite definite

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

and we do not doubt that it occurred formerly, but we could hear of no recent instances in which Veddas alone officiated. 782 648

This did not surprise us for we met with no Veddas who knew these long invocations, and we believe that this practice must have ceased throughout the Vedirata at least two or three generations ago. The necessary conditions existed in those days when, as we were assured, there were communities of village Veddas with shaman of repute such as no longer exist, and we may instance the history of Lindegala given on pp. 171 and 172 as a case in point. Nevertheless the custom survives in a modified form, for Tissahami with three Veddas performed a *kolamaduwa* ceremony at Damenegama in 1903 with the object of stopping an epidemic, alleged to be dysentery, which was then raging in the neighbouring villages. [731] [755]

A very large number of spirits are invoked, but as has been indicated in Chapter IX Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka, and the *yaku* of the recent dead were not of the number. This demonstrates that the ceremony as it at present exists is essentially foreign, and therefore the length and nature of the three invocations given are not surprising. The invocation to Unapane Kiriamma which recites her deeds agrees well with all we could find out about her independently, and suggests that these invocations arose among such settled village Veddas as those mentioned in the Sinhalese chronicles referred to in the first chapter. 782

The four invocations written down by Tissahami were discussed at length with him, the shaman of the Henebedda Veddas sitting with us, though as this man—a half bred—knew only parts of these invocations and greatly admired Tissahami, the translations obtained in this way only represent the opinion of Tissahami, and presumably that of the Kovil Vanamai Veddas from whom he learnt them in his youth. In these circumstances it is not surprising that two of these translations differ considerably from those furnished by Mr Parker, and this difference is so great in the invocation (No. XXXIX) which should be sung while the leaves are being slashed from the *kolamaduwa* (cf. p. 269) that we have thought it best to give our field version as well as Mr Parker's translation. Some of the allusions, for instance, the reference to the shark contained in the first portion 782 539

C.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782 of No. XXXIX, were equally unintelligible to our field informants
539 and to Mr Parker.

INVOCATION OF UNAPANE KIRIAMMA AT THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

XXXVIII. 1. *Udu-nāwara hāṭāgena*
Yaeṭi-nāwara hāṭāgena
Sal ūyan sādāgena
Pol ūyan sādāgena

2. *Aeli ādā sādāgena*
Ru nitwā sādāgena
Uḍu wīyan sādāgena
Waṭa wīyan sādāgena

3. *Raṇ piyōwili sādāgena*
Netti mālē sādāgena
Raṇ kara gal sādāgena
Moṭṭaekkili sādāgena.

4. *Siṭṭinō ātaraṭa*
Mālāwak waeṭi siṭa
Miya gudin sat dawōsaṭa
Raṇ diwas waeṭi siṭa.

5. *Sat Pāttini Deviyannem*
Teda wāran labāgena
Moṭṭaekkili labāgena
Kataragan wahālen

6. *Kaḍa hangal labāgena*
Teda wāraṇ ladāgena
Sidda Māngra Deviyannem
Kiri dāluwā labāgena

7. *Valli nam Ammā gō*
Kalu ambara paṭṭiyeṭa
Hudu ambara paṭṭiyeṭa
Rā wāhun muṭṭāweṭa

8. *Deva diwas ilāpā*
Unāpanē Kiri Ammā
Sat pēretu Kumārī
Uḍu wīyan Kumārī

9. *Waṭa wīyan Kumārī*
Moṭṭaekkili Kumārī
Raṇ piyōwili Kumārī
Raṇ kara gal Kumārī
Vidāgama Kumārī!—

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

10. *Aeyi pāmā muna pāmāda*
Hun kirī sādāpunu
Kaḍa hāngal sādāpunu!
Raṇ diwas elāpan
Raṇ naḍū kiyāpan.

1. Cutting Udu-nuwara (jungle),
Cutting Yati-nuwara (jungle),
Planting Sal gardens,
Planting Coconut gardens,

2. Training elephants (f.) and the tusk elephant,
Training the riding buffalo,
Making ceiling cloths,
Making side (wall) cloths,

3. Making golden coverings,
Making forehead ornaments,
Making golden necklaces (?),
Making head cloths,

4. While (you were) living;
Having fallen into adversity,
Seven days after (your) fatal sickness,
After (their) golden divine eyes had fallen (on you),

5. From the seven Pattini Goddesses
Receiving their gifts of power;
Receiving head coverings
From the Kataragam palace,

6. Receiving a pair of robes;
Receiving the gift of power,
From the deity the God Mangala
Receiving coconuts[1],

7. (Receiving from) the mother called Valli, cattle
For the black cattle (lit. horn-bearer) fold
(And) for the white cattle fold,
(And) beautiful chatties for cooking-pots;

8. (You) who cast down (on us your) divine eyes,
Kiri Ammā of Unāpāna,
The Princess foremost of seven (Kiri Ammas),
Princess of ceiling cloths,

9. Princess of wall cloths,
Princess of head coverings,
Princess of golden coverings,
Princess of golden necklaces,
Princess of Vidāgama!—

[1] Cf. note [2] p. 277.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

●782
539

10. Why (are you) late, what is (the cause of) the delay
When we have made ready young coconuts,
When we have made ready a pair of robes?
Cast (on us your) golden divine eyes;
Declare (your) golden decision.

"*Moṭṭaakkili* is formed of two Tamil words, *moṭṭai* (pronounced *mottei*), a bald head, and *kili* a strip of cloth. The word does not occur in Winslow's dictionary.

"*Piyowili* is a verbal noun derived from *piyanawa* to cover or shut.

"*Kara gal* may here mean 'stones for the neck,' i.e. beads; the usual meaning is whet-stones.

"*Ambara*, horn-bearer, is a *kaelē bāsa* word which usually means buffalo.

"*Peretu* for *peratu*, foremost.

"*Sadapumu* is a peculiar form, the past participial adjective with the termination of the first person plural."

The first three verses enumerate the works that Unapane Kiriamma is traditionally supposed to have performed during her life on earth. The fourth and fifth verses indicate that she died after a prolonged illness and on the seventh day after her death received power, i.e. became a *yaka*. Verses four to seven mention her and the gifts presented to her by various superior gods who, as Mr Parker writes, are all Tamil deities, "by Pattini the Goddess of chastity and controller of epidemics, who has seven manifestations or forms; Skanda the god of the Kataragam temple; Mangala, who may be Ayiyanar; and Walliamma the wife of Skanda, who according to the traditions of Ceylon married her at Kataragama." Mr Parker suggests that in the third line of the eighth verse "The Princess foremost of Seven" refers to the position of Unapane Kiriamma as "the most important personage among the seven minor Kiriammas to whom worship is paid by the Southern Vaeddas. Four others among them are local princesses or chieftainesses, and two are the *sakti* or female manifestations of minor deities. In another district Miriyabaedda Kiriamma is considered to be the most important one of this group, and the Unapane Kiriamma is there held to occupy only the third place."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

INVOCATION SUNG AT THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

XXXIX.

1. *Masāmasa mūda maedde masa mōrā hapāgena lē keliyaṭada mas keliyaṭada giyē ara Wālimba gala dun wēḍi panikkiyā.*

2. *Nā haḍuwen hoṭa Bō haḍuwen dinun dakinñayi.*
Bō haḍuwen hoṭā Bo haḍuwen dinun danñayi
Dinun dakinñayi, tōṭā yāluwā.

3. *Kadu hēwākan karaganō*
Hat hēwākan karanñada karanña(da)?
Hat hēwākan karaganō
Kadu hēwākan karañada karanñadae?

4. *Obama obama oba Herabara waewā nō;*
Mobama mobama moba Māwilingangā nō,
Anḍā diya duwana Māwilingangā nō,
Enawā kiyanman Nilmal gangā nō.

5. *Herabarā waewē kānuwa piṭa inñada?*
Acla welē wel eliyen enñada?
Daena walalu nada dīlā enñada?
Kāriya kiyannaṭa Nilmal enñada?

Pālu raṭayi, Wanniya, otanin ohaṭa;
Gōlu gena panini wael kinnō aengaṭa,
Reru aewit diya kelinā sonda ruwaṭa.
Yālu topit giyoda Sorabora waewaṭa?

Sorabora waewē egoḍat innan Vaeddō;
Sorabora waewē me goḍat innan Vaeddō;
Sorabora waewē de goḍama innan Vaeddō,
Apaṭat nelun mal awulanḍa deddō?

Sorabara waewē sonda sonda olu nelun aetī;
Ewuwā nelannaṭa sonda sonda liyō etī;
Kalu haralā kudu haralā uyā detī.
Olu sālē hat kannaṭa mālu naetī.

6. *Mē kalumal aella wicārē*
Atat damā yana murā gamanayi hālannē
Mē Kaḍagat gala wicārē
Īnaṭa dāmā yānē is moṭṭachhili hālanē
Mē Niyandawarā gala wicārē
Ātaṭa payaṭa dāmā yanē gēgiri nānda ātanē.

Kalumal Nangiṭa hāmdaṭa panni mula hilen raṭa wacṭī gē.
Kalumal Nangiṭa hamdaṭa amā mula hendu rāṭā wacṭī gē
Āngura nacṭun naṭana Wanniṭa hendu hendu heru ṭada gōcāṭā.
Keri hat keri hat āpaṭa ēpā ēhe panagiri hela hīndāṭā

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Kaha hirilan tilāwē nāla pīrati Hannachalāgē nārā gaman pīnīnna
Ātapu wādan pāyapu wādan daeta gigiri sālannē,
Nāla pīrati Hannachala mulpālapayi duwa ennē.
Mini hābā tilāwē nāla pīrati Hannachela nurā gāman hārennē.
Daeta dāmā daeta gigiri sālannē.

1. Cutting the shark fish in the midst of the Masāmasa Sea, did that skilful elephant catcher to whom Wālimba-gala is given go for the sport with blood or for the sport with fish?

2. Having cut with the Nā sword I shall see victories (i.e. I shall be victorious) with the Bō sword.
Having cut with the Bō sword I shall gain victories with the Bō sword;
I shall see victories, You Friend.

3. (When) fighting with swords shall I fight shall I fight with (my) hands (also)?
(When) fighting with (my) hands shall I fight shall I fight with swords?

4. There, there, there is Horabora waewa;
Here, here, here is the Mahawaeli-ganga
The Mahawaeli-ganga in which the water laments as it flows.
"I am coming, Nilmal-ganga," I shall say.

5. (He longs to return to distant Horabora, and his thoughts now dwell on it.)
Shall I stop on the sluice of Horabora?
Shall I come from the open ground of the field on the channel?

Shall I come now, making my bangles resound?
Shall I come to Nilmal (ganga) to declare the matter? (i.e. to tell the truth about the district. He means that he need not go there to tell it).

It is a deserted district, Wanniyā, from end to end (lit. from there to there);
Bringing their pupils (young ones, with them) the small creeping ants spring on to my body.
Teal come (to the tank) and sport very beautifully in the water.
Friends, have you also been to Sorabora waewa?

There will be Vaeddas on this side of Sorabora waewa;
There will be Vaeddas on that side of Sorabora waewa;
There will be Vaeddas on even both sides of Sorabora waewa.
Will they permit us also to collect lotus flowers?

There will be very lovely white lotus in Sorabora waewa;
Very handsome women will have been sent to pluck them;

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

After preparing and cleaning and cooking them they will give them (to be eaten).
For eating (with) rice made from seeds of the white lotus there is no meat (the game having been driven away).

782
539

6. (When I examine) this Kalumal waterfall
It looks (as though) I am joining in a love (making) journey.
In the examination of this Kadagat-gala what is fixed on the head (? of the rock) looks like a head-cloth.
In the examination of this Niyandawarā-gala the sound of the jingling bangles placed on the hands and feet is heard.
From the end of the bundle of honey tied up for Kalumal Nangī it is falling (? on the ground).
From the mouth of the bundle of rice (?) tied up for Kalumal Nangī it is falling (? on the ground).
For the Wanniyā who dances the *angara* dances beat excellent tunes on the tom-toms.
We do not want lame women's pingo loads, or sham (or refuse) loads; tie up desirable betel leaves.
The reed pipes of Kaha Kirillantalawa (Orioles' plain) being in front, it seems to be the love (making) journey of Hannaehelā (hill).
Having garlands for the hands and garlands for the feet (she) shakes the jingling bangles of both hands.
The reed pipes being in front Hannaehelā comes running to the Chief place (summit)—(or, they come running to the chief place of Hannaehelā).

7. The reed pipes of Mini Kōbōtalāwa (turtle doves' plain) being in front, Hannaehelā makes (her) love journey;
Having placed them on both hands (she) shakes the jingling bangles of both hands.

"In this song the Masāmasa Sea is again mentioned; there is probably some legend regarding the shark that was killed in the olden time. In *Ancient Ceylon* I have given reasons for believing that the early Vaeddas were in part a race of fishers.

"The 'blood-game,' *lē keliya*, of the first section may have some connection with blood offerings to demons. The other expression, *mas keliya*, would commonly mean 'meat-game,' but as meat is termed *mālu* at the end of the fifth section it appears to mean here 'fish-game,' the sport of fishing.

"In the fourth section, the singer, living near the Mahawaeli-ganga, thinks he will hear the Nilmal-ganga, apparently a river near Horabora, calling him back to that district. The last

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
537

words of the fifth section give the reason why the Vaeddas have left it,—the want of game. The expression *kalu karalā*, 'having made black,' must refer to some part of the process in preparing the lotus seeds.

"I do not understand the sixth section, in which I have adhered as closely as possible to what appears to be the literal meaning. It would be much more intelligible if pronouns had been inserted; there is only one, *apaṭa epā*, 'we do not want,' which explains nothing.

"Apparently the hill Hannachelā, with reeds growing in pools on the plains near it (from which the reed pipe, *nalāwa*, is made), reminds the singer of a girl decked with garlands, who is going to be married (or possibly only visiting her younger sister), preceded by men playing these pipes. As I understood it, she takes with her pingo loads of betel, honey and cooked rice, to present to her younger sister, the Kaluṃal waterfall.

"The meaning of *raṭā* in the second verse of this section is uncertain. The word *amā* may be *kambā* or *sambā*, a kind of rice. *Angura* is defined in Clough's Dictionary as 'anointing the body after bathing with perfumes made from sandal wood.'

"*Paengiri kola* is a *kaelibāsa* expression for betel. *Mini kobo* should be *mini kobeyiyō* (jewelled) turtle doves; some other pigeons are called *bōwā* in Sinhalese, an onomatopoietic word imitating their cooing.

"*Kori kat bori kat* is an expression I have not heard, and the meaning is doubtful."

On account of the great difference between Mr Parker's translation and the meaning of this invocation as it was explained in the field, we now give the translation we wrote down while discussing the matter with our informants. It does not pretend to do more than explain the significance which our informants attributed to the invocation, and at the time we noted it we realised that it was far from being a literal translation. Explanatory remarks are enclosed between square brackets.

(1) Did the Panikkia of mist covered Walimbagala go to the great sea to kill the great shark and bring his flesh and blood?

[The Panikkia is a spirit whose home is Walimbagala

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

(Friar's Hood). He is doubtless the Walimbagala Yaka of other groups of Veddas.] 782 539

(2) Friends I will cut with my sword of Na and Bo and I will be victorious. [The Panikkia speaks to a host of spirits known as the Maha Yakino.]

(3) Did he go to fight with the sword, or to charm with his tongue?

(4) Horaborawewa is far away, the Mahawelliganga the waters of which are blue, is far away. [It was explained that this verse referred to the Veddas of Horabora being far away.]

(5) Are you on the sluice of Horaborawewa? [The *yaku* of dead Veddas are thus addressed.]

They [the *yaku*] will be coming by the fields of Elavella [well-known rice fields].

Are you coming shaking your bangles in your hands?

Nilmal (Kiriamma) are you coming to favour us?

The country of the Wanniyas is abandoned in that direction.

Bears growl and roam (in the abandoned country).

Friend have you been to Horaborawewa where teal swim?

There are Veddas on the far side of Horaborawewa.

There are Veddas on this side of Horaborawewa.

There are Veddas on both sides of Horaborawewa.

Will they allow us to pick lotus flowers?

There are fine *olo* [a plant] and lotus in Horaborawewa.

Beautiful women come to pick them.

(They) cook and give white and black (seeds) [i.e. cleaned and uncleaned seeds].

(There is) no curry to eat the *olo* rice [i.e. the seeds].

(6) See how (they) go along Kalumalella [the stream below the sluice] swinging their hands;

See how (they) go along Kadagangala [a hill] with their heads covered.

Hear the jingling of bangles on the hands and feet of those going to Niyandawaragala [a hill].

The parcel of honey [tied up in leaves] for Nilmal Nangi is slanting.

The parcel of rice for Kalumal Nangi is erect.

Beat the tom-tom for the Wanniya to dance well.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Do not give small and torn betel leaves to us.
See how Pereti Hannachela going and coming from Kaha
Kirilian *talawa* jingling the bangles on her hands....
Pereti Hannachela is coming running to the Kolamaduwa.
(7) Pereti Hannachela of Minikobo *talawa* comes jingling bangles on her hands.

Invocation of the Maha Yakino Ceremony.

XL. *Kolamaduwo bat mul bu(n)dina-kuta kiyana haviya.*
Kayi rati rati gami yandada mi ran ama mul badinni badinni. Kaya wai rati gami yanda ubwiyi. Tôpi rati gami yandayi mi ran ama mul badinni badinni. Muna muna wel gan kotala di mi ran ama mul badinni badinni. Kayi rati gami yandada mi na kola wiyan badinni badinni. Tôpi rati gami yanda mi na kola wi bâdin dinni, bâdinni.

Song which is sung while tying up the bundles of rice for the *kolamaduwa.*

To go to a village in whose countries are (we) tying, are (we) tying these bundles of golden Ambrosia? Not to go to a village in the country of anyone (else) whatever, (but) to go to a village in thy country (we) are tying, (we) are tying these bundles of golden ambrosia. Having cut which fields are (we) tying, are (we) tying these bundles of golden ambrosia? To go to a village in whose country are (we) tying, are (we) tying these *na* leaf canopies? To go to a village in thy country (we) are tying, (we) are tying these *Na* leaf canopies.

Our field translation of this invocation substantially agrees with Mr Parker's, though as might be expected our informants gave "rice" in place of "Ambrosia."

Invocation of Ambarapoti Kiriamma at the Kolamaduwa Ceremony.

XLI. *Gawara wil manadi elawala keli yudda*
Bumburu mala piya tuilugena karayi nanda wenama nadda
Ambarala puima sumuhu palandinawa ili sudda
Ambarapoti Ammia mina mi nadawaya kowuru dadda
Mandurinju kara nila tamba pola simayi
Bilinduga atana ruwa yodunâ
Bâdu kosoo mal malilan simayi
Bella wayaya gombara iruna
Saggu puskola e ran tadu gana
Nasihawa malalaya ebinâ

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
539

Kumala patul deka deranī Sōbāgena
Waedīyayī Ambarāpoti Ammā.
Salā didī rasla matupīta petīyak perelena andan
Walā yaetīn pacyu sandī devīyō waedawena andan
Ran toraneka ramba toraneka devīyō sastapena andan
Uva tudeti mal sāmī maduwapa saerasuna andan.

While the sambar deer trusted to the pool, being driven away it was attacked in the jungle.
The Bambarā bee sitting on the flower will make quite another cry (i.e. objects) about bathing.
It is very cleanly to put on frequent sandal-wood after grinding it (to powder),
Except Ambarāpoti Ammā who is there (to undertake) this business?
The sapphire of the peacock's neck (shines) like a plate of copper.
The throne of Bilindi is made beautifully.
From his body (hang) margosa flowers like a garland,
Round his neck are scattered freckles (light patches),
He has ear-rings of gold joined to talipat leaf,
His nose is worthy of his forehead.
The child placing his two feet on the earth
Is greater than Ambarāpoti Ammā.
As a *petīyā* (fish) is rolled over on the top of the eddying wave,
Like the moon risen from under the cloud, the *devīyā* advances.
Like an arch of gold, an arch of ramba grass, the *devīyā* reclines,
Like the Lord of Vaeddas, who has renown throughout Uva, adorned for the (wedding) hall.

The first four lines of our field version of this invocation agree tolerably well with Mr Parker's translation except that nothing is said about bathing, the second line running "The bees seated on the flowers make humming noises." The next eight lines were given to us as follows:

"The child should be like the colour of the peacock's neck.

"The body (of the child) should be like the flowers of the kohomba tree (margosa tree), like the flowers of the damba tree are the *gomera*[1] round the neck (of the child).

"The earrings made of talipot leaves look beautiful (when worn) in the face.

"Ambarāpoti Ammā came striding across the firmament."

Of the remaining four lines only the last is substantially different from Mr Parker's. It runs "See how the Malsāmi who has authority over Uva comes to the *maduwa*."

[1] *Gomera* are light flecks on the skin which are much admired.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1].

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe.

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated.

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*.

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarale*.

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

wildest Veddahs are without an "instinct of worship." They be- 776
lieve that the air is peopled by spirits, that every rock and every tree, every forest and every hill, in short every feature of nature, has its *genius loci*; but these seem little else than mere nameless phantoms, whom they regard rather with mysterious awe than actual dread.

Such appears to be the form which the superstitions of every 776
savage tribe naturally assume,—the necessity for a belief in some- 775
thing more than human, imparting to the commonest objects a 769
supernatural character. But besides this vague spirit-worship, they have a more definite superstition, in which there is more of system. This is the belief in the guardianship of the spirits of the dead. Every near relative becomes a spirit after death, who watches over the welfare of those who are left behind. These, which include their ancestors and their children, they term their "néhya yakoon," kindred spirits. They describe them as "ever watchful, coming to them in sickness, visiting them in dreams, giving them flesh when hunting." In short in every calamity, in every want they call on them for aid; and it is curious that the shades of their departed children, "bilindoo yakkoon," or infant spirits, as they call them, are those which they appear most frequently to invoke.*

It is a pretty belief, and contrasts favourably with the super- 769
stitions of the Kandyans, who have spirits enough in their system, 776
but almost all thoroughly malignant, and needing constant propi- 782
tiation. But the Veddah spirit-world is singularly free from evil. I can find only one *absolutely* malignant spirit in it whom they really fear;† though, like all savages, they have an undefined awe of the nameless spirits whom they believe to haunt the darkness. The shades of their ancestors and of their children seem to be purely benevolent. The ceremonies with which they invoke them are few as they are simple. The most common is the following. An arrow is fixed upright in the ground, and the Veddah dances slowly round it, chanting this invocation, which is almost musical in its rhythm. [539]

"Mà miya, mà miy, mà deyà'
Topang koyihetti mittigan yandà'h!"

---

* They also speak of them as "witera yakkoon," "child-spirits." They seem to prefer their great-grandmother (maha kiri amma) to the rest of their defunct ancestors; but I cannot ascertain any cause for their preference for the old lady. I may, however, be wrong in describing it as a preference. It may be the reverse, for she is invoked chiefly in cases of sickness, when the patient is supposed to be suffering from the malignity of a spirit. [753]

† Awāramada Yakko, who especially injures women, lying wait for them in the forest.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
776
[539]

"My departed one, my departed one, my God!
Where art thou wandering?"*

The spirit of the dead is here simply called upon, without even the object for which it is invoked being mentioned. And this invocation appears to be used on all occasions when the intervention of the guardian spirits is required, in sickness, preparatory to hunting, etc.†

[224] Sometimes, in the latter case, a portion of the flesh of the game is promised as a votive offering, in the event of the chase being successful; and they believe that the spirits will appear to them in dreams and tell them where to hunt.

Sometimes they cook food and place it in the dry bed of a river, or some other secluded spot, and then call on their deceased ancestors by name. "Come, and partake of this! Give us maintenance as you did when living! Come, wheresoever you may be; on a tree, on a rock, in the forest, come!" And they dance round the food, half chanting, half shouting, the invocation.‡

776 They have no knowledge of a Supreme Being. "Is he on a
782 rock? On a white ant-hill? On a tree? I never saw a God!" was the only reply I received to repeated questions.§ They have

* I find in my notes another version of this invocation, which slightly alters the first words. It runs thus: "Ma mini, ma mini!—my gem, my gem;" but "miya," which signifies "dead," is the most common. [The word in the invocation translated "God" is evidently a corruption of the Sanskrit deva, a god or divinity. EDIT.]

† And they are invoked without any ceremony at all—by a mere mental ejaculation. I once saw a Veddah make a bad shot, and he threw down his bow with a gesture of impatience, saying—"That was because I did not call on my Bilindoo Yakkoon." And before making his next shot, he muttered an invocation.

‡ A superstition similar somewhat to this is prevalent among the neighbouring Singhalese. If a man die who has lived a good life, his relatives give alms to the poor, calling on the dead by name to look down on them, and enable them to follow his good example. If he has lived an evil life, alms are also given; but these are propitiatory offerings for his sins, and to avert his evil influence from his survivors. For, in this case, he has become an evil spirit, apt to injure his own family and their cattle unless civilly treated. The degree of malignity depends on the degree of evil in the life led by deceased. If he dies with a hankering after worldly things, he haunts the house in which he lived in a variety of forms—perhaps most commonly that of a toad or a cobra, probably because these frequent houses. It is also, in some parts, a common belief that if a man die, and shortly after one of the family fall sick, and is not cured by the usual medicines and ceremonies, the sickness is attributed to the spirit of the dead, who must be propitiated by a mess of rice, left in the house for him. This, generally, is supposed to effect a cure.

§ It is curious that in one of their invocations, "mâ Deyâ", my God!
[782] occurs, see before; and that of thunder they say, "a spirit, or a god has cried out".

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to protect their votive offerings. 782 776 [346]

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medicine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, so universal amongst Buddhists. 755 769 [775]

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded. 771 174

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡ [821]

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Weddo-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapāna-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapāna-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddirates, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon, 789

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
993 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

5; Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

133 timber. Such places are the favourite resort of sambur, of which on this morning we saw no less than six. From great tree-heights came the whirring of strong wings as gibbous-beaked hornbills took alarm. We were perhaps a half-mile from the falls when we first heard them like a pervasive hum of swarming bees. Soon we lost the noise; and turning to our guide for an explanation, learnt, inconsequently enough, that "the water does not cry after the morning; it cries loudest when the cock crows at dawn!" The sound swelled suddenly again as there opened before us, not the turbulent cascade we expected, but placid murmuring rapids that swirled in a wide sheet around and over a thousand sunnied boulders. Such were the falls as we saw them; but on occasion they could be a roaring power leaping over the granite to a wild cataract melody, surging widely to the outskirts of Yakkure itself, and bestrewing the jungle with great wrack that even now lay stranded high on forked tree-trunks. What wonder the place is held in awe and that men have a care how they journey to it, lest they be lost on the way or fall a prey to beast or demon.

172 778 A smooth rock on the bank bore the frettings of ancient craft; the tutelary god's *devale* (temple) it was said to be. Here we were irreverently seated, while our guides sat apart whispering at the profanation. The surface of the rock was socketed presumably to hold strong stanchions which in the old days supported a bridge across the water; while small 782 oval pools, reputed to contain a mint of wealth from the accumulation of years of propitiatory and votive offerings, showed to our pagan vision nothing more than a few potato-like pebbles and sportive water beetles.

000 A few months before our visit, Yakkure was the setting of a gallant episode:—On the bund of the Polonnaruwa tank stands a shanty for forest-officers on circuit. Here one evening a wiry man of forty-five was amusing himself with his rifle. Placing a rupee against a tree fifty yards away he fired, holing it in the centre. He next made his targets a variety of live things that flecked the smooth surface of the tank, such as a cormorant or the barely visible head of a submerged crocodile. Every time his aim was true. The shots attracted a friend. "Testing your nerves as usual before an adventure?" he asked, walking up. "What is it this time? The Yakkure rogue* I'll bet."

"Yes, to-morrow I hope to get him," was the confident response. "You haven't seen *this* before, have you?" said the hunter handling his new rifle.

"You know best," said his friend; "but I should have brought a tried weapon if I were you, especially against such a beast as the Yakkure rogue is said to be. Only yesterday he smashed a boy to pulp. The villagers are too scared to leave their homes."

"This gun is all right. I've tested it. See," said he, indicating his hits, "I've been warned time and again against the use of light arms for elephants, but they have never failed me so far. Once, though," he continued thoughtfully "I had a near shave..... You know, I sometimes wonder whether the villagers appreciate what I do for them."

"They look on you as their greatest benefactor," replied his friend.

"It is good to know that," said the hunter. "For the last fifteen years, whenever I heard of a rogue in my province, I've gone after him; often at great trouble and expense."

*A dangerous elephant ostracised by the herd, and a menace to human life and property.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

cries he had rushed in vain to the rescue. It speaks much for the dominance of man over animals that this puny fellow, armed only with a small hatchet, could live with impunity in such surroundings; and moreover leave his wife and children unprotected in their fragile leaf-hut while he was out in quest of food.

"Cha," I heard Sinna ruminating sorrowfully to himself, "the goa-catching dog is gone."

"Have you no other?" I asked.

"The one that's left isn't much good," he said. "With the bitch I lost I could catch six *goyas** a day."

The way to the caves was up the heavily-wooded, boulder-encumbered side of the hill, plentiful with caves of bear, porcupine and wild cat. On the sandy floor of one dark den were the footprints of a bear and her cubs that had just vacated it. Sinna was well ahead of us, as we clambered on trembling knees regardless of all else but where to gain foot-hold, when a timorous one called out to the Vedda from below, "There now, if a bear should come, don't you run away and climb a tree."

The little chap wagged his head acquiescingly. I asked him what he would do in such an event.

"We will also strike; he will also bite," was the cool reply.

Gaining a spur, at length we attained the first of the series of caves known as the Maraweethiya. A strong aroma of bats greeted us. Ant-hills grew out of the dusty floor of the cave, the plastered dome of which was ornamented with frescoes of Buddhas and *devas*. A decayed wooden image stood behind a flat altar stone supported on bricks, many of which lay fallen about. A broken wall partially shut in the cave, and another divided it off from a deep pool of crystalline water.

From here a passage protected by a low wall led through a narrow gulley flanked by small trees; thence by way of spurs, tunnels and deep grottoes we came to a shallow cave in full face of the sky, where we were the cause of much concern to a pair of peregrine falcons. They hovered above us crying perturbedly; now they would swoop boldly down almost within reach of our hands; now wing away with harsh cackling cries of alarm, as they discovered us handling their eggs, that lay amidst the debris of brick and tile.

Ahead was a fearsome pass, which we must negotiate to reach the last of the caves. It was no more than a shallow, sloping notch in the sheer side of the rock, overlooking a drop of about three hundred feet, and with seemingly nothing beyond it but eternity. On hands and knees we crawled through and were mightily relieved to find ourselves in the security of a large grotto. Here, before two patched stone images, we found a few of our carriers devoutly kneeling; on an altar-stone were their meagre oblations of ixora blooms they had gathered on the way. The virtue, it would seem, lay less in the quality of the offerings than in the attainment of this inhospitable shrine with its weathered and lonely gods.

We could go no farther; but hence along the crazy edge of the hill was the merest semblance of a break-neck way that led, we were told, to the ancient kingdom of the *rakshayas* (demons) with its foot-wide

*Monitor lizard

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

535 to all the spirits combined. Suddenly he stooped, twirled the chatty
796 on the ground, and shouting "hooy", fell swooning into the arms of one who had for some time been waiting to catch him. The dance was over. He was artist enough to impart something of his wild fervour to his spectators.

224 The next day at the appointed hour we set out, the Veddas buoyed up with the certainty of success. We had not gone far when Kaurala, who was leading, suddenly levelled his gun (or rather mine) and fired. A fine buck bounded away.

"Cha", he said, examining the spot where the animal had stood; "now why did that animal not fall? So close too. That was the *kirihoraha* deer right enough; did you not see the horns?" When he discovered that he had fired the barrel containing small shot and not the bullet, he fell to cursing my gun.

782 Should an animal be killed after a *kirihoraha* ceremony an offering of
224 boiled rice, with flesh from the head and chest, is made to the propitious spirits. Of this offering the hunters may themselves partake with a view to continuance of success.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Lastly, there is the *hangotuwa* (deer-skin receptacle for the honey), or *yakka-hatti* (devil's mouth) as it is reverently called out of deference to the tutelary demons of the rock, who might otherwise be angered and send the cutter to his doom. 222 415 776

A pile of firewood is now collected on top of the rock to protect the guardians of the ladder, while another heap is made by those below. All being ready they await the protecting darkness. When this comes the play begins. The great fire at the foot of the rock is lit and fed abundantly with green leaves; large volumes of smoke lick uncannily up the side of the hill towards the hives; now there is a stir among the bees. As the Veddas hear it their merriment waxes great: "*Bambaru, bambaru, bambaru; thapita, thapita, thapita. Ho bambaru thuape**;" they cry. "*Giddi, giddi, giddi; rung, rung, rung,*" they jeer in imitation of the flight. 222 [372]

Meanwhile the fire above has been lighted, and two smoking *hulas* have been lowered towards the hives. The air is heavy with the ominous hum of angry bees.

Now is the time for the descent. The ladder, firmly secured to a tree or stone, and guarded by the brother-in-law of the cutter (the only person ineligible to marry his wife in the event of accident), is let down with a propitiatory incantation* to the demons of the rock and ancestral spirits. This being uttered, the hand grip is said to be strong and the feet to cling like jak milk to the stone. [58] 607 [783]

With smoking *hulas* looped to forearms and *matha* slung on shoulder, and hair dishevelled over his face that the bees may not get at his eyes and nose, the cutter, gripping the cane with a single hand, disappears over the edge of the cliff into the darkness and the smoke. The ladder creaks as he feels his way down, for he sees nothing.

He has reached the level of the hives. At a signal the deer-skin receptacle is lowered to him, and this he secures to the ladder. Thrusting a leg between two rungs so that his foot is on the lower and his bent knee against the upper, and his head between two others so that the back of his neck is braced against a rung, he is free to use his hands. First he smokes the hives with the *hulas* mounted on the *matha* and drives away the lingering bees. Then, slinging the *hulas* on his forearms, he takes up the stake and, with its pointed end, cuts horizontally through the lower part of the comb, separating off the useless *yotha* with its contained grubs which the bees stoutly defend. He next cuts the comb in vertical sections, and, loosening each from its attachment, spits it with the pronged end of the stake, removes it, and shakes it into the receptacle at his knee. Thus he deals with all the hives. [412]

---

*"The bees, the bees, the bees; pile the fire, pile the fire, pile the fire. Ho! the bees run."

†*Yothinamu* it is called; and thus it goes:—

Haibo, haibo, haibo.
Ma ninthagang hetuabo marichee,
Abi upang nevanthangin mathi helanay,
Maihi urai opahera thenawa hithen.
Hamatheyan santhoern opuaragana harumahagama.
Tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna, tho badey yanna.

783

783 PURIFICATION AND EXPIATION--practices reflecting a sense of contamination or guilt; concept of ritual uncleanness; things and persons considered unclean or impure; purification rites (e.g., ritual ablutions and bathing); concepts of sin, salvation, and redemption; riddance of sin (e.g., confession, remission, atonement, penance, scapegoat); etc. See also:

Elimination 814
Personal hygiene 815
Ideas about unclean causes 864
Definitions of acts regarded as sinful 873
Punishment of ritual offenses 895
Conception of pollution, contagion, and leathsome diseases 753
Ideas about corpses 764
Ideas about sexual intercourse 838
Ideas about menstrual blood 841
Ideas about the exuviae of childbirth 844

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

101 points were left doubtful. The extent of their neighbours'
177 influence upon this community may be gauged to a certain degree by the following fact. When visiting the shaman we asked him to show us his *aude* and other sacred objects (as will be seen later, certain beads are held sacred in this community), he replied that he did not keep them at his own hut
[562] because of the noxious influence due to the presence of the
[783] women[1], but that the Sinhalese *gamarale*[2] took charge of them for him. We then went together to the house of the *gamarale*; this consisted of a hut divided by a partition at the back, one room being the sleeping room and the other the granary, and a large open barn in front, with its roof continuous with that of the hut. In the part of the barn nearest the rooms, the women of the household were cooking and pounding rice, while the back was railed off to form a byre in which a number of calves were tethered and into which the cows were driven at night. When it was pointed out that there were also women living in this house the shaman explained that their influence was counter-balanced by the presence of the cows. Physically some of the Unuwatura
144 Bubula Veddas must be regarded as tolerably pure-blooded,
141 since they included some of the shortest men we met. One man measured only about 1360 millimetres (53½ inches), but probably he is to be regarded as almost a dwarf.

VILLAGE VEDDAS.

184 The village Veddas form a class which it is most difficult to
361 describe briefly, yet fairly. The term must not be taken to apply to degenerate Veddas who have lost their jungle characteristics and independent habits under Sinhalese encroachment. Doubtless many such folk do live as Sinhalese in chena settlements for a short time before their extinction in the surrounding mass of peasant Sinhalese. But this is not the sense in which the Sinhalese apply the term Gan Veddo (village Veddas), nor is it the sense in which we use the term. Knox speaks of "wild"

[1] We afterwards ascertained that *hile* was the name for the ceremonial uncleanliness of women.

[2] The *gamarale* of a Sinhalese village is the headman, who is responsible for the cultivation of the village lands and generally directs the agricultural affairs of the community.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

slipping. Such ceremonial arrows are generally heirlooms, not necessarily passing from father to son but rather being handed down in apostolic succession from shaman to shaman, and among the village Veddas of Bintenne I have handled one such blade with a history running back for five generations. 411 778 [523 428]

Figure 8 shows two ceremonial arrows which we were able to collect. Besides these we saw similar *aude* at Omuni and were told at Sitala Wanniya that Handuna had formerly possessed one. Rutimeyer has figured one of these ceremonial arrows about 14 inches long, obtained from Kaira the "senior" of the Danigala Veddas. These arrows are carefully preserved by the shaman, and just as he himself observes certain dietetic rules, avoiding eating pig and fowl which are supposed to be particularly repulsive to the *yaku*, so among those more sophisticated communities who believe in the periodical uncleanliness of women, special precautions are taken to avoid the possible contamination of the *aude*[1]. This is generally done by keeping them in some comparatively remote spot such as a cave or in the roof thatch. It is necessary that the shaman should hold one of these arrows in his hand when invoking Kande Yaka; he should also have one for Bilindi Yaka, though as a matter of practice Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka were often invoked using the same *aude*, another *aude* being reserved for invoking the *Nae Yaku*. Both arrows were, however, commonly held in the hands during the whole of the *Nae Yaku* ceremony, but in spite of this no confusion seemed to arise nor had the onlookers the least difficulty in saying which *aude* belonged to Kande Yaka whenever they were asked. [783]

The offering of rice in the pot would be stirred with the *aude*, and betel leaves might be ceremonially transfixed with it. Among the Veddas of Unuwatura Bubula the testing of the quality of the food provided for the *yaku* was performed with the help of the *aude*, the shaman possessed by Kande Yaka using the *aude* to remove from the pot a few grains of rice which the *yaku* in the person of the shaman several times examined before expressing his approval of the offering provided. 411 778 782

[1] The belief in the periodical uncleanliness of women has been borrowed from the Sinhalese. It did not exist in the "wildest" group we met with, on the other hand we found it among all the more sophisticated Veddas, attaining a maximum where these had come under foreign influence.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the onlookers, who were all willing assistants, he filled the palms of his hands with milk and bounded forward, and raising his hands with every step he scattered the milk, and in this manner the *yaka* within him showed his pleasure. Next he took the *kirikoraha* from the tripod with both hands (Plate XXXIV, fig. 1), spun it on the ground, and immediately it left his hands he fell back. The spinning was prophetic, for in that direction towards which the bowl dipped as it came to rest, there game would be found; and on this occasion it dipped to the north. When the shaman revived a few seconds later, Kande Yaka had left him, and he was possessed by Bilindi Yaka again. With shouts, gasping and trembling, he came to most of the onlookers and promised good hunting in the usual manner, then he took the *kirikoraha* and spun it, but when it left his hands the spirit departed from the shaman and he fell back.

The dance was now over, and all were eager to partake of the coconut milk which had been offered to the *yaku*, for none of it might be wasted. All the men took a little, and also fed the children with it, but the women were not allowed to partake of it. However, as the mere contact of the milk had virtue the shaman rubbed some on their heads. In other less sophisticated communities women were not looked upon as unclean, and they shared in this and other food offered to the *yaku*. As has already been stated there is little doubt that the idea of women being unclean has been borrowed from the Sinhalese, among whom it is very strongly held. A little of the contents of the *kirikoraha* might also be rubbed on the heads of the dogs which were supposed to be more likely to hunt successfully after this.

The Kirikoraha at Sitala Wanniya. Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were all invoked at the *kirikoraha* held at Sitala Wanniya. Indigollae was held to be the principal attendant of Kande Yaka, and though the invocation sung to him refers to "seven pots of blood" our informants were unable to give us any meaning for this[1].

Handuna, the shaman of the Sitala Wanniya community, did

[1] This matter is briefly discussed in Chapter X after the invocation (No. XXXII) to Indigollae Yaka.

786

786 ORGIES--practices reflecting hysterical tendencies or release from normal inhibitions; frenzied singing and dancing; ceremonial license (e.g., phallic rites, temporary lifting of sex restraints, ceremonial intoxication); bacchanalian revels; religious prostitution; induced hysteria, hallucination, and swoon; religious revivalism; etc. See also:

Sex taboos	83	Temple prostitutes	793
Drunkenness	273	Conception of abnormal mental states	838

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER IX

CEREMONIAL DANCES

535
786

WITH a single possible exception the dances of the Veddas are ceremonial and are performed with the object of becoming possessed by a *yaka* in the manner that has already been stated in Chapter VI where the subjective phenomena of possession are discussed. The majority of the ceremonial dances described in this chapter are pantomimic, and so well illustrate the objective manifestations of the condition of possession that little need be said on this subject, though it may be well to repeat our conviction that there is no considerable element of pretence in the performance of the shaman. The sudden collapse which accompanies the performance of some given act of the pantomime, usually an important event towards which the action has been leading up, is the feature that is most difficult to explain. According to the Veddas themselves it occurs when a *yaka* suddenly leaves the individual possessed, but it does not invariably accompany the cessation of possession, and it may equally occur when the individual becomes possessed, as at the Bandaraduwa *Nae Yaku* ceremony described on pages 233 to 237, where the first sign of possession shown by the brothers of the dead man was their collapse into the arms of their supporters. This can be explained as the result of expectancy, they expected to be overcome by the spirit of the deceased, and in fact this happened. In this connection we may refer to a Sinhalese "devil ceremony" which we witnessed in the remote jungle village of Gonagolla in the Eastern Province. One of us has described this ceremony elsewhere[1], but we would here

[1] Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journal Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXVIII, 1908.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
786

specially refer to the condition of the *katandirale* or "devil dancer" when dealing with the dangerous demon Riri Yaka. Although he took special precautions to prevent the demon entering him, that is to say to avoid possession by the demon, he almost collapsed, requiring to be supported in the arms of an assistant as under the assaults of the *yaka* he tottered with drawn features and half open quivering lips and almost closed eyes. Yet avowedly he was not possessed by the demon, but on the contrary was successful in warding off possession. His whole appearance was that of a person suffering from some amount of shock and in a condition of partial collapse, while the rapidity with which he passed into deep sleep immediately Riri Yaka, and his almost equally dreaded consort Riri Yakini, had left him, also favour the genuine character of his sufferings, concerning which he said that although he had never completely lost consciousness he had been near doing so and had felt giddy and nauseated[1]. Here we have a condition only a degree short of possession, occurring in an individual who not only hoped and expected to avoid being possessed by the spirit whom he invoked to come to the offering, but took elaborate precautions to prevent it. Had he become possessed it would have been a disaster which would have led to his illness and perhaps death, and would certainly have frustrated the object of the ceremony. Here there can have been no desire to lose consciousness, yet as the result of anticipation of the attack of the *yaka* the *katandirale* came near collapse.

This in our opinion throws a flood of light on Vedda possession and the collapse which may take place at its beginning, but it does not directly explain the collapse often experienced when a *yaka* leaves a person. But here we may seek assistance in the idea of analogy; when a spirit leaves the body, collapse and unconsciousness, permanent (death) or temporary (swoon, fainting fits or sleep), ensue. When the *yaka* leaves the body which for the time it has entirely

[1] During the condition of partial collapse the dancer's face was covered with sweat and so felt clammy, but this may only have been the result of his previous exertions; his pulse was small and rapid and was certainly over 120 though the condition prevented it being accurately counted.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

dominated, what more natural than that collapse should occur or be feigned by the less honest or susceptible practitioners? There is no doubt that the Vedda ceremonies make considerable demand on the bodily powers of the dancers, but this is not so great as in the case of the Sinhalese devil ceremony of Gonagolla, since the Vedda ceremonies are of shorter duration—none we saw lasted over two hours and the majority certainly did not take so long. In spite of this we noted, after more than one ceremony, that the shaman was genuinely tired, and this was the case at Sitala Wanniya, where Kaira appeared actually exhausted at the end of the Pata Yaka ceremony.

We may now refer to the steps of the Vedda dance. The Drs Sarasin have described the steps of the arrow dance of the Henebedda Veddas in an elaborate and rather formal manner. We shall shortly quote their description of this dance and meanwhile content ourselves with summarising the movements of the Vedda dances. Essentially, these appear to consist of steps taken alternately with each foot, each step being followed by a couple of pats on the ground delivered with the ball of the foot that is in advance, and after each such movement with right or left foot a half turn is made. The rhythm of the dance is kept by swaying the body gently from the waist, the hands (when not beating the body or holding an object) being allowed to swing freely; with each half turn forward the body is inclined forward and the head bent so that the hair falls over the face, and with each half turn backwards the head is thrown backwards. The dance always begins slowly and gently, the back foot still touching the ground while that foot with which the step has been made performs the double pat, so that just at first it is little more than a shuffle, soon, however, the feet are raised more and more and longer paces are taken, the back foot no longer remains on the ground while the double pat is made and the swaying and bending of the body is greatly increased.

When the *yaka* enters the person of a shaman it is customary for him to inspect the offerings, and if he is pleased—which is almost invariably the case—he will show his pleasure. This is usually done by bending the head low over the offering, then

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

arms straight above their heads, and then stretching over the *wilkoraha* exchanged *kaduwa*. They danced a few steps and exchanged *kaduwa* again, and yet once more before they bent their heads low over the *wilkoraha*, by which action the *yaku* inspected the coconut milk and pronounced it very good. The exchange of swords was merely in imitation of the Rahu brothers who were said to have done this in their lifetime.

After approving of the offering of milk Handuna and Kaira, both followed by their supporters, danced to Nila, and Handuna placed his sword on the latter's chest while swaying his body and moving from one foot to the other, prophesying that Nila would have good luck in hunting and would take many combs (Plate XLVIII, fig. 2). Nila answered; Handuna and Kaira still gasping and trembling said that the *yaku* possessing them must go now, and that their brother the Fire Chief would come. There was more wild dancing round the *wilkoraha*, and both men were so overcome that had their supporters not held them in their arms they must have fallen. We could not determine the exact time of the departure of the two elder Rahu Yaku and the advent of the younger brother[1]. Handuna and Kaira bent their heads simultaneously over the *wilkoraha*, inspected the milk, were satisfied and continued to dance, and while a bundle of grass was brought and set on fire they raised both arms, and after holding hands over the *wilkoraha* they rushed to the burning grass and danced on the fire till they put it out, then again holding hands they danced and bent their heads over the *wilkoraha*. More grass was set alight, and after repeating their dance on it both fell back into their supporters' arms. In a few seconds they sprang forward and danced up to Nila: Handuna spoke in the gasping *yaka* voice and covered the swords with a cloth. More grass having been set alight the dance continued as before, first round the pot, then on the flames, and then round the pot again. While Handuna placed his sword on the chest of Nila the spirit within him spoke saying he must go soon, but both Handuna and Kaira danced again before

[1] It was perfectly clear that the idea of one *yaka* possessing two people at the same time presented no difficulty to Handuna and the rest of the Sitala Wanniya community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 535 786 returning to Nila and giving him their *kaduwa* to hold. This they did because they wanted to put them down, and they considered them too sacred and dangerous to be put on the ground, or even to be held by anyone who was not a grown man who had frequent intercourse with the spirits.

796 535 Handuna took the necklace from the *wilkoraha* and showed it to one of us (B. Z. S.), to whom he gave it, asking for a red necklace instead of the bast one. Kaira followed Handuna and gave to each of us betel leaves from the *wilkoraha* as a sign of favour from the youngest of the Rahu Yaku. Then both went to the *maesa*, looked at the offering, and then fell back into their supporters' arms. We were told that the *yaka* was well pleased with the offering and was about to depart from them, but Nila sang the invocation and soon the two dancers began to tremble and shake their heads, then shouting hah! hah! they sprang forward and danced again. They picked up their *kaduwa* from the *wilkoraha*, where they had been put for safety, this being considered a sufficiently sacred spot. Using the leaves which formed the hilts of their swords, they scooped out the coconut milk from the *wilkoraha* and scattered it about, and those on whom it happened to fall considered themselves lucky. Then the *yaka* spoke to Nila saying that he wished to go, and Nila answered "It is well." But before the *yaka* left Handuna and Kaira, the two men danced toward that side of the cleared spot where the women and children were grouped together, raising their *kaduwa* and pointing at the group. One woman was [755] carrying a baby suffering from yaws, and Handuna held his *kaduwa* over the child's head and promised that its sores should be cured. Then Handuna and Kaira gave their *kaduwa* to Nila; both bent their heads over the *maesa* and the *yaka* left them.

796 The necklace was replaced on the *wilkoraha* which was put with the *kaduwa* on the *maesa*. Handuna and Kaira repeated a charm over them and all were removed from the *maesa*. Handuna picked a few leafy twigs, put them under a tree, then took the leaves from the *kaduwa* and placed them on the freshly picked leaves, so that the hallowed leaves might not touch the ground; he then poured the remains of the coconut milk from the *wilkoraha* over them.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann 3-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

Plate LII, fig. 2 shows the *ruwala* built by Wannaku and his comrades at Maha Oya.

796
535
796

The dance began by Wannaku moving slowly round the central post. As he did this he sometimes waved the bundle of leaves which he held in his hands, at other times he held his hands close together in front of his body. As his dancing became quicker and more vigorous, Sina, his eldest son, placed himself behind him, and following his movements prepared to support him when he became possessed. Suddenly Wannaku fell forward assuming a cruciform attitude, his arms held stiffly at right angles to his body and his neck rigidly extended so that his head was pressed against the centre post of the *ruwala*, his supporter bearing the whole strain of holding him in this position. He still grasped the leaves in his hands, and his face was buried in the leaves tied to the centre post of the *ruwala*. He remained in this position for perhaps half a minute, then shaking violently he clutched the post in both hands. It was explained that the *yaku* were in the leaves tied to the *ruwala*, and that thence they passed into the body of the shaman, in whose shaking and quivering person they inspected and approved the structure of the *ruwala*, while the shaman clutched the central post. After a few moments the shaman danced again, this time more energetically than before, moving in and out of and round the structure of the *ruwala*, while he struck at the leaves pendant from its framework with the twigs he held in his hands. His movements became more violent, and he shouted several times. All this was explained as play on the part of the *yaku*, who thus showed their pleasure in the *ruwala* that had been built for them. Wannaku clutched at the side posts and bast streamers, and struck these with the leaves he held in his hands. The *yaku* thus examined the streamers to ascertain if they were properly made and of the right number. Wannaku then danced very energetically, and leaving the *ruwala* dragged Sina to where Mr Perera stood a few paces from the *ruwala*, and shaking and gesticulating violently spoke to him promising him success in all he undertook[1].

[1] Mr Samuel Perera, Forest Ranger, was an old friend of the Uniche community, and it was owing to his presence and assistance at our first interview with Wannaku and his fellows that we were immediately on the best of terms with them.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Wannaku again danced in and out and round the structure, then after striking the leaves and clutching the uprights of the *ruwala* he dragged his supporter towards an elderly Vedda onlooker, before whom he quivered and shouted as he had done before Mr Perera. We were told that in this case he prophesied success in hunting. After this he returned to the *ruwala*, and, still dancing and quivering, took a streamer in his left hand and shouting and dancing wiped its length with the bunch of leaves that he held in his right hand. He began this manœuvre at the east front of the *ruwala*, and taking each streamer in turn, went round in the opposite direction to the hands of a clock, but he soon turned and went round the reverse way; we were afterwards told that he should have gone clockwise all the time, and that when he did otherwise "it was a mistake." After this he danced round the central post, clutching at the leaves that hung from the roof of the *ruwala*, and at last moving so energetically and violently as to get away from his supporter Sina, who had been following his movements as best he could. About this time Sina himself became possessed, and after a few moments of extremely energetic dancing both men fell supine at the north front of the *ruwala*. Wannaku came to himself almost immediately, but Sina appeared to remain unconscious, even when lifted up and propped against the central post of the *ruwala*, while Wannaku shook bunches of leaves in his face and over his head, Wannaku meanwhile dancing energetically and repeating two words, to which the onlookers answered "Eh-h." We were told that the *yaku* in this way announced their satisfaction with the *ruwala* which had been built for them, and indicated that they were now ready to go.

Then Wannaku stumbled to the central post, to which he clung in a seemingly exhausted condition, partly supported by a Vedda, who had been following him since Sina fell to the ground. As Sina, who had been helped up by another man, still appeared in a semi-conscious condition, water was splashed over him, with the result that he soon came to himself. This was the end of the ceremonial as far as Ruwala Yaka and Ruwala Yakini were concerned, but after a short break another Vedda invoked two other *yaku*, Milalane Yaka and Milalane

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Yakini, who live on a hill called Milalanegala. This Vedda
535 danced in very much the same way as Wannaku had danced,
786 and the few differences noted, such as his less energetic steps, were doubtless due to personal idiosyncrasy. However, he did not bury his head in the leaves tied to the central post on becoming possessed, but shook the leaves which he held in his right hand in his own face, having previously struck these against those pendant from the *rawala*. After dancing for a short time he staggered up to Wannaku and spoke, the spirits possessing him asking why they were called and whether there was sickness amongst the people. To this Wannaku answered "No," telling the spirits that he had called them at the request of the white man who wished to know them. After this the celebrant again danced in and out of and round the *rawala*, striking at the pendant leaves. Soon he buried his head in the leaves tied to the central post, his whole body quivering, then he quickly jumped away from the pole and made his way to the Ratemahatmaya of the district, who was an onlooker, and shook the leaves in his right hand against the latter's chest, telling him he would be successful in the business he was about to undertake. This was in answer to a question that the Ratemahatmaya had shouted a short time previously. There was more dancing round the central pole, the performer striking it with the leaves which he held in his hand; after a few minutes he approached Wannaku, and striking him with the leaves said something, and again danced round the central pole which he seized in his hand and shook four times, once facing each of the cardinal points of the compass, shouting loudly as he did so. This was the means adopted by the *yaku* to test the solidity of the structure. We were told that this dance was generally per-
[755 formed in order to cure sickness, and if the pole fell or the
787] structure came to pieces the patient for whose benefit it took place would die or others would become ill. At last with many quiverings and clutchings at the central post the *yaku* took their departure.

796 A similar dance lasting a shorter time, during which the
535 dancer was possessed by Moranegala Yaka, then took place, after which Wannaku, who appeared to have quite recovered

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a prophecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *choregos*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wach! wach! wach!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announcement was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[8]

them on pp. 333-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were not coast Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one of some interest; but as, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[8] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 It was now two o'clock in the morning, and, though the ceremony was by no means concluded, I had seen enough of it to appreciate its general nature and it behoved me to get a little sleep in preparation for the day's work before me. Accompanied by the Chief Headman I made my way back along the jungle paths and across the open spaces, still white in the moonlight,—with the throb of the tom-tom behind me becoming fainter and fainter as I pursued my way,—to the quiet of my lodging.

R. B. NAISH.

[796 dancers lay upon the ground and certainly appeared to be genuinely
789] and completely unconscious for about ten minutes, *i.e.*, up to the time at which I left the clearing.

787

787 REVELATION AND DIVINATION--practices reflecting anxiety about the future and often also a sense of inspiration; quest for visions and guardian spirits; hallucinatory revelations; communication with spirits (e.g., through spirit possession, through inspired oracles, through mediums); prophesy; clairvoyance; acquiring mystic insight through concentration and contemplation; interpretation of dreams; omens and their interpretation; divinatory practices and techniques (e.g., haruspicy, hepatoscopy, necromancy, scapulimancy, scrying, sortilege, astrology); etc. See also:

Personality disorders 150
Judicial oaths and ordeals 695
Revelation and divination in the treatment of diseases 755
Omens of death 763
Cult of the dead 769
Guardian spirits 770
Diviners, seers, and messiahs 791
Ideas about dreams 922

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

becomes a *yaka*, for it appears that properly speaking the word *yaka* should not be applied to the spirit of the dead for the first few days after it has left the body. During this short period the word *prana karaya* (living one) should be used for the spirit of the deceased, for it has not yet attained the condition implied by the term *yaka*. Among the Henebedda Veddas it was thought that the *prana karaya* resorted to Kande Yaka a few days, perhaps three or five, after death, and then obtained permission from him to accept offerings from the living, and thus become numbered among his attendants, the *Nae Yaku*; but beyond a vague idea that the spirit might perhaps exist for a short time at the site where death had occurred, these folk had no knowledge of its state before it reached Kande Yaka. The Bandaraduwa Veddas, who had come more under Sinhalese and Tamil influence, asserted that the spirit of the deceased spent some days in the neighbourhood of the death scene, which it only left to seek the Kataragam God and obtain his permission to become a *yaka* and pass into the train of attendants on Kande Yaka, and so become a *Nae Yaku* capable of accepting offerings from the living and in return helping or injuring them.

The method of invocation of the *yaku* is essentially the same in all Vedda ceremonies; an invocation is sung by the shaman and often by the onlookers, while the shaman slowly dances, usually round the offering that has been prepared for the *yaku*. Sometimes the invocations are quite appropriate and either consist of straightforward appeals to the *yaka* invoked for help, or recite the deeds and prowess of the *yaka* when he too was a man, as when Kande Yaka is addressed as "continuing to go from hill to hill [who] follows up the traces from footprint to footprint of excellent sambar deer." But at other times the charms seem singularly inappropriate; probably in many of these instances they are the remains of old Sinhalese charms that have not only been displaced from their proper position and function, but have been mangled in the process, and have in the course of time become incomprehensible. As the charm is recited over and over again the shaman dances more and more quickly, his voice becomes hoarse and he soon becomes possessed by the *yaka*, and, although he does not lose consciousness and can coordinate

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

his movements, he nevertheless does not retain any clear recollection of what he says, and only a general idea of the movements he has performed. Although there is doubtless a certain element of humbug about some of the performances, we believe that this is only intentional among the tamer Veddas accustomed to show off before visitors, and that among the less sophisticated Veddas the singing and movements of the dance soon produce a more or less automatic condition, in which the mind of the shaman, being dominated by his belief in the reality of the *yaku*, and of his coming possession, really acts without being in a condition of complete volitional consciousness. Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that although they never entirely lost consciousness, they nearly did so at times, and that they never fully appreciated what they said when possessed, while at both the beginning and end of possession they experienced a sensation of nausea and vertigo and the ground seemed to rock and sway beneath their feet.

Some men, including Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, whom we consider one of the most trustworthy of our informants, said that they were aware that they shivered and trembled when they became possessed, and Handuna heard booming noises in his ears as the spirit left him and full consciousness returned. He said this usually happened after he had ceased to dance. We could not hear of any shaman who saw visions while possessed or experienced any olfactory or visual hallucinations before, during, or after possession. The Veddas recognise that women may become possessed, but we only saw one instance of (alleged) possession in a woman, which occurred at a rehearsal of a dance got up for our benefit on our first visit to Bendiyagalge, during which we are confident that none of the dancers were really possessed. Although we did not see the beginning of this woman's seizure we have little doubt that there was a large element of conscious deception in her actions, for when we became aware of her she was sitting bolt upright with her eyes shut and the lids quivering, apparently from the muscular effort of keeping them tightly closed, while opposite her was Tissahami the Vedda Arachi muttering spells over a coconut shell half full of water with which he dabbed her eyes and face.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It is not suggested that the conscious element is entirely absent from the Vedda possession dances, it is impossible to believe that such a sudden collapse as that occurring in the Henebedda *hirikoraha* ceremony (p. 222) (when Kande Yaka in the person of the shaman shoots the sambar deer), followed by an almost instantaneous recovery, is entirely non-volitional, and the same holds good for the pig-spearing in the Bambura Yaka ceremony (p. 243) at Sitala Wanniya. We believe that these facts can be fully accounted for by a partial abolition of the will, that is to say, by a dulling of volition far short of complete unconsciousness. The shaman in fact surrenders himself to the dance in the fullest sense, and it is this, combined with a high degree of sub-conscious expectancy, which leads him to enact almost automatically and certainly without careful forethought the traditional parts of the dance in their conventionally correct order. Further, the assistant, who follows every movement of the dancer, prepared to catch him when he falls, may also greatly assist by conscious or unconscious suggestion in the correct performance of these complicated possession dances. Again, we do not think there can be any doubt as to the non-volitional nature of the possession, by the *yaka*, of the bystanders, near relatives of the dead man, which may take place during the *Nat Yaku* ceremony[1].

One remarkable fact may be chronicled here, viz. that we have never met a Vedda who had seen the spirit of a dead man, that is to say, no Vedda ever saw a ghost, at least in his waking hours. We have never been able to obtain any corroborative evidence for Bailey's assertion that "the spirits [of the dead] appear to them in dreams and tell them [the Veddas] where to hunt." Veddas certainly dream, but Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira, two most trustworthy informants, said that they did

[1] There was nothing about the general behaviour of any of the Veddas with whom we came in contact that suggested a specially neurotic or hysterical tendency. The graver stigmata of hysteria such as would warrant a diagnosis of functional disease were always absent and the Veddas, even when ill, were in no sense fuss makers or inclined to magnify their ailments in the way so many Melanesians do. We are indebted to Dr C. S. Myers for the suggestion that possession by the *yaku* can best be explained as an affection (dissociation) of altered personality. If this be so the condition is comparable to a number of well-known cases in the sphere of mental pathology.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

not often have dreams. Dreams are considered uncanny, and Handuna said that, although a shaman, he himself feared them. He told us that a man would usually remain quietly in the rock-shelter for a whole day after a dream, and would not leave it to get food, even if staying in the cave meant going hungry. Handuna once dreamt that he had shot a monkey and brought it back to the cave, so he did not go out hunting the next day but stayed in the cave. He said that he had never had dreams that were of themselves of a terrifying nature, such as being attacked by bears or falling over a precipice. He dreamt of his father a few days after his death, but seldom or never since then. In his dream his dead father invited him to come hunting with him, and together they went into the jungle and found some yams and cooked and ate them. Handuna said that he was not afraid "because he was my father; what was there to be afraid of? Nevertheless I stayed in the cave, for I was sorry that day." Handuna told us that children—even small children that cannot talk—may wake up shrieking, but he has never heard of people talking in their sleep.

With regard to the causation of dreams there was a real but ill-defined belief connecting the dream-forms of dead relatives with the spirits (*yaku*) of the dead. Discussing this matter in connection with his dream of his dead father, Handuna said, "We think it is through love they come," but he showed that he realised that living people who were not near relatives might be seen in dreams, by volunteering the statement that at our departure he might dream of one of us (C. G. S.) to whom he was speaking.

Although the dream-forms of dead persons were vaguely associated with their *yaku*, it was generally denied that the dead seen in dreams told the living where to hunt, and it must be remembered that the general opinion was that no living person had ever seen a *yaku*, and it was only when specially discussing dreams that it was said that *yaku* were seen in dreams. Nor did the *Nae Yaku* regularly make their presence known in any other way than by possession, though some Veddas translated the minor noises of the jungle into signs of the presence of the *yaku*. These facts also seem to militate against the idea that any

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

considerable part of Vedda possession is a fraud, deliberately conceived and perpetrated, for knowing, as many Veddas do, of the frequency with which the Sinhalese see "devils" and "spirits" of all sorts, nothing would appear easier, if fraud were intended, than for a shaman to assert that he could see the spirits which every Vedda believes are constantly around him.

Arrows play a considerable part in the Vedda religion, two forms of arrow being used. The first is the ordinary arrow used for shooting game, the second a ceremonial arrow called *aude* with a blade 8 to 18 inches long, which is usually but not always hafted into a handle often considerably shorter than the blade[1]. Both forms of arrows are used in the possession dances described in Chapter IX, but in addition to this the shooting arrow is used as a protection to infants, being commonly thrust in the ground by the side of a sleeping child when its mother is forced to leave it. We heard of this custom in several communities, and at Sitala Wanniya, where arrows were scarce, were shown a wooden bladed arrow which was said to be used in this way (figure 7 (*a*)); *aude* might also be made of wood when an iron blade was not available, and figure 7 (*b*) shows a wooden *aude* made for us at Henebedda. These facts are important as showing that the power of the arrow lies in itself and not in its iron blade.

The protective power of the arrow was noted by Nevill, who stated that the Nilgala Veddas "regard the symbol of an arrow, placed by their babe, as efficient protection for it. They leave tiny babes upon the sand for hours together, with no other guard than an arrow stuck in the ground by their side. Their belief in the efficacy of this has received no shock. They never knew such a child to be attacked by wild beasts, pigs, leopards, jackals, etc. or harmed[2]."

With regard to the long-bladed and short-handled ceremonial arrows, the handles of these are sometimes covered with incisions so roughly executed that they do not form a pattern and can hardly be decorative even in intention, so that probably they only serve the useful purpose of preventing the hand from

[1] These ceremonial arrows are doubtless identical with the large blades described by various authors as formerly used in shooting elephants.
[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 184.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mangara Deyo is invoked to protect cattle. About a month before our visit a nephew of the shaman suffered from headache and fever and woke up in the middle of the night in a great state of alarm. It was ascertained by stone augury that Mangara Deyo had sent the sickness, offerings were made to him, and the youngster speedily recovered. 776 755

There are no dances at a man's death or invocations to the spirits of the dead, nor did there appear to be any particular spirit who gave luck in hunting, indeed it seemed that game was little sought, the whole activity of the community being concentrated on cattle breeding. 231 776 769

The temple of Mangara Deyo is a small bare hut, with the roof projecting a few feet beyond that wall in which the door is cut. The inside of the temple is quite bare except for a narrow wooden rack about a foot wide which runs round the two side and back walls at a height of about four feet from the ground. In one corner of this was a pile of *aude* of all shapes and sizes which were said to belong to Mangara Deyo. 778 346

ROTAWAEWA.

Mr G. W. Jayawardene writes as follows concerning the beliefs of the Tamankaduwa "Veddas" described on p. 56. "They regard Adukganna Hulawali Yaka and Vedi Yaka as the important *yaku*. Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit to whom they look to be cured of sickness. When any one is ill he or she or someone on their behalf puts aside one or two cents which are wrapped in a clean piece of cloth and from each house an offering of food is made. Vedi Yaka is the spirit they look to for help in getting game. When an animal is killed the heart is taken and roasted and offered on a stick with the end split into four to hold the heart under a tree." Commenting on this Mr B. Horsburgh writes, "Adukganna Hulawali Yaka is the spirit of a Vedda who was killed by King Mahasena for refusing to leave Minneriya tank when he was going to restore it. The name Adukganna Hulawaliyaka means Hulawali Yaka who takes the *adukkuwa* or present of food (from the offering made to him). He is only seen in dreams, 776 753 776 224 776 775 787

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The
775
787

when he takes the shape of a well made young man dressed in white and with a white stick in his hand. Vedi Yaka also appears only in dreams, as a black man in a cloth with nothing else particular about him[1]."

The Avoidance of Certain Foods.

262

It must be assumed that the following prohibitions are of a religious or of a magico-religious nature, and for this reason they are included in the present chapter. They do not appear to be connected with totemism, yet we do not feel confident that they are derived from Hinduism, as is suggested by the Sarasins[2]. In this doubt we have the support of Mr Parker who writes: "This prohibition appears to have no connection with Hinduism, or the common Brown Monkey, *Rilawā* (*Macacus pileatus*), would be included, and also the Rat, as the vāhana of Ganēsa, and the Turtle as representative of Vishnu; or some of these[3]."

Bailey writes, "The Veddahs eat the flesh of elk, deer, monkeys, pigs, the iguana, and pengolin—all flesh indeed, but that of oxen, elephants, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.

"They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of these beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained, is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh[4]."

We are able to confirm Bailey's statement as far as it concerns the flesh of mammals, with the reservation that most Veddas do not eat porcupine. With regard to birds, the Veddas of Henebedda said they would not eat fowls or eagles. The majority of Veddas, including even the degenerate Veddas of the coast, avoid eating fowl, though many of the settled village Veddas keep them for sale or for the sake of their eggs, and in

[1] Both the passages quoted are from a report by Mr Horsburgh to the Colonial Secretary.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 415.

[3] *Ancient Ceylon*, p. 191.

[4] *Op. cit.* pp. 187 and 188.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

many places the flesh of the jungle cock is avoided as well as that of the domesticated bird. Many Veddas when questioned about fowl said, that though they did not eat it themselves other Veddas would, and some alleged that the reason for their abstinence was that fowls eat dirt. The lay members of the Sitala Wanniya community had no objection to eating fowl, though Handuna avoided it because he was a shaman. 262

Further, those Veddas who eat fowl, avoid eating it when about to take part in a dance. When discussing this matter at Sitala Wanniya, Vela, who was not a shaman, was about to take part in the Dola Yaka ceremony described in Chapter IX, and it was then explained that this day he must avoid fowl, though at other times it would not matter if he were to eat it or not. The reason was not clear, while one man said that it was because the *yaku* did not like fowl, and so would not readily enter him after he had eaten it, another said that should a man become possessed after eating fowl it might be difficult to regain consciousness. It is equally necessary for shamans to avoid eating pig, though the reason for this was more definitely stated, namely, that the *yaku* disliked this animal. 262 787

Although shamans will not eat pig, they have no scruples with regard to killing it, but they must not touch it or cut it up. If they were to neglect this observance they would be ill and shiver for four or five days afterwards, even when seated comfortably in the cave. The arrow with which a pig had been killed must be cleaned by a man who is not a shaman, and may then be used again by the shaman. The shaman of the sophisticated Veddas said that he would eat only rice, coconut milk, salt, bananas and cow's milk for some days before invoking the *yaku*, and this man insisted on having a daily ration of rice for several days before the *Nae Yaku* ceremony held after the death of Tuta. But as all these foods are foreign to the wilder Veddas and must be obtained by trade, these abstinences have assuredly been introduced, and certainly no custom of this sort is observed at Sitala Wanniya or even at Henebedda. 262 791

The suggestion that these prohibitions have been taken over from Hinduism will not explain the equally strong objection to 262

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

dominated, what more natural than that collapse should occur or be feigned by the less honest or susceptible practitioners? There is no doubt that the Vedda ceremonies make considerable demand on the bodily powers of the dancers, but this is not so great as in the case of the Sinhalese devil ceremony of Gonagolla, since the Vedda ceremonies are of shorter duration—none we saw lasted over two hours and the majority certainly did not take so long. In spite of this we noted, after more than one ceremony, that the shaman was genuinely tired, and this was the case at Sitala Wanniya, where Kaira appeared actually exhausted at the end of the Pata Yaka ceremony. 535 786

We may now refer to the steps of the Vedda dance. The Drs Sarasin have described the steps of the arrow dance of the Henebedda Veddas in an elaborate and rather formal manner. We shall shortly quote their description of this dance and meanwhile content ourselves with summarising the movements of the Vedda dances. Essentially, these appear to consist of steps taken alternately with each foot, each step being followed by a couple of pats on the ground delivered with the ball of the foot that is in advance, and after each such movement with right or left foot a half turn is made. The rhythm of the dance is kept by swaying the body gently from the waist, the hands (when not beating the body or holding an object) being allowed to swing freely; with each half turn forward the body is inclined forward and the head bent so that the hair falls over the face, and with each half turn backwards the head is thrown backwards. The dance always begins slowly and gently, the back foot still touching the ground while that foot with which the step has been made performs the double pat, so that just at first it is little more than a shuffle, soon, however, the feet are raised more and more and longer paces are taken, the back foot no longer remains on the ground while the double pat is made and the swaying and bending of the body is greatly increased. 535

When the *yaka* enters the person of a shaman it is customary for him to inspect the offerings, and if he is pleased—which is almost invariably the case—he will show his pleasure. This is usually done by bending the head low over the offering, then 535 787

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 787 springing away and shouting "Ah! Ah!" while taking short deep breaths. The natural outcome of the *yaka's* gratitude is a promise of favours to the community. When prophesying good luck, the shaman places one or both hands on the participant's shoulders, or if he carries an *aude* or other sacred object, the shaman holds this against the latter's chest or, more rarely, presses it on the top of his head. His whole manner is agitated and he usually shuffles his feet, speaks in a hoarse somewhat guttural voice taking short deep breaths, and punctuates his remarks with a deep "Ah! Ah!"

787 778 535 With regard to the arrows and other special objects which are used when invoking the *yaku*, in which class we include such bower-like structures as the *alutyakagama*, the *ruwala* and the *kolomaduwa*, all described in this Chapter, we must point out that these simply act as conductors and resting places for the *yaku*. It was stated that Kande Yaka could not and would not come when invoked, unless his arrow were held, and the same idea accounts for the arrow dance, performed round an arrow struck in the ground in order to obtain game. Again the leaves in the bower-like structures with the aid of which the *yaku* were invoked were considered the resting place of the *yaku* which they left in order to enter the shaman. The number of *yaku* who came to the bower was not thought to be limited to those who possessed the shaman, on the contrary, important *yaku* were thought to bring their attendants (*piriwari*), who remained among the leaves which their lord left to possess the shaman, and it was to drive away the *yaku* who might unduly prolong their stay in the bower prepared for them, that the leaves were beaten and more or less stripped from the bowers at the end of the ceremony.

778 Before leaving the subject we would point out that though *yaku* might be spoken of as arrow-yaka (Itale Yaka), bow-yaka (Dunne Yakini) and so forth, such names do not imply that the *yaka* in question is immanent in the object or is believed to stand in specially close relationship to all objects of that class. In the case of Itale Yaka the idea was "the *yaka* who is invoked by means of an arrow"; in the case of Dunne Yakini the name simply refers to the skill of the nameless heroine who killed the

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

boar wounded by the companions of Bandura, as is related in the Bambura Yaka dance.

The Henebedda Veddas washed before performing or assisting at the *kirikoraha* seen by us, and every Vedda who invoked the *yaku*, either let down his hair before beginning to dance or while dancing, in the latter instance presumably as he felt "possession" coming upon him. Many Veddas put on the *hangala* before dancing, this being a length of white cloth worn round the waist as is shown in many of the photographs reproduced in this chapter. Presumably this was not worn for the arrow dance, which is especially performed by unsuccessful hunters without any special preparation. We do not think that a leaf girdle was ever worn as a ceremonial garment when dancing. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya said that at some time, which he put more than three generations ago, there were Veddas, whom he called *Attukola Veddo*, who lived so remote from the Sinhalese that they had no cloth and so always wore leaf girdles, but he was quite confident that no Veddas who had cloth ever wore such girdles especially to invoke the *yaku*. This agrees with Nevill's conclusions[1] and does not conflict with the experience of the Sarasins.[2]

The Roman numbers in parentheses after references to invocations in the accounts of the ceremonies described in this chapter refer to the invocations given in Chapter X.

The Arrow Dance.

This, the simplest of the Vedda dances, has been described at length by the Drs Sarasin who saw it danced by "Veddas of the Nilgala district[3]." We have already quoted Bailey's account of the arrow dance as he found it danced by the ancestors of these Veddas two generations ago, and Monsieur Emile

[1] "I have especially questioned the best informed Vaeddas whether leaves were worn, either at ceremonies or otherwise. They all say yes, they were worn once, when cotton cloth was hard and dear to get, by those who lived where there were no Riti trees. They were only worn by the poorest, and from necessity, not choice. The leaves chosen were those of shrubs, the branches of which ended in rather pendulous sprays of foliage, and these were tucked under the waist string as a sort of apron." (*Op. cit.* p. 188.)

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 387—389.

[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 512—514.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 787 We were told at Bandaraduwa that if men had no luck in hunting they might thrust an arrow into the ground, decorate it with leaves of the *na* tree (*Messua ferruginea*) or the *mille*, and dance round it. If a shaman were present, which was not necessary, he would naturally take part in this, and any number might participate. This dance was performed at our request, the shaman and a Vedda called Tambia taking part in it. Two clusters of *na* leaves were tied to an arrow, one just below the feathers and another immediately above the blade. This was struck in the ground (Plate XXVII, fig. 1) and the dancers slowly moved round it singing an invocation (No. XV). Soon they both became possessed, the shaman falling into the arms of his supporter (Plate XXVII, fig. 2), almost immediately after which he came to one of the onlookers and promised him a sambar deer if he would hunt in a westerly direction early the next morning. Several times during the dance the performers touched the leaves tied to the upper part of the arrow, and bending low gathered them up to their faces (as in Plate XXVIII, fig. 1), while their hair mingled with the leaves. The shaman afterwards explained that the *yaka* first came to the arrow and the leaves tied to it, and then entered the persons of the dancers who became possessed. Before the *yaka* left the dancers bent low over the arrow shaking their heads violently, and after the dance both men salaamed to the arrow.

776 The *yaka* invoked in this dance was sometimes called Itale Yaka (Arrow Yaka), and though identical with Kande Yaka, there was nevertheless a tendency to think of Itale Yaka as a separate spirit, who was not so generally well disposed as Kande Yaka. We discovered this by the shaman refusing to sing the invocation into the phonograph when we were surrounded by children, lest his attention being attracted, the *yaka* should come, which might be dangerous to the little ones. It must be [77] remembered that the Bandaraduwa community had been much exposed to foreign influence, so that there is nothing surprising in their *yaku* having to a certain extent assumed the dangerous complexion of Sinhalese and Tamil demons.

535 Although the arrow dance originally had, and still has, a religious significance, since it is danced to procure game and as

535
787

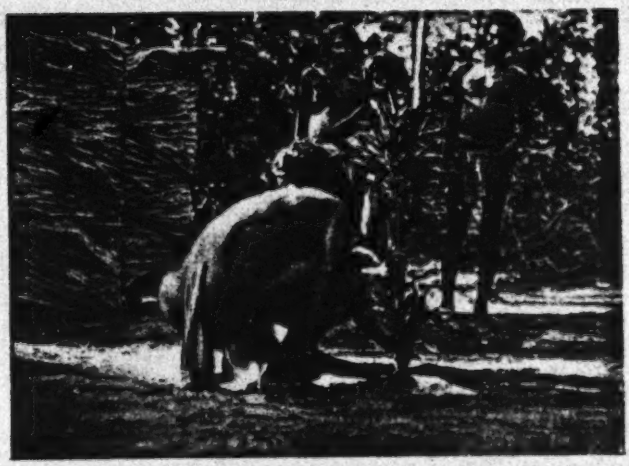


Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony. Arrow with *Na* leaves attached (Bandaraduwa)*

Fig. 2. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*

[facing p.216]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
787

Fig. 1. Itale Yaka ceremony (Bandaraduwa)*

[516]

Fig. 2. The Adukku Denawa ceremony (Henebedda)

[facing p.216]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the Henebedda *kirikoraha*) it is usually poured on the ground 796
without any ceremony.

A description of the phenomena of "possession" of the Vedda 796
shaman by the *yaku* has already been given in Chapter VI, so 787
that nothing need be said on that matter in connection with this
dance or any of the ceremonies described in this chapter, in all
of which "possession" occurred.

The essential features of the *kirikoraha* are two in number.
The first of these is the offering of coconut milk and generally [782]
of other food to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka and sometimes
other *yaku* regarded as their attendants. Secondly the panto-
mimic representation by the shaman, while possessed by Kande
Yaka, of Kande Wanniya tracking and shooting a sambar deer.
This pantomime seems to occur only when "possession" by
Kande Yaka takes place, for whenever any pantomime of this
sort was enacted, even in the most shortened and conventional
form, as in the Nae Yaku ceremony (described on pp. 233 to
237 of this chapter), the shaman was held to be possessed
by Kande Yaka.

We witnessed four *kirikoraha* ceremonies during our stay in 796
the Vedda country. One was performed by the Henebedda
Veddas in thanksgiving for a fine buck which one of them had
shot, and the other three were undertaken at our request, but we
have no doubt that they were accurately performed; for the
Veddas were always pleased to perform any ceremonial dance
provided the correct offering were given, as thereby they gained
the favour of the *yaku*, and it was seldom that they were able to
offer such food as we gave them for the purpose. The *kirikoraha*
ceremony appears to be held equally as a thanksgiving for game
killed and in order to obtain success in the future.

The Kirikoraha at Bendiyagalge. A fine buck was killed
late in the afternoon of the 7th of February, 1908, and was
carried to a flat rock between our camp and the Bendiyagalge
caves and rapidly skinned and cut up during the short tropical
twilight. A *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed the next
morning, before taking part in which all the men went to the
neighbouring stream and bathed, and afterwards made an offering
of food to the *yaku*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Some rice with coconut and chillies had previously been cooked at the cave together with certain portions of the deer, the flesh from the head, sternum and front of the ribs, and the whole was brought down to the *talawa*. This food formed the offering (*aduk*), and the ceremony of *adukku denawa* or "offering the food" was performed before the dance began. The shaman, Randu Wanniya, squatted in front of the food, and with his hands together repeated a dedicatory invocation to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, which lasted nearly ten minutes, and consisted mainly, if not entirely, of repetitions of invocation No. XIX. It was performed in gratitude for all deer and sambar killed, and in it the *yaku* were invited to accept the offering of food which was left for them for a short time and afterwards eaten by the Veddas themselves. Fig. 2 of Plate XXVIII shows the shaman invoking the *yaku* with the offering in front of him. This ceremony, called *adukku denawa* (literally "the giving of cooked food"), is always held before a *kirikoraha* when game has been killed, but it is not itself part of the latter ceremony.

An open part of the *talawa* near the caves was selected as a dancing ground, and a tripod called *mukkaliya* was made by binding three sticks together on which an earthen pot, the *kirikoraha*, was placed, and a ceremonial arrow (*aude*) laid upon it.

The shaman took a coconut and the *aude*, held them to his head and salaamed while Poromala smeared some resin on a stick and afterwards censed the *aude* which was held so that the smoke might eddy round it, for thus would Kande Yaka smell the incense and be pleased (Plate XXIX, fig. 1). At the same time the shaman repeated the invocation (No. XIX) to Kande Yaka.

This appeared to be one of the many incidents pointing to the fact that when *yaku* are invoked they first come to their special vehicles (Kande always to an *aude*, other *yaku* to leaves, swords and various articles), and from these enter the person of the shaman.

796 All sang the invocation, and the shaman danced round the
535 tripod holding the *aude* and coconut together in both hands and
787 waving them rhythmically as he performed the orthodox Vedda step, i.e. one pace with each foot followed by a couple of pats on the ground with the ball of the same foot, every step being

796
787
535

[417]

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, censing the *asude* and coconut (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *asude* and coconut (Henebedda)

[facing p. 220]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
787
535

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *aude* and coconut (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman breaking the coconut (Henebedda)

[facing p. 228b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
1787
535

followed by a half turn of the body to the accompaniment of sounds produced by some of those who were not dancing slapping their sides. The shaman next sang the invocation to Bilindi Yaka (No. XXI), and after a short time he showed signs of becoming possessed; he shivered and shook his head, and with the *aude* in his right hand he struck the coconut which he held in his left and broke it in half (Plate XXX, fig. 2), letting the water fall into the *kiriboraka*. The way in which the nut split was prophetic; if a clean break was made the animal to be promised later would be a female, but if the edges were jagged a male would be shot. The shaman was now possessed by Bilindi Yaka, and with half the nut in each hand came to each of us in turn, placed his arms on our shoulders, and in the hoarse gasping voice of the *yaka* promised us good hunting and protection from wild animals.

Two of the younger Veddas, Poromala and Sita Wanniya, scraped the meat of the coconut with the *aude* to make the milk, and afterwards placed one half shell on the end of one of the sticks forming the tripod, and the other below the *kiriboraka*. Leaves taken from any tree, but said to represent betel leaves, were also placed in the *kiriboraka*. There was no reason for the particular position of the coconut shells, but as they were considered part of the offering to the *yaka*, it would have been considered disrespectful to the *yaka* to place them on the ground. This rule was observed in all the dances that we witnessed. All sang the invocation again, and the shaman, Randu Wanniya, continued to dance, holding the handle of the *aude* in the right hand and the point of the blade in the left, turning it with a rotatory movement as he danced, gradually swaying his body more and more and lifting his feet higher from the ground. He went to the *kiriboraka* and inspected the milk, letting it run through his fingers (Plate XXXI, fig. 1), and dropping some on the *aude* to see if it was rich enough. Apparently he was satisfied with its quality, and soon he fell back into the arms of Sita Wanniya who supported him. After a short time he revived with much quivering of muscles and gasping for breath, and taking a handful of the coconut milk he shouted and approached Tissahami the Vedda Arachi[1] (who

[1] This man, concerning whom something has been said on p. 41, was known to

L. Seligmann & Seligmann R-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

796 was then staying in our camp) and scattered the milk over him,
535 while with the right hand on his shoulder he expressed his
787 pleasure in seeing him and promised him luck in hunting. Then after prophesying good hunting to each of us in turn and to several of the Veddas, Billiadi Yaka left the shaman.

Randu Wanniya again danced eastward round the *kirikoraha*, holding the *aude* in both hands, but soon he began to crouch and point it to the ground, and then pretended to thrust it at imaginary footprints (Plate XXXI, fig. 2). His excited manner showed that he was now possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he represented following the slot of a sambar. Soon Sita Wanniya took the *aude* away from him and gave him a bow and arrow, and the tracking continued amidst intense excitement (Plate XXXII, fig. 1). Sita Wanniya followed closely, ready to support the shaman if he should fall, while others pointed out the slot to him till at last, a basket having been placed on the ground, he drew his bow and transfixed it.

796 Plate XXXII, fig. 2 shows the group round the shaman as
787 the arrow left the bow. As the arrow sped the shaman fell back seemingly exhausted and almost senseless. The *yaks* did not, however, finally depart from the shaman, but merely went to the quarry to ascertain if his arrow had proved fatal. The shaman soon came to himself, apparently satisfied, and bent his head (Plate XXXIII, fig. 1) over the *kirikoraha*, and then shouting "Ah, ah!" in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaks* came to each of us in turn and placed the *aude* on our heads, thereby granting us jungle favour, after which he went to several of the Veddas prophesying good luck in hunting to each of them (Plate XXXIII, fig. 2). Then taking the half shells of the coconut in either hand and waving them about, he danced round the *kirikoraha* and bent his head over the pot so that the *yaks* might drink, and afterwards fell into the arms of Sita Wanniya, who had been following, ready to support him. Again the shaman revived, and, putting his arms on our interpreter, promised him victory in all undertakings. Then returning to the *kirikoraha*, and having given the *aude* to one of

the Henebedda community and was much respected both because of his Vedda blood and because of his renown as a charmer and medicine man (*vedarala*).

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kirikorahe ceremony, the shaman examines the offering of coconut milk (Hemabedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikorahe ceremony, the shaman tracking the sambar (Hemabedda)

[facing p. 222]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

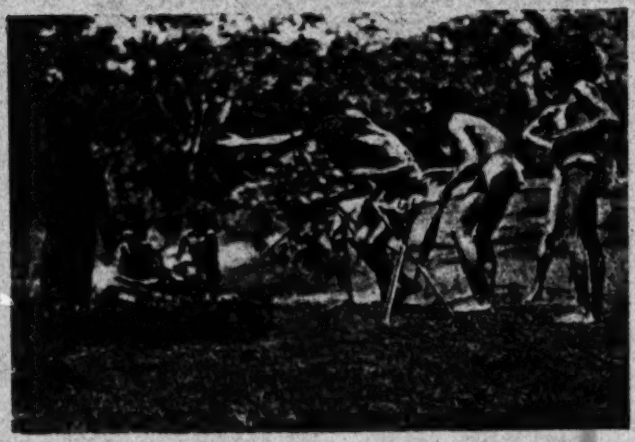


Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman tracking the sambar (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman shoots the sambar (Henebedda)

[facing p. 222 b]

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman bends his head over the coconut milk (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman possessed by Bilindi Yaka promises good hunting (Henebedda)

[facing p. 222c]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

Plate XXXIV

Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot (Henebedda)

[facing p. 222 d]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the onlookers, who were all willing assistants, he filled the palms of his hands with milk and bounded forward, and raising his hands with every step he scattered the milk, and in this manner the *yaka* within him showed his pleasure. Next he took the *kirikoraha* from the tripod with both hands (Plate XXXIV, fig. 1), spun it on the ground, and immediately it left his hands he fell back. The spinning was prophetic, for in that direction towards which the bowl dipped as it came to rest, there game would be found; and on this occasion it dipped to the north. When the shaman revived a few seconds later, Kande Yaka had left him, and he was possessed by Bilindi Yaka again. With shouts, gasping and trembling, he came to most of the onlookers and promised good hunting in the usual manner, then he took the *kirikoraha* and spun it, but when it left his hands the spirit departed from the shaman and he fell back.

The dance was now over, and all were eager to partake of the coconut milk which had been offered to the *yaku*, for none of it might be wasted. All the men took a little, and also fed the children with it, but the women were not allowed to partake of it. However, as the mere contact of the milk had virtue the shaman rubbed some on their heads. In other less sophisticated communities women were not looked upon as unclean, and they shared in this and other food offered to the *yaku*. As has already been stated there is little doubt that the idea of women being unclean has been borrowed from the Sinhalese, among whom it is very strongly held. A little of the contents of the *kirikoraha* might also be rubbed on the heads of the dogs which were supposed to be more likely to hunt successfully after this.

The Kirikoraha at Sitala Wanniya. Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were all invoked at the *kirikoraha* held at Sitala Wanniya. Indigollae was held to be the principal attendant of Kande Yaka, and though the invocation sung to him refers to "seven pots of blood" our informants were unable to give us any meaning for this[1].

Handuna, the shaman of the Sitala Wanniya community, did

[1] This matter is briefly discussed in Chapter X after the invocation (No. XXXII) to Indigollae Yaka.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796

not possess an *aude*, having given his to a white man who knew not its value, but since an *aude* must be used when invoking Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, Handuna unfastened the blade from one of his shooting arrows to represent an *aude*. Having put on the *hangula* he burnt some resin and censed the *kirikoraha*. This had been placed on a support of the usual form in the centre of the dancing ground, and the arrow blade and some betel leaves had been placed in it. Two pots of boiled rice had been placed upon a small platform or altar (*maesa*) which had been built for, and used in, another ceremony.

796
535
787

The shaman raised the coconut and salaamed to the *kirikoraha* and then danced round and round it, singing the invocation given in Chapter X (No. XVI) and exhibiting the nut to the *yaku* and thrusting at the pot as he danced though not actually hitting it. The step was the usual one with many half turns and performed clockwise. Handuna now invoked Bilindi Yaka (Chapter X, invocation No. XVIII) and soon he fell back and was supported for a few seconds, but revived almost immediately, when he became possessed by Bilindi Yaka. An axe was given him by one of the Veddas with which he hit the coconut so as to split it, letting the water pour out on the ground. Then with a half coconut in each hand he danced up to Vela shouting "Houh! houh!" and held the nuts against his chest while with head bent and body swaying he said, "You have offered me coconut, and I have come, why did you call me?" For coconut, instead of the usual word *pol* he used *sudu ewa*, literally "the white one" or "the white thing." Again he danced round the pot and bent his head low over it, in this way showing his satisfaction with the offering. Whilst he continued to dance Vela and Kaira made the coconut milk, putting the remains of the flesh of the nut on the pots of rice which had been placed on the *maesa*. Handuna now took the arrow blade from the *kirikoraha* and danced with it, holding its ends in either hand and twirling it round between his fingers; taking it in his right hand, he stabbed sharply at the pot as he danced round it, taking care, however, never to hit the pot. He dipped the arrow into the pot and examined the milk on the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5.

796
535
787

blade, then scattered it to show that he was pleased, shouting several times *Has Bilindi! Has Bilindi!* to which Kaira always answered *divas* or "Lord." He danced again, stretching alternately his right and left arms, and about this time Bilindi Yaka left and Kande Yaka entered him without any outward signs, so that we did not recognise the change which had taken place until presently he danced round the *kirikoruha* with one arm extended and holding the arrow blade by its centre. We were told that he was possessed by Kande Yaka, who in his person performed the traditional pantomime of tracking the sambar by its slots, pointing at them with the arrow. This scene was not acted so thoroughly as it was at Bendiyagalge. Handuna picked up a few leaves and held them across the arrow to represent a bow whilst he crouched in a position ready to shoot; then, dipping his hand in the *kirikoruha* he dropped some milk on the leaves and got up and danced. Filling the palms of his hands with the milk he went to Kaira and said: "The sambar you shall shoot shall bleed like this milk dripping." Coming to one of us he placed one arm on his shoulder, holding a betel leaf moist with milk in the other outstretched hand, and prophesied sambar to the bow of Kaira. With head slightly thrown back and rapt expression he told of Indigollae and the seven pots of blood—and now it seemed that Kande Yaka went and Indigollae Yaka came[1]. Before going back to the *kirikoruha* Handuna gave one of us (C.G.S.) a betel leaf as a sign of favour, and then taking another from the *kirikoruha* he allowed some milk to drip over it before he let it fall to the ground. Then with the arrow head he made two slits in the leaf not quite extending to the base, and again dipped it in the milk. Next he went to Vela and passed the slit leaf slowly over his head and finally slapped it on his chest. He did the same thing to Kaira with an uncut leaf, and it was noted that when the leaves fell to the ground off the men's chests they were picked up carefully and put in the *kirikoruha*. The cuts in the leaf denoted that the sambar promised to Vela would be horned. The manner in which the leaf falls is also considered prophetic; when, as in this case, it falls with its

[1] His invocation is given in Chapter X, No. XXXII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

under surface upwards, the quarry will take long to kill; if, on the other hand, the leaf fall with its upper surface upwards, death will be speedy.

After this Handuna again danced round the *kirikoraha*, holding the arrow in it, and showed his favour to each of the male onlookers by passing a milky betel leaf over their heads and placing it on their chests. This was repeated several times alternating with dances and quiverings over the pot before Handuna finally shook his head over the pot and fell back with a shout, the *yaka* having left him.

Now Indigollae Yakini, the wife of Indigollae Yaka, was invoked, and we were told that Kaira who performed this dance would have worn beads on his wrists had he possessed them. He danced in the usual way round the *kirikoraha* with the arrow head which transfixed a betel leaf in one hand, when suddenly dropping his head over the *kirikoraha* he shouted and apparently became possessed by the *yakini*. Gasping and shaking he went to both Handuna and Vela and put milky betel leaves on their chests, and spoke to them, raising his arms alternately and shuffling his feet. He returned to the pot and danced, stretching his arms and then crossing them across his body as he would have done had he been holding a couple of *ande*, swaying his body and moving vigorously. Several times he bent over the *kirikoraha* and each time leapt back with a shout and danced again. At last Handuna pointed to the offering of rice on the *maesa*, which he approached and inspected while gasping and shaking, then evidently satisfied with this he sprang forward to the *kirikoraha*, dropped his head over it and fell back exhausted, but no longer possessed by any *yaka*.

The Kirikoraha at Uniche. The *kirikoraha* performed at Maha Oya by Wannaku of Uniche seemed to be intermediate between the ceremony of the wilder Veddas where the original idea, namely Kande Yaka tracking the elk, was the dominant feature, and that danced by the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula where this *motif* was omitted.

A *maesa* was built (though not elaborated into a *bulutyahana* as at Unuwatura Bubula), a white cloth was laid over it and betel leaves, areca nuts, bananas, coconuts, and two pots of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cooked rice were placed on it, as well as the *kirikoraha* itself 796 containing the coconut milk, in which two *aude* had been 535 placed. All these offerings were then covered with a red cloth, 787 the red colour being said to be necessary.

Before describing the dance it must be explained that the Uniche Veddas had come to Maha Oya, some twenty-four miles from their home, and the shaman had not brought his *aude* with him, so we offered to lend him two, a small one we had collected at Unuwatura Bubula, and a particularly fine one lent to us by Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, the Sinhalese headman already referred to, who in his youth had lived a great deal among Veddas, and from whom he had received the *aude*. This *aude*, evidently an old one, pleased Wannaku greatly and he exclaimed with joy: "This is indeed an *aude* for Kande Yaka[1]." We did not tell him whence we had obtained them, but he seemed impressed that a white man should possess such a good Vedda *aude*.

Wannaku put on the *hangula* and salaamed to the *maesa*, and whilst the drum was beaten sang the invocation given in Chapter X, No. XXII, to Bilindi Yaka. He danced in front of the *maesa* facing east, slowly at first, but gradually he began to sway his body more rapidly and with greater vigour and soon became possessed by Bilindi Yaka. The shaman now picked up the large *aude* and, after dancing with it in his hands for a few seconds, flung it from him to the ground with disgust, exclaiming angrily: "This is not my arrow, this has been used by a Sinhalese." Someone handed him the small *aude* and he seemed satisfied and danced with this. Of course it was quite possible for Wannaku to have discovered the history of the *aude* from our servants or from the villagers, or it may even have been mentioned quite casually in conversation with them and not have made much impression on him at the time, but flashing into consciousness in the excitement of the dance it may have appeared an important and till then unknown fact. On questioning Wannaku after the dance he denied any previous knowledge but said quite simply that he was possessed

[1] However, when the dance took place the next day he used this *aude* when invoking Bilindi Yaka.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

by Bilindi Yaka and "as a man knows his own betel pouch so Bilindi Yaka would know his own *aude*."

The shaman bent his head over the *kirikoraha* and inspected it, then putting his hand into it he scattered the milk on the ground two or three times, before filling his palm with milk and letting it fall over the *aude*, in this way testing the quality of the offering. With the arrow in one hand he stood in front of the *maesa* shaking and shouting. Now he took a betel leaf from the *kirikoraha*, fixed it on the point of the *aude* and as a sign of favour put this on an old Vedda's chest, asking at the same time why he had been invoked: "Is anyone sick?" The old man replied that no one was ill, they had merely called him to take the offerings on the *maesa*. So the *yaka* was pleased and with rapt expression the shaman danced, and again dripped milk over the *aude*, saying at the same time that he must go. He repeated this several times, all the while quivering and gasping and saying that now he would leave, but before finally departing the spirit again showed favour to the old Vedda, influencing the shaman to put a milky betel leaf on his chest; then the shaman leapt back suddenly and the *yaka* left him.

After a short interval the shaman danced again and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he called by the invocation No. XVII; soon he made signs that he wanted something, when the Veddas understood that he lacked a second *aude*, and not having another, one of the Veddas gave him a knife, which the shaman preferred to the rejected *aude*. He held the *aude* and the knife crosswise, these now representing the bow and arrow of Kande Yaka, and dancing wildly the shaman feigned to test the imaginary bow, then leaning both arms on the *maesa* he shivered and shook, at the same time declaring that the bow was a strong and good one. Again holding the arrow blade and knife like a bow and arrow he followed the track of an imaginary sambar for a few yards; he pointed to a spot on the ground and said the next *kirikoraha* should be built there. Then taking some milk from the *kirikoraha* he let some fall on the arrow and spilled some on the ground, and we were told that this represented Kande Wanniya

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

drinking after the kill. After a little more dancing the shaman fell back into the arms of his supporter and the spirit left him.

The Kirikoraha at Unuwatura Bubula. When dancing to Kande Yaka at Unuwatura Bubula the Veddas made a *bulatyahana* (Plate XXXV); this, we were told, would be built when invoking many *yaka*, but the *kirikoraha* would never be danced without it. The *bulatyahana* seemed to be an elaborated *maesa* with the framework carried up to form a back and slanting roof over which a cloth, specially kept for this purpose, was hung and fastened down. On the shelf of the *bulatyahana* two *aude* and a trident of the ordinary Hindu pattern were placed together with betel leaves and areca nut. The *kirikoraha* containing coconut milk and betel leaves stood on a rice-mortar beside it and a pot of cooked rice was put on the ground.

The shaman danced in front of the *bulatyahana* holding in his hands a new piece of cloth (a coloured handkerchief which we gave him) specially obtained for the purpose. He swayed his body and raised the cloth to his head while lifting his feet and patting the ground alternately with his right and left foot, but not moving from the front of the *bulatyahana*, that is to say confining his dancing to a space three or four feet long. He exchanged the handkerchief for the trident and placing a betel leaf on the point he danced with this and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka. Putting his hands into the *kirikoraha*, he examined the milk and expressed his satisfaction by shouting and clapping his hands. Again he danced to and fro in front of the *bulatyahana* with the trident in his hand. The *kirikoraha* was taken off the rice-mortar and put on the *bulatyahana*, and the pot of cooked rice was put in its place on the rice-mortar.

The dancer then approached a sick shaman who, as mentioned on p. 263, had coughed up a considerable amount of blood at the end of the *alutyahagama* ceremony performed previously, and fed him with some rice which he brought to him in a betel leaf. In this way Kande Yaka showed his benevolence towards the sick man, for it was considered that the *yaka* food would cure him. Returning to the *bulatyahana* the shaman quivered and shook his head and examined the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

rice, then he came to us and in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaku* said that he had come because we had asked for him. After some more dancing a little longer in front of the *bulatyahana* and after much bending and shaking over it and the rice pot the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya left the shaman and the ceremony ended.

NAE YAKU CEREMONIES.

769
535

The large part the *Nae Yaku* play in the life of the Veddas and the great deference paid to them have been treated in the chapters on religion. We witnessed two *Nae Yaku* ceremonies which took place at Sitala Wanniya and Bandaraduwa respectively. The Bandaraduwa ceremony was performed on the seventh day after the death of the individual whose spirit was invoked, and we were allowed to prepare a dancing ground in the jungle, where it seemed that a tolerably good series of photographs might be obtained. However, the Veddas were obviously apprehensive of the spirit of the deceased until the ceremony had taken place, and insisted on performing it early in the morning with the result that the photographs obtained were all underexposed. We have however thought it best to publish a number of these without retouching them, an exception being made in the case of the two photographs reproduced in Plates XXXVI, fig. 2, and XXXVIII, fig. 1, the value of which do not depend on the facial expression of the performers while they were so underexposed that all detail would have been lost in a reproduction.

The ceremony performed at Sitala Wanniya was danced expressly because we wished to see it, but Handuna, the most important man in this community, was delighted when we suggested that they should dance to the *Nae Yaku*, because he said it would please the *yaku*, for when alone the community could seldom provide such good things to offer them as we promised to give.

Nae Yaku Ceremony at Sitala Wanniya. Although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas told us that the *Nae Yaku* could not come without Kande Yaka, Kande Yaka was not invoked at

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
787
535
417

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the *bulatyahana* (Unuwatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman before the *bulatyahana* (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 238]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela did so also, with the result that Kaira dropped his head forward, shook violently and nodded his head sideways in a clumsy drunken fashion, and in a few seconds, still supported, jerked his limbs forwards and moved to the offering, after which he came back to where the women were standing and fell again into the arms of Vela. His chin was thrown back and his whole body trembled, while he gasped a word or two occasionally and fanned himself with his cloth vigorously. He held the cloth over the child suffering from yaws and promised to cure him, then putting both hands on Handuna he let his head fall on the latter's chest, and while trembling and shuffling his feet asked how Handuna fared. Handuna replied that game was scarce, and Kaira then spoke to the wife of Handuna and again to Handuna, and promised help. Then leaving Handuna he danced with wild leaping steps round the *kirikoraha* and gasped that now he must go and so leapt to the *maesa*, bent his head over the offering, and fell back exhausted. But he soon began to dance again, twirling the arrow blade between his fingers, till after a short time he returned to the *maesa*, and again bent his head over the offering; then with a great shout he took the pot of rice in both hands and spun it on the ground, and as he did so the *yaku* left him and he fell back. 769 535

Spinning the pot had the same significance here as at Henebedda, the direction towards which the pot dipped showing where game would be found. In this instance the pot was so full of rice that it did not dip at all, but this was considered a good omen as game might be expected on all sides. 769 787

After all was over Handuna took an arrow, and standing by the *maesa* pointed the arrow to the pots, and called upon all the *Nae Yaku* to feed. The pots were soon removed, the rice they contained was eaten, and the betel leaves from the *kirikoraha* chewed, but the milk in the *kirikoraha* was poured over a heap of twigs laid on the ground, being thus devoted to the *yaku*. 769

Nae Yaku ceremony at Bandaraduwa. Some account has already been given in Chapter II of the abnormal conditions prevailing at Bandaraduwa, so it will only be necessary to touch lightly upon this subject here. Some twenty years back these Kovil Vanamai Veddas, of whom the Bandaraduwa Veddas 177 769

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535
787

At the same time an invocation was sung, presumably to Kande Yaka and the *Nae Yaka*, but our notes are not quite clear about this; it was however certain that Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and the *Nae Yaka* all came, indeed that the last was unable to come without Kande Yaka, but it was not clear when each *yaka* came and went, and it seemed quite possible for the shaman to be possessed by several *yaka* at once.

As the shaman danced he stabbed at the *kirikoraka* with both the *aude* (Plate XXXVI, fig. 2), in this way the *Nae Yaka* by whom he was possessed was pleased to show his power. Sometimes as Tissahami made the usual half turn on his heels he held the *aude* against his hips pointed end outwards. Soon he began to quiver and bend his head forward, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers, into whose arms he fell back (Plate XXXVII, fig. 1). After lying still for a few seconds he revived and began to dance wildly, stabbing the *aude* in the air; this was in order to frighten people, for although the feeling of the *Nae Yaka* towards his living relatives was friendly, provided always that he had been well treated by them and had been offered sufficient rice, coconut milk and betel leaves, the *yaka* was not averse to showing his newly acquired power. After this, in order to show his favour to his relatives the shaman went to both the brothers of the dead man in turn and sprinkled them with coconut milk from the *kirikoraka* (Plate XXXVII, fig. 2), he put his arms on their shoulders and promised them luck in hunting, and taking two betel leaves from the *kirikoraka* he put one on the chest of each man, and the leaves being wet with the milk stayed where they were placed for a short time. Suddenly leaping away the shaman, now apparently possessed by Kande Yaka and probably with the spirit of the *Nae Yaka* still within him, tracked an imaginary sambar round the dancing ground, holding the two *aude* crosswise to represent a bow and arrow. This is shown in Plate XXXVIII, fig. 1, which also shows the betel leaves on the chest

by the shaman who wanted to wear Sinhalese leggings with bells, although he said these had not been worn before in a Vedda ceremony. The leglets, which he greatly admired, had been worn by a peasant Sinhalese at a devil ceremony which had been held two days before at a village a few miles distant. [177]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

769
535
787

of each of the two brothers of the deceased. The shaman made no feint to shoot but soon put the *aude* on the *kirikoraha*, and taking a pot of rice which had been prepared twirled it vigorously in his hands, and though this may have represented Kande Wanniya spinning the rice pot for prophecy, the shaman put the pot down without actually spinning it. Supported by one of the Veddas he again danced round the *kirikoraha* and swayed his body violently; at times he would spring suddenly to one side stabbing fiercely at the air, after which (bending over the *kirikoraha*) he fell back and remained perfectly still with rapt expression and head slightly bent, one hand resting on the edge of the milk pot. It seemed as though the Yaka was about to leave the shaman, but as the relatives did not desire this (perhaps because the Yaka had not yet fed them as a sign of greater favour) they all sang the invocation together. The Yaka heard them, for suddenly the shaman began to tremble, the trembling grew to a vigorous shaking, and he sprang forward and again bent his head over the *kirikoraha*; then with body bent and head drooping he moved a little way, taking short leaping steps, and again fell back exhausted. But he soon revived and took the *aude* and approached the dead man's brothers in turn, who both became possessed by the *Nae Yaka* and fell back. Then the shaman smeared their bodies with coconut milk, throwing some into their mouths, and they soon showed signs of life again. Plate XXXVIII, fig. 2, and Plate XXXIX, fig. 1, show the two brothers of the deceased possessed by the *Nae Yaka*; in the latter figure the body of the unconscious man has been smeared with the contents of the *kirikoraha*, while the remains of that with which he had been fed hangs about his mouth and chin. It will be observed that in both these figures the supporters are Sinhalese; this was because there were not enough grown Vedda men in the community to support the men possessed by Yaku. All this time the invocation was being repeated by one of the youngest Veddas present, who we were told was the dead man's sister's son, that is the dead man's potential son-in-law. The shaman now fed the dead man's brothers with rice from the offering, and then fell exhausted to the ground. One of the onlookers immediately came

769
535
787

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the other brother of the deceased is also possessed (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Nae Yaku embraces the brothers of the deceased (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 236 a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XL

769
535
787

Fig. 1. Nae Yaku ceremony, the Nae Yaka shows his power (Bandaraduwa)

Fig. 2. Nae Yaku ceremony, the shaman feeds the members of the community (Bandaraduwa)

[facing p. 236 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to his assistance when he began to quiver and sway, then moved and put both arms round one of the dead man's brothers as a sign of kindness from the deceased. (Plate XXXIX, fig. 2.) The brothers said: "It was good of you to come. See we have given you food, now do not come back again," and the *yaka* agreed. The shaman then took the *aude* and transfixed a betel leaf with each and danced and again showed favour to the relatives by giving them each another betel leaf, after which one of the relatives danced, but the shaman threatened to stab with the *aude* the men who were not relatives of the dead man. (Plate XL, fig. 1.) Soon both the shaman and the two brothers fell back and the Yaka departed from them. When the shaman revived, he bent his head over the *kirikoraha* as a sign of respect; then holding both hands over the rice pot he repeated a silent charm, asking any of the other *yaku* who might have come to the ceremony to depart peacefully. After this he fed each relative of the dead man, holding the *kirikoraha* to their mouths, as is shown in Plate XL, fig. 2.

769
535
787

The Invocation of Bambura Yaka.

The Veddas invoke Bambura Yaka for help in getting pig and yams, both staple foods, the latter being an extremely important element in their diet. The dance is pantomimic, and depicts a boar hunt in which Bambura, the boar-hunting hero, was aided by a Vedda woman, who killed the pig with an arrow she shot from her husband's bow and whose spirit is therefore called Dunne Yakini (Bow Spirit), while the spirit of this woman's husband who turned the boar with his yam stick (*ule*) has become Ule Yaka, that is (Yam-stick Spirit). This ceremony, though not so widely spread, is as dramatic as that in which Kande Yaka stalks and kills sambar deer. We saw it danced by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya and by Wannaku of Uniche.

776
535
773
796

The invocation of Bambura Yaka at Sitala Wanniya. The dance at Sitala Wanniya will be described first, since the story was told us here in its more complete form. Once long ago many Vedda men and women went out in search of yams,

776
773
796

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

nd black pigment. It closely resembled that used in the Bambura Yaka ceremony at Uniche.

535
796

(vii) The *tadiya* is well seen in Plate XLI, fig. 1. It is a short stout stick, and represents a carrying stick or *pingo* which is used throughout Ceylon; however, it was quite unlike one, as these are long and springy and resemble a bow; moreover, Veddas usually unstring their bows and use them as carrying sticks.

(viii) The *nimiti* or book (explained as book of omens, and said to be borrowed from Sinhalese ceremonies) was made of a couple of broad strips of bark in imitation of the *ola* books used in Ceylon[1].

[787]
[177]

The *hatlapeta* and *run hadawa* were said to belong to Devatayo of those names, but nothing was known about them. Devatayo or Dewa are Sinhalese spirits distinct from the *yaku* according to Sinhalese beliefs, but Handuna, our best informant at Sitala Wanniya, said Devatayo were the same as *yaku*. Obviously they had been introduced and assimilated to the Vedda *yaku*.

After all the sticks had been painted some cooked yams were tied up in leaves and bound to one end of the *tadiya*, and some wisps of grass were tied to the other to represent monitor lizards (Plate XLI, fig. 1), the whole was then put on the lower stage of the *maesa* with cooked yams for all the *yaku*, while a portion of yams was placed on the upper stage for Koriminaala Yaka, but no reason could be discovered why his food was kept apart from the rest. The dance began by Handuna singing an invocation (No. XXIX) to Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and Kaira, who wore a *hangula*, held the *mulpola itiya* in his right hand, letting the decorated end rest in his left, then he danced slowly round and round in front of the *maesa* facing east, the direction whence the boar of the story came. The *mulpola itiya* was soon changed for the *run hadawa*, and now Kaira made long leaping steps, widening his circle as he moved in front of the *maesa* and

[1] The *nimiti* omen or book is perhaps the most curious of all the properties. It was said that Bambura Yaka could read and write, and that he was the only Yaka who had these accomplishments, though nothing was known as to how he had learned them. But certainly this part of the ritual was old and must be the result of quite ancient contact with a Buddhistic people.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843
796
535

wilder till after a final leap between the posts Nila fell supine with outstretched arms, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers. The *yaka* of the high post now possessed Nila who, after a few minutes' immobility, began to shiver and gasp, then springing forward he danced to the posts with shuffling feet and head bent forward, and examined each one in turn. This he did by dropping his head on them so that his face was partly buried in the bast, his supporter always close behind him (Plate XLV, fig. 2). We were told that Nila was now possessed by all three *yaka*, who appear to have entered him as he bent over the posts. The exact moment of the entry and exit of the *yaka* into the person of the shaman was often very ill-defined, although in this instance, and indeed in most cases when more than one *yaka* was present at a dance, it was clear when the first *yaka* arrived, it seemed that the other *yaka* entered the shaman without giving any immediate sign of their presence.

The *yaka* speaking through Nila signified that they were pleased with the posts built for their reception. Then Nila picked up the *wila* and shouting, apparently with approval, held it up by each end and whirled the handle round making the bast strands fly out, then he approached Mari and waved it over her head and rested it there, so that her head was buried in the bast for several seconds while Nila predicted a male child (Plate XLVI, fig. 1)[1]. Nila then danced to Handuna and waved the *wila* over him. No particular reason was given for this, Handuna being no relation to the woman, but he was the most important old man in the community.

[787]
[554]

After covering Handuna with the *wila*, Nila danced wildly, always with the rapt expression of a man possessed by a *yaka*, showing his pleasure by holding the *wila* aloft and whirling it round and round. Then Nila put down the *wila* and took the *amawula* and dancing with it in his hand he approached Mari stretching it out towards her, but he only stayed a few seconds and passed on to Handuna and falling on the latter's chest spoke and again foretold the birth of a male child to Mari.

[1] The sex of the child is determined by the position assumed by the strips of bast as they fall over the woman's head. If most fall over the woman's face the child will be a girl, if over the occiput a boy.

843
535
796
[787]

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman predicts the sex of the child (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, Nila prays for his daughter's safe delivery (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250 b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

as a smoker; the other was "just an arrow" and did not appear to fulfil any specific purpose. Small leafy twigs from the surrounding trees were placed on the ground round the arrows, and on these a number of betel leaves and areca nuts were placed as an offering, the twigs being a device for preventing the offering to the *yaku* from touching the ground. 796 778

All the adult men of the community decided to take part in this dance, as only those who become possessed by Dola Yaka would derive benefit from the ceremony, that is, obtain special favour and help from him in gathering honey. In order to provide a supporter for each man, the dance was performed in two parts, Nila, Kaira and Pema taking part in the first performance. The ceremony began by these men walking several times round the arrows singing an invocation (No. XXXI) as they moved clockwise and occasionally salaamed to the arrows. Soon they began to dance and at times passed their hands, palms downwards, over the top of the arrows. This was the old custom; the reason for it was not known. After a little while Nila fell and was supported, soon all three dancers became possessed and bending forward shook their heads over the arrows. Then Nila taking the lead, they all moved to one end of the dancing ground, where they assumed the strained attitude of men listening attentively for the distant hum of bees, with body bent forward, one hand to the ear and the other raised as if to impose silence on their companions. Suddenly they all leapt back to the arrows and danced round them wildly, and shook their heads low over them; again they listened for the bees and beat their chests with joy, crying, "We hear many bees, there will be plenty of honey." 796 535 787

Returning to the arrows they danced round them again, at times falling back into the arms of their supporters, and again springing forward to dance. Nila gave each of us a betel leaf as a sign of favour from Dola Yaka, and then spoke in a gasping voice to Handuna who answered him. All beat their bodies with both hands, driving away imaginary bees. Again they listened for the bees, and this time picked up some leafy twigs and pretending they were alight shook them beneath the *maesa*, which now represented a comb, but they soon sprang back and 796 535

796
535

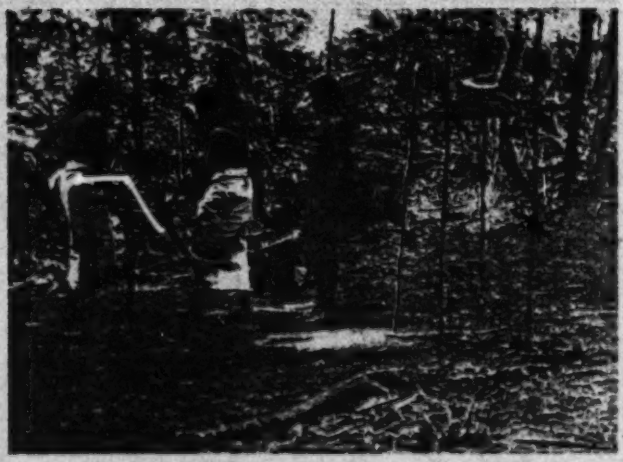


Fig. 1. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

[787]

Fig. 2. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the shaman prophesies good luck in hunting and honey gathering (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 258]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5. (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Yakini, who live on a hill called Milalanegala. This Vedda
535 danced in very much the same way as Wannaku had danced,
786 and the few differences noted, such as his less energetic steps, were doubtless due to personal idiosyncrasy. However, he did not bury his head in the leaves tied to the central post on becoming possessed, but shook the leaves which he held in his right hand in his own face, having previously struck these against those pendant from the *ruwala*. After dancing for a short time he staggered up to Wannaku and spoke, the spirits possessing him asking why they were called and whether there was sickness amongst the people. To this Wannaku answered "No," telling the spirits that he had called them at the request of the white man who wished to know them. After this the celebrant again danced in and out of and round the *ruwala*, striking at the pendant leaves. Soon he buried his head in the leaves tied to the central post, his whole body quivering, then he quickly jumped away from the pole and made his way to the Ratemahatmaya of the district, who was an onlooker, and shook the leaves in his right hand against the latter's chest, telling him he would be successful in the business he was about to undertake. This was in answer to a question that the Ratemahatmaya had shouted a short time previously. There was more dancing round the central pole, the performer striking it with the leaves which he held in his hand; after a few minutes he approached Wannaku, and striking him with the leaves said something, and again danced round the central pole which he seized in his hand and shook four times, once facing each of the cardinal points of the compass, shouting loudly as he did so. This was the means adopted by the *yaku* to test the solidity of the structure. We were told that this dance was generally per-
[755 formed in order to cure sickness, and if the pole fell or the
787] structure came to pieces the patient for whose benefit it took place would die or others would become ill. At last with many quiverings and clutchings at the central post the *yaku* took their departure.

796 A similar dance lasting a shorter time, during which the
535 dancer was possessed by Moranegala Yaka, then took place, after which Wannaku, who appeared to have quite recovered

Nila holding bow while reciting invocation No. XXIII. When
illness is spoken the bow swings to

[facing p. 290]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

782
411
516
142
587

Plate LV

the name of the yaka causing the

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

shows the site selected for the dance and the arrangements made. The dancing ground consisted of one of those sandy spaces surrounded by a growth of scrub and low trees which are so common on the east coast. A *kudaram*, the upper part of which was covered with leaves, had been prepared, the top of this was depressed so as to present a sort of tray upon which a white cloth was laid; within the tray were laid flowers, which in this case did duty for the food offered in the ceremony. No model of a ship was hoisted to the top of the pole, which was encircled by wreaths of small leafy bunches at heights of about 6 to 12 feet from the ground.

There were five dancers, each of whom held a bunch of leafy twigs in each hand, which when the dance began were held against the body just below the umbilicus.

535
796
787

The leader of the dance was an old man who held a piece of cloth instead of a bunch of leaves. Behind each dancer stood a man who supported him by clapping his hands round the dancer's body below the latter's hands, i.e. over the hypogastric and epipubic region. At first the dancers faced the *kudaram*, their hands being held low against their thighs, but soon they began to move round the altar in single file (Plate LXX, fig. 2). As they danced they began to quiver, the rippling motion of their muscles from the knees upwards becoming progressively more violent, until as the dancers moved round the altar the majority of their superficial muscles all over the body were twitching irregularly. As the dance became quicker the dancers feigned exhaustion, leaning or falling back into the arms of their supporters, but this did not last long and dancing was not interrupted; soon the men left the altar and danced round the pole, the irregular quivering of their muscles being very striking. At times they shouted and raised the bunches of leaves which they held in their hands above their heads. They continued to dance round the altar and round the pole alternately; as they danced round the pole their movements became more violent, the men supporting the dancers let go and the latter now danced and leapt round the pole and beat the leaves tied to it with the leaves they held in their hands. As the vigour of their movements lessened, their supporters, who had been following their

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

motions, once more put their arms round them, soon after which the dancers fell limply into their arms. The leader of the dance seemed especially excited at this stage and, trembling and quivering all over, stood back to the pole and wildly waved his scarf in the air. Soon his movements became less vigorous, his head nodded on his shoulders and hung down on his chest as he addressed the other dancers in a harsh and broken voice (Plate LXXI). In view of the Vedda ceremonies which we subsequently saw we have no doubt that he prophesied good fortune. It appeared to us that this old man really presented the ordinary characteristics of Vedda "possession," i.e. the dance, though only a rehearsal, had produced the customary effects associated with it, and certainly this old man's muscles continued to quiver irregularly for some time after the dance was over. As for the remaining dancers we have no doubt that the dance remained for them as it had begun, simply a rehearsal and an amusing piece of acting.

535 796 787

Such dances are held only to cure sickness or in return for good crops, and it was emphatically denied that anything similar took place after childbirth or death.

535 796

Very little was elicited concerning death and mourning ceremonies. The corpse is washed, and it seemed that although this is usually done by a barber or *dhobie* (professional washerman) it might be done by one or more of the relatives of the dead man. The grave must be at some distance from the habitations of the living and also from their cultivation patches. No fire is lit on the grave. A feast is held a few days after burial, which appears to be called *bati bane*, and the food for this, especially rice, is provided by the near relatives of the dead man and distributed. A *kudaram* is built upon which the food is placed for "a short time" as an offering to Kapalpei, after which it is eaten by the assembled people.

764

This account agrees with that given by the Sarasins, who record that a coast Vedda, Pereman, when asked about his religion "laughed and said they had that of the Tamils, they honoured their dead by cooking rice in front of their house, folding their hands, saying a few words and then eating the rice. As they did this they spoke the name of the deceased and said: 'Help

769 177

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 796 guidance I touched the flowers in acknowledgement. After this the rice which had meanwhile been cooked in the enclosure in front of the shrine was offered to the goddess at the shrine, and the enclosure itself was removed.

The offering of the rice appeared to mark the conclusion of the first stage of the ceremony, for it was followed by a procession of those who were to take part in the subsequent dancing,—apparently accompanied by the image of the goddess,—out of the clearing and, as I was informed, down to the river about half a mile away for the sacred bath.

Time dragged by. The moonlight flooded the clearing, showing the ranks of the spectators sitting in their places with oriental patience and talking in undertones. At last the procession of dancers re-entered the clearing and advanced to the open space in front of the shrine. Here a ritual was gone through which seemed to be intended to induce in the dancers a state of "possession,"[7] and after the performance of this ritual the dances began.

First of all two principal dancers, wearing what were evidently ceremonial jackets of red cloth, took, each of them, in one hand one of the wooden swords previously mentioned and in the other [535] a bunch of leaves, and went in and out among the people with a queer shuffling step and a curious rhythmic brandishing of the swords and leaves. Once or twice the leader stopped, and laying his sword upon the head of some person in the crowd began to [787] prophesy.[8] One prophecy, as interpreted to me by the Chief Headman, concerned the outbreak of cholera, and was in the form

[7] The Seligmanns, on pp. 134-5 of *The Veddas*, discuss at some length the nature of "possession" in the Vedda ritual dances.

[8] My impression at the time was that in uttering these prophecies the [114 197] leader of the dance used the Vedda language. Certainly the language used did not appear to me to be either Sinhalese or Tamil. It is true that the Seligmanns say, in the passage quoted in the text, that the "old Vedda language" as spoken by the coast Veddas was found to be Sinhalese; but (i) it seems at least possible that the Vedda language may remain to some extent in ritual use among them; and (ii) I am inclined to think that in the ceremony here described the invocation of Rahu Yaka, described by the Seligmanns on pp. 254-9 of *The Veddas*, was combined with the worship of Ammal and Kapalpe, described by

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a prophecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *choregos*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wach! wach! wach!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announcement was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[9]

them on pp. 335-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were not coast Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one of some interest; but as, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[9] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

5; Spittel B-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).* 776

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred. 761 [763]

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakha*).† 769 771

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *andes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells. 776 796

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Rovathath*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees*, *Pati-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*). 776

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad. 787

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakha* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakha* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakha* ancestral spirit. *Hetha* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanniya* is another word synonymous with *yakha* and *hetha*. [196]

†The Veddas, by Seligmann; page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

787 To ignore such warnings would be to court failure or even disaster. When a *kotaka* (large gekko) quaintly cries "krok, krok," a Vedda will seriously lean towards it and ask, "Shall we shoot a monkey to-morrow?" "Krok," says the *kotaka*, and the questioner's face falls, for here no answer is good news. Then there is that subtle thing the *hille*, an evil
778 influence possessed by certain kinds of meat when eaten under circum-
262 stances too involved to explain. The flesh of pigs, peafowl, langurs and a species of fish (*urang*, *monerang*, *wandoorang*, *magurang*) are said to have this property; but here it would seem that the rhyming of the names has something to do with their evil association.

776 There is an interesting little spirit, belief in which (as with many of the other superstitions already mentioned) is as universal among the Sinhalese as the Veddas. *Bolhili*, *Vilirany*, or *Kunnu-yakkini** (dirty she-devil) is its name. It is said to have a nasty nack of grasping one's leg in the dark, and so making it wither to the thinness of an *illuk*-blade. The incarnation of a woman who died in child-birth it is thought to be, and comes moaning at night in the form of a light. The story is best told in the words of a solemnly sworn eye-witness:—Kalu Banda (the narrator) and his sister Balahamy were occupying a watch-hut in a *kurrukhan* field one dark night when they heard a moaning as of one in pain—"*andoa, andoa, oo oo oo.*" Kalu Banda, suspecting what it was, told his sister not to speak—for the *villirany* is shy of women and vanishes at the sound of their voice. He then charmed a little oil, and placing it some distance away, called out, "If you have a stomach-ache, come, rub some oil, and go away." A shadow appeared at which Kalu Banda
[825] fired. On going to the spot, what should he find but a green blood-sucker, with a red head! This is said to be the invariable discovery when the *bodili* is killed. The same is said of the devil bird; but here apparently the rule has exceptions; for I have met several people who shot at devil birds, and had a bird to show.

825 The identity of the devil-bird—*ulama* or *ulalena*——is still a matter of doubt; and it is a pity that those who have had the rare fortune to shoot this bird have not thought it worth their while to send it up for identification. Much of the mystery surrounding it is due to the fact that it cries only at night and has wide and sporadic circuits. That it has some sort of a crest, I think, there can be no doubt; also that it is a large bird mottled in its breast feathers like a jungle-hen. These particulars all my reliable informants (who shot the bird as it cried at night) have independently confirmed. It is supposed to be the brown wood owl (*Surnium indrani*) by some, the *Huhua nepalensis* by others. The theory that different birds are capable of uttering the devil-bird's cry, is, I think, quite untenable. Its note is too invariable and distinctive for that.

825 The cry of the *ulama*, like that of the owl (*bakumuna*) and *hanga*, is
787 said to be a portent, varying according to its direction. Should it come from the west, it forbodes rain; from the east, good luck; from the north, the visit of a relative or friend; from the south, a death. One of these birds hovered about our camp one night uttering its blood-curdling calls, now from this direction, now from that, baffling the ingenuity of
825 its interpreters! Its "hoo-oo" is most eerily human; but it has an even worse note, a gurgling chuckle, strongly suggestive of a person

*This is perhaps none other than the Ceylon loris.

1 [a species of lizard.—Ms/pt]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

177
535

attributed to Sinhalese influence, especially the substitution of the mortar for the tripod, the drum for the slapping of hands and thighs, and the introduction of the coconut scraper and betel leaves.

535
796
[776]

The *hirikoraha* (milk-chatty)* dance has for its object the co-operation of certain ancestral spirits (*Nae Yakku*) in hunting enterprises. The occasion for it is a period of repeated ill luck, which is attributed to the disfavour of these spirits, whose names are, *Kande Yakka*, the great hunter, his brother *Bilinde Yakka* and their wives *Kudu Hora* (nest thief) and *Pol Hora* (coconut thief) respectively; also *Hath-kudu Hora* (seven-nests thief), elder brother of the two she demons. Significant signs in the ceremony are the fine bubbles that form when the coconut milk is handled, and the manner in which the coconut divides; if the halves are equal the omen is good, in unequal, bad. [787]

In a clearing was placed a mortar and on it a bowl containing a coconut with two arrows laid across the brim. Kaurala, the dancer, took care to eat no meat that morning. Having smeared his head with lime-juice and his body with saffron, he would have worn a white cloth borrowed for the purpose, had we not dissuaded him from covering his picturesque nudity, much to the disapproval of the other Veddas who feared the anger of the spirits invoked. [262]

The dance began quietly enough. Taking up the coconut and an arrow, the performer clasped them together in his hands which he placed now on the shoulder, now on the head, now well before him, as he walked round the mortar chanting a supplication to *Kande Yakka*. Soon he began hopping alternately on each heel, making half-turns with the body so characteristic of Vedda dances, and sweeping his arms semi-circularly. Gradually the monotonous song loudened to the drum-beats, and more and more vigorous became the contortions of the dancer, whose shaggy hair covered his face and whose body streamed with sweat. So he danced for perhaps a half hour, when suddenly he became as one possessed. *Kande Yakka* had "covered" him. Shouting the fearful name he staggered to the mortar and, bending over the bowl, split the coconut in halves. He stood by panting, while the coconut was scraped, the milk prepared, and seven betel leaves were arranged around the sides of the bowl, which was then replaced on the mortar with a single arrow across it. The other arrow, with a betel leaf transfixed in its point, was now in the hands of the dancer who holding it at both ends resumed his movements. *Bilinde Yakka*, the spirit next invoked, soon possessed him. The dance was then continued to each of the other spirits, male and female, in turn. By each of these he was successively possessed. With each possession the strange, wild-eyed figure before us, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, shouted the name of the mastering demon,† and threw lifeless hands on the shoulders of one or other of the onlookers as if for support. Eventually, when the frenzy was at its height, he had just breath enough to gasp out the inspired message that the spirits were propitious and success was assured‡. With his forearm he indicated the length of the quarry's horns and, pointing to the heavens, the favourable time for starting. Then, taking up the two arrows and the bowl containing the two halves of the coconut, the milk and the betel leaves, he danced

*Coconut milk is the juice obtained by squeezing out with water the scraped kernel of the coconut.

†*Pana hiyenawa.*

‡*Hoey galgewara magalak alla thenawa.*

789

789 MAGIC--practices reflecting confidence in the ability to manipulate supernatural forces; magical techniques of weather control (e.g., rain making); magical rites for increasing the food supply; exorcistic practices (e.g., driving off evil spirits with noise); potent formulas, incantations, and spells; curses; miracles; prevalent types of magic (e.g., imitative, contagious); concept of magical force; functions and social significance of magic; nonsupernatural magic (e.g., wonder-working, jugglery, legerdemain, fire-walking); etc. See also:

Magical rites in the food quest 22
Magic rites in agriculture 94
Magic rites in the reproductive cycle 84
Magic as entertainment 545
Magic rites in warfare 728
Sorcery, witchcraft, and evil eye 784
Therapeutic magic 751, 755
Magic rites at funerals 764
Luck magic 777
Concept of mana 778
Prevalence of nonlogical reasoning 811
Relation of magic to science 813
Love magic 832

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

CHAPTER VIII

MAGIC

789 In the chapters upon religion we have described those ceremonies and observances of the Veddas which depend for their efficacy upon the successful appeal to some extra-human personal influence. In this section we shall discuss a number of actions which we consider magical, that is, actions which are expected to produce the required result automatically by virtue of their own intrinsic qualities.

One of the first things we noted during our stay in the Vedda country was the very slight part which magic played in the life of the Veddas. The more we saw of the people the more convinced we became of this. It seems to us that among the uncontaminated Veddas of two or three generations ago magical practices were almost entirely absent, and even at the present day the few remaining Veddas who have not been much exposed to foreign influence have scarcely any customs that are truly magical.

789 We include in this chapter the custom which formerly existed of eating a small piece of human liver in times of 266 great stress, for even if this custom be not considered magical in the strict sense, it is clearly based on principles which lie at the root of many magical beliefs.

789 Since it is important to make thoroughly clear the absence of many forms of magic, we shall consider the condition of the different communities with regard to some of the most commonly occurring forms.

Magic directed against the Individual.

754 This is completely absent except among the village Veddas, which is all the more surprising in view of the extraordinary

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The words used in speaking of the bear are of interest from this standpoint. We believe that in most Vedda communities *walaha* the ordinary word for bear is seldom or never used[1], certainly this was the case at Sitala Wanniya where the word ordinarily used for bear was *heria*. This word was not considered a dangerous word to use when all bears were at a distance, but when there was any possibility of coming in contact with a bear the animal was spoken of as *hatera*, the meaning of this word being "enemy" or "adversary." On one occasion when with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya we came to a hill covered with irregularly weathered rocks and known to be the haunt of bears, Handuna shouted *hatera yanda* ("enemy begone") before taking an abrupt turn in the track which here skirted a mass of rock. He repeated this sentence two or three times in a loud voice and assured us that we could now proceed without running the least risk of meeting a bear, and he himself led us round the rock with every appearance of careless ease, explaining that even if bears were about they would have heard what he had said and would have moved away. Two of the Henebedda Veddas exhibited the same appearance of carelessness when guiding us to a rock-shelter which though sometimes used by Veddas had not been tenanted for some time and bore obvious signs of being the lair of a bear. Sita Wanniya, our guide, explained his attitude by his belief in the power of the charms with which he was confident he could put any bear to flight.

These charms were recited in a loud voice, in fact the last words were almost shrieked and would doubtless have turned any bear, for it is a well known fact that the Sinhalese bear fears man and only attacks when surprised or cornered. This is shown by the circumstances in which the majority of accidents with bears occur. A man coming silently along a narrow jungle track suddenly meets a bear, or disturbs one grubbing behind a white ant heap. It is then that the bear, as much frightened as the man, charges inflicting severe though seldom fatal injuries.

[1] We met with one obvious exception to this rule, the Henebedda youths Sita Wanniya and Poromala used the word *walaha* quite freely even in the jungle, and old Poromala, half of whose face was torn away by a bear some years ago, has been nicknamed Walaha, the Bear. This name was, however, given him by the Sinhalese.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bailey's remarks on these charms, which unfortunately he does not quote, are extremely pertinent. "I shall never forget the first time one of these Vedda charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation.... I was chatting to an intelligent Vedda at my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms....I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant 'behegang! wirooowee! wiroowah!' which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success[1]."

A youth, Kaira of Bingoda, wore a number of bone beads on his waist string. He refused to sell these or exchange them for other beads or cloth, and though obviously not desirous of discussing them, stated that he had made them by grinding down the bones of a bear which he had found in the jungle. Although the remains of animals are not commonly found we did ourselves find the remains of one bear which we identified with certainty by the skull which was tolerably well preserved. The wearing of these beads as a matter of personal feeling by a single Vedda, if not exactly an example of magic, seems to us to be an example of the mode of thought from which magical practices spring and perhaps an example of an early experiment in magic, which under favourable circumstances might give rise to an amulet of bear's bone.

The Veddas of Sitala Wanniya have no charms against bears or other animals and the only charms directed towards this end that we could discover were a number obviously of Sinhalese origin which we collected at Henebedda. Probably these are not of very recent introduction, for we obtained some of them from old Poromala, nicknamed Walaha. Poromala is one of the oldest men of the community and is its leader as

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 289.

789 177

far as a leader can be said to exist, and he told us that he had learnt these invocations as a boy.

We regret that the names of our informants were not noted in every case in the following charms, but we give them where possible. The transliterations and translations of these charms as well as the comments on them are by Mr Parker who points out that the word *Ōn* occurring in a number of them is the Indian *Ōm*[1].

789 539

The first two charms are directed against bears.

Arini kurini, nāga pata gē ja kurē, jaḷ.

Venerable one of noble family (?). O Lord, born in a house in a rock-hole. Be off!

Mr Parker writes, "I do not know the meaning of the first two words of the spell, *arini kurini*. Probably *arini* is derived from *ārya* and the honorific ending *ni*, meaning 'the venerable one.' In that case the second word may be *kulīna*, 'of noble family,' and the whole translation would be as given. *Pata* for *pataha*, a hole, hollow or pool."

This charm was given us by Poromala of Bingoda who said he had known it a long time. Its meaning could not be ascertained in the field. The next charm was obtained from Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, who said it had been used in his youth by the Kovil Vanamai Veddas.

Ōn Dahasak Budunnē kunu goḍen upan Nīla Kandigē baḍē upan Nīlāda Nīlīda, nil, pō ādā, nil, po adī, poḷ.

Ōn! Born in the womb of Nīla (the blue-black) Kandī, born from the heap of filth of a thousand Buddhas (or sages), whether (you are) Nīlā or Nīlī (the blue-black one, m. or f.). Stop! Go thou (m.)! Stop! Go thou (f.). Be off!

The first part is ordinary Sinhalese; the orders to go are in Tamil.

1 "This word begins nearly all invocations, and it is stated in the *Vishnu Purāṇa* (Wilson, p. 273) that 'The syllable *Ōm* is defined to be the eternal monosyllable Brahma.' On p. 274 Wilson adds (f. n.) 'The daily prayers of the Brahman commence with the formula *Ōm bhūḥ, bhuvaḥ, swar*; *Ōm*, earth, sky, heaven.'

"In the *Sacred Laws of the Āryas* (Bühler), I. 4, 5 (Aphorisms of Apastamba) it is said 'The syllable "*Ōm*" is the door of heaven.' At I. 4, 8 also 'And in common life at the occasion of ceremonies performed for the sake of welfare, the sentences shall be headed by this word, as, for instance, "(*Ōm*) an auspicious day!" "(*Ōm*) welfare."'

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-8 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Mr Parker writes, "This looks like a very modern spell. The speaker treats the bear contemptuously; but I cannot explain the reference to the sages. He wishes the bear to understand the very inferior position he occupies, in his opinion." 787 539

The next charm applies to the elephant.

Ōn! Aeri singa wayirā naeri singā swudgayā, namā. Sī.

Ōn! Excited (or strong) elephant, angry one, stout elephant. Salutation! homage! Be off!

We could obtain no satisfactory translation of this charm. Mr Parker writes, "The difficult words in this spell are *aeri* and *naeri*. Such spells as these almost always commence by applying honourable epithets to the animals, and therefore a probable derivation of the former word is from *airya* (Skt root *ir*), with the meaning 'excited,' 'aroused,' or from *irya* 'strong.'

"*Naeri* is perhaps derived from *neripanamā*, to grow stout or obese, although the change from *e* to *ae* is unusual. The translation would then be as above.

"*Singa*, for *śringa*, a horn; compare *śringin*, an elephant, derived from the same word.

"*Wayirawā*. This was translated in Ceylon as Dhairava, but the Sinhalese form for this deity is Bahirawā, and I prefer the meaning given above, from the Tamil *vayiram*, angry, and *avan*, he.

"*Swudgayā* appears literally to mean 'may you go to heaven,' *swarga*; but compare *swdgata* 'salutation' from *swwa* and *agata*."

Mr De Zoysa gives the following charm as a protection against elephants but he does not give its origin.

Ichchata vallay
Pachchata vallay
Dela dewallay
Situ appa situ.

A hanging member in front (trunk)
A hanging member behind (tail)
On two sides two hanging members (the two ears)
Stay, beast, stay!

Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

n 19
537

The next two charms were given by Tissahami the Vedda Arachi as protections against the leopard and the buffalo respectively. They were said to be in use at Bandaraduwa but owing to an oversight this statement was not verified.

Ōu! Sinhaw Sivatthe vadippulayā nam ata hala ārw. Sī.

Ōu! O Lion, for the sake of Siva, if you are one who has escaped from shooting, may (your) feet and mouth be appeased. Be off!

The words of this charm are chiefly Tamil.

Sivatthe from *Śiva* and *atthaw*, on account of.

Vadippulayā for *Vadippiliyār* (honorific) from *Vaḍi* "a shot," and *piḷi* to escape from a danger.

Ārw, v. *ārw*, "to cool," "be appeased," "repose."

Sī for *iti*, an expression used in driving away cats.

Mr Parker points out that "remembrance of the danger from which he himself escaped is expected to cause the leopard to sympathise with and to spare the man."

Ōu. Nā Waeraliliyā puttā Rana Devatāwā Andungiri parawatti wanā kadagena Kalugal risiyātāyi ā ānd mahā no wayi. Hōdaw kāli kewa.

Ōu. Rana Devata, son of Nāga-Waeraliliyā (?), thou shalt strike the Kalugal (Black-cock) Ascetic who sits on the Andun-giri (Black-hill) mountain; not me. Be off, be off!

Mr Parker does not know anything about the Rana Devata (Godling of Fighting) or his mother, or the Ascetic, but the charm suggests to him that the Devata is believed to inspire the buffalo to attack men.

Bailey gives the following charm against an animal called *okma* which he says is the wild boar, though Mr Parker considers that the *okma* is the buffalo and this view is also taken by Mr De Zoysa. We are inclined to agree with them and therefore quote this charm here.

Iri dayyanā ākma
Sanda dayyanā ākma
Pasi Budunā ākma
Situ ākma nita

Okma of the Sun-god!
Okma of the Moon-god!
Okma of the Pasu Bude!
Stay, *Okma*, stay!

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

781
539

The great interest of this spell is that Bailey obtained it from the Nilgala Veddas over fifty years ago, and that he was able to trace the Sinhalese charm against toothache—from which it was derived.

Ira deyani ayā!
Sanda deyani ayā!
Pasai Budeni ayā!
Dati nosiro dat ayā!
Worm of the sun-god!
Worm of the moon-god!
Worm of the Passe Buddha!
Stay not in the tooth, thou tooth-worm.

Bailey recognised the importance of this discovery, for he wrote, "These are identical; yet the Veddahs and the Sinhalese certainly do not associate so closely as to borrow one another's charms....The term okma I can get no satisfactory explanation of. It is not Sinhalese, certainly I assume it means 'wild boar,' and this is the charm to arrest a boar in the path; but it is not the term used by the Veddahs for a boar in ordinary conversation. The allusion to the Pase, or Pache Buddha, is curious as occurring in both....The other Veddah charms are, I believe, quite unlike those of the Sinhalese, but on that point I am still making enquiries...[1]."

The next two charms are against snakes and were obtained from Poromala (Walaha) of Henebedda and Poromala of Bingoda.

It is necessary for the efficacy of the first of these charms that a string of human hair be bound round the limb above the bite. The hand of the operator is then carried down the limb repeatedly as he mutters the charm, the thumb nail being flicked against the ground each time the hand has passed down the leg[2]. This is to drive the poison into the ground. The string of hair is not the purposeful beginning of rational treatment; we believe that it was not considered necessary to tie the hair

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 304.
There can be little doubt that this and similar charms crept into the beliefs of the wilder Veddas at the same time and in the same way as the *yaka* of village Veddas, e.g. Uragaha Kirisanna, became known to the wilder Veddas.
[2] Snake bites in the jungle are invariably on the leg.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

string at all tightly and our informants were perfectly certain that the benefit derived from this treatment (which Poromala assured us he had seen succeed more than once) was due to the virtue of the hair of the head which might equally well be that of the snake's victim, or of any one else.

Namō. Nayin gini helīmi, polangun darana helīmi, karawalu mālu helīmi, pansiyak sarpayin in aes gaesi, is gaesi, dala gaesā, wisa baesi maha polowaṭa dīswāhā.

Salutation! I set fire to cobras, I coil up (or split up) polongas (*Dalois russelli*), I make curry of karawilas (*Bungarus sp.*). From five hundred snakes the eyes are knocked out, the heads are beaten, the teeth are knocked out, and the poison is sent down to the earth. Ēswaha!

"*Namo* is a Pali expression, borrowed from Buddhist works etc. in which it takes the place occupied by *om* in India. It is derived from the Skt. root *nam*, to bend, bow etc.

"*Malu* is the colloquial word for curry; also for meat, but the latter word is not suitable here. The Sinhalese never say 'I made meat of' anything.

"*Deswaha* from *da*, the conjunction 'and' in combination with *īswaha*. The last two words of the charm should be *polowaṭada īswaha*."

Ahasaṭa guru kawuda guru? Aha(sa) ṭa guru iru sanda de guru.

Polawaṭa guru kawuda guru? Polawaṭa guru Mihikat devuru.

Nayinda guru kawuda guru? Nayida guru Nāga guru.
Visīṭa guru kawu(da) guru? Visīṭa guru mamayi guru.
Visī basin tilō guru mātā. Me desī guruṇ anen yayi dīsī.
Poloṇ visī dāra visī. Tō nedana tō daesṭa kalī nam.
Man daena visa bannam, visī naeti bahu Guruppurāja yānam.
Ōn namō.

The preceptor of the sky, who is the preceptor?

The preceptor of the sky, the Sun and the Moon are the two preceptors.

The preceptor of the earth, who is the preceptor?

The preceptor of the earth, the great Goddess Mahikantawa is the preceptor.

And the preceptor of the cobras, who is the preceptor?

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

The preceptor of the cobras, the Naga is the preceptor.
The preceptor of poison, who is the preceptor?
The preceptor to poison, I am the preceptor.
For casting down poison (there is) the mother of the teacher of the three worlds (Buddha).
The preceptor of this country will go to another country (after death).
The poison of Polangas is the limit of poison. If thou, not knowing (me), shouldst make (it) for (thy) two eyes, I will bind (on thee) the poisons which I know, going (afterwards, out of thy reach) to the excellent king of many *garuda*, who have no poison. *Ōn!* salutation!

"A *guru* is a teacher or preceptor, one who has complete knowledge of the subject. A student's teacher is his *guru*. The word is also especially used to indicate a Brahman who is thoroughly acquainted with the Vedas and the forms of religious ceremonies, and who acts as a king's chaplain. Brihaspati, the deity of the planet Jupiter, was the *guru* of the Gods[1].

"Mahikantawa is the Earth Goddess, or personification of the earth.

"*Nāga* are supernatural beings who take either a human form or that of cobras, at will. I think the reference to Mayā, the mother of Buddha, means that by bringing into the world such a son she has reduced the poison of evil deeds and thoughts, which are compared to those of the poisonous snakes. The poison of the polanga (*Daboia russelli*) is said to be the most powerful of all snake poisons. It is stated that persons sometimes die within five minutes after being bitten by this snake, and usually within half an hour. There is an idea that some snakes have the power of projecting poison from their eyes.

"The *garuda* is a fabulous bird which feeds on poisonous snakes, especially cobras."

We failed to obtain any coherent account of the meaning of

[1] In the *Ordinances of Manu* (Burnell's translation) ii, 1 and 2, it is stated "That Brahman is called Guru who performs according to rule the rites on conception and the like, and feeds (the child) with rice (for the first time)." At ii, 149 it is said, "He who confers the benefit of the Veda on anyone, be it little or be it much, he should know him to be here his Guru, by reason of that benefit through the Veda."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
539

this charm in the field and are indebted to Mr Parker for the following explanation. "I think I understand the meaning of this invocation quite clearly. The reciter says 'As the Sun and Moon are the preceptors, or the beings or deities who have a complete knowledge of the sky; as Mahikantawa has complete knowledge of the earth; as Nagas have complete knowledge of cobras, so I have complete knowledge of all poisons.' He first wishes to impress the snake with a belief in his powers, and then he threatens it."

The next charm given by Poromala of Bingoda cures the bite of the centipede, but neither Poromala nor Tissahami the Vedda Arachi could tell us the meaning of the spell.

Nāngara guru, nāngara guru, nāngara potakun aeragena visakuṇ.

Man atu bindagena, rattaeyā pāgāgena, aeli modarā piṭa siṭagena, aṭi guruṇ sikiharagena, mama yannē visa bāgena, tō nedana tō daesṭa kalē nam maṇ daena visa baemnaṇ, eyin taekae(?) visē naeta baku Guruppranija yanam. Ōn namō!

Vile preceptors, vile preceptors, poisonous ones taking (with you) vile young ones!

I, breaking branches, trampling on the Centipede, sitting on the back of the White Peacock, reflecting on our preceptors, I will go (only after) casting out the poisons. If thou, not knowing (me), shouldst make (poison) for (thy) two eyes[1], I will bind (on thee) the poisons which I know, after (?) that going to the excellent king of many *garudas*, who have no poison. *Ōn*, Salutation!

"The centipede is here treated with much less respect than the vertebrates, and the last two words must be said ironically. The breaking of branches refers to the custom of making offerings of leafy twigs when asking for the protection of the forest Deities. I do not know the white peacock, *aeli monarā*. (The bird is sometimes colloquially called *moṇḍarā*.) It may be the peacock that is the riding animal or *vahana* of the God Skanda, which is carved at the Tanjore temple with a snake hanging from its bill. Peacocks kill centipedes as well as snakes.

"The preceptors on whom the exorcist reflects will be those mentioned in the spell for cobras—that is Buddha, the Sun and Moon, Mahikantawa, and the Nagas who are guardian deities. Possibly also Skanda and Ayiyanar, the Guardian Forest Deities

[1] Another reading is, If thou (even) unwittingly, hast made (poison) for (thy) two eyes.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the Sinhalese. I do not understand *taekae*, there may have been some mistake in writing down the charm." 789 539

Charms to Obtain Food.

Neither amulets nor verbal formulae are used to insure straight shooting or the killing of deer or sambar, the two animals providing the greater part of the flesh consumed by the Veddas; nor are there amulets or charms to obtain success in pig hunting. Doubtless this is because the *yaku* when properly invoked give success in these matters. There are, however, no *yaku* whose special business it is to give success in the monkey drives which are, or were until recently, practised, and we found that certain formulae were sung by the members of the driving party, and in some case muttered by the men who waited in ambush for the monkeys to be driven to them. And we were told that the singing or reciting of these formulae was necessary to the success of the drive. 789 224

Mr Parker uses the diminutive "doggie" in the translations of the two following charms collected at Bandaraduwa in order to retain the sense of the originals, which clearly indicates that the reciter is speaking coaxingly to the monkeys. The words of the charm are literally "dog" and "bitch," the use of which in the translation would give a wrong impression. In one charm the hunters call the monkeys to them assuring them that they are quite safe, for certainly they cannot shoot them. 789 224 539

Charm sung while driving Wandura monkeys (Bandaraduwa).

Ammā maya nā kolandīnī
Kolandan handā pīta yannī
Ekī kiyalā innā kāā,
Ēkit awalā yandama yannī.
"Taek, taek," kiyalā wāren kallā.
"Kik, kik," kiyalā wāren kallī.
Nāwini nāgan handā pīti,
Ēkīta dunnak widala hādoyi
Ēkī yandama yandama yannī.
Keliyen keliyata wāren kallā,
Keli madalāgena dewagena wāre.

Mother mine, the leaf-clad chief,
Pops behind a leafy trunk;

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
224
537

Tells another who is there;
She, excited, runs away.
"Tack, tack," crying, doggie come;
"Kik, kik," crying, doggie come.
In the Na-tree forest hid,
Safe behind a banyan trunk,
With a bow she can't be shot,
Setting off to go, to go.
Playing, playing, doggie come.
Stop your games and running come.

Charm sung while driving Rilawa monkeys (Bandaraduwa).

Ammā māyē mā rōsāni
Rōsan handē piṭa yanni
"Rō, Rō" kiyala wāren balla.
Burutak handē piṭo yannā.
Keliyen koliyaṭa duwagana wāru,
Keli maḍalāgena duwagena wāru.

Mother mine, the lovely chief,
Pops behind a cotton trunk,
"Ro, Ro" crying, doggie come.
Behind a satin stem she goes.
Playing, playing, running come;
Stop your games and running come.

The Sinhalese heading of this charm, collected at Henebedda (where it was dictated by Poromala of Bingoda) runs *Wanduraṇ nawa tanaka wiya*, the translation of which is "said at a place where *wanduru* stay."

Ātu surā damanni
Ō man handīṭa pāninni.
"Ah, Oh," kiyā wārī nam
Kola surā damanni,
Mī man handī naṭanni.
Bala siṭā aeyi dennā?

The branches they scratch off and throw down,
They spring on to that trunk (?).
Come, indeed, saying "Ah, Oh."
They scratch off and throw down the leaves.
They dance on this trunk (?).
Why did they stop and look, both of them?

789 We could find no trace of any ceremony having for its object the control of the supply of game and honey or the increase of the number of yams and edible berries. It is assumed that

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

these are beyond human control, though the *yaku*, who in an indefinite way are considered to be concerned with them, give success in hunting, yam digging and honey gathering. 789

Nor could we discover any trace of weather magic in spite of the preference for rain indicated in a number of the invocations given in Chapter X, as well as by the remark on this subject made by Handuna, quoted upon page 84.

We could not discover among the wilder Veddas any magic connected with the bow and arrow, and certainly these were never personified or named. We, however, obtained the following "song" from the village Veddas of Bintenne. It was taken down just as we were breaking camp and so no special attention was paid to it, as we were assured that it was of the same nature as other songs we had collected. Mr Parker, who has provided the following transliteration and translation, points out that, in his opinion, this "song" must be regarded as a charm said over an arrow in order to kill monitor lizards. To our suggestion that this song might be sung mockingly to a particularly bad shot, urging him to try again and see if he could not hit the lizard in some part of its body, Mr Parker replied that this did not seem probable to him. "If this were addressed to a person who was a bad shot I hardly think expressions would be used such as *i maela* which would then require to be translated 'younger brother of arrows.'" We accordingly treat this formula as a charm and include it in the present chapter. 789 539

Mundi Kunda pitu wattirt gā,
Ehatu widahā hiri hurē.
Ettama arupa i maelā,
Pituta accu pulāgu.
Etanama arupa i maelā,
Tommatu lasiyen (pulāgu).
Ettama arupa i maelā,
Tommatu accu pulāgu.
Etanama arupa i maelā,
Bellatu lasiyen pulāgu.
Etanama arupa i maelā,
Badatu lasiyen pulāgu.
Etanama arupa i maelā,
Kibilu maddu lurutgu.

789
539

Go and drop behind the body of the monitor lizard;
Place it, dear cousin.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle (or edge) of the back.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle of the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the neck.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the stomach.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and fix (yourself) in the middle of the armpit.

"In order to rhyme all the lines ought to end in a long a.

"*Ettama* is an evident mistake for *stanama*.

"*Tomma* is for *tumba*, a Vaedi word for tail, the Sinhalese is *isbu*.

"*Acam* and *accen* are for *assen*, abl. of *assa*, angle or corner.

"*Lastten* is a word I have not previously met with. The only probable derivation with which I am acquainted is the Tamil *iratta*, Sin. *ratta*, double, two-fold.

"*Mahali* means younger brother.

"*Kiri kuru*, lit. milk cousin, simply means dear cousin."

Love Charms.

822 Love magic or charms to compel love do not seem to exist among the wilder Veddas, though in the Bintenne we were told that women may charm the waist strings they give to their husbands, in order to ensure their fidelity.

Amulets.

301 Before discussing the existence of these it is necessary to determine to what extent the Veddas now wear, or formerly wore, ornaments.

Disregarding the stories current among the Sinhalese that the Veddas formerly had valuable jewellery and pots of pure gold—legends of which the Veddas themselves are quite

[Errata — see p. xx. — Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

success in honey gathering, the shaman asked us for two strings of beads. These beads he placed over betel leaves upon two arrows thrust in the centre of the dancing ground which were surrounded by betel leaves offered to the *yaka*. These beads were said to represent the rough rope of creeper with which the green twigs forming the smoker were secured and the rope by which the smoker was lowered to the comb. 301 782

When it is remembered that Veddas do not tattoo or paint themselves, and have never been seen wearing any kind of seeds as ornaments, it seems reasonable to assume that where beads are sought after by the Veddas they are valued for their supposed magical properties. 304 302 301

In conclusion we may give the only perfectly clear instance of a Vedda wearing an amulet with which we are acquainted. The shaman of Bandaraduwa wore on his wrist a small silver cylinder such as is commonly used to contain a written charm. The cylinder was empty and had never contained a charm, but the shaman told us that he wore it in order to be cured of an illness from which he had suffered formerly, and that presently he would give the cylinder to some pilgrim proceeding to Kataragam in order that he might deposit it in the temple there. 751

The Eating of Human Liver.

Every group of Veddas except the most sophisticated village Veddas believe that it was formerly the custom for a man to carry in his betel pouch a small piece of dry human liver. But the majority of our informants were not clear as to the exact reason for doing this, though they were all agreed that it had something to do with raising a man's valour and making him strong to bear trouble. It was essential that the liver should be taken from a man killed by the individual who proposed to carry a portion of the dried liver in his pouch. When a man had been killed the slayer would open his belly and take out a small portion of his liver which he would dry in the sun in a secret place. This custom appears to have ceased about three generations ago, but the following instance, said to have occurred about fifty years ago, was given us at Bandaraduwa. 789 266

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

789
266

The headman of a small group of Kovil Vanamai Veddas killed a Sinhalese simply because he required a piece of human liver to keep in his betel pouch. In spite of this example the Bandaraduwa people could not tell us exactly how it was used, and it was only at Sitala Wanniya that it was ascertained that the purpose of the dried liver was to make men strong and confident to avenge insults. A man would bite off a piece of the dried liver and chew it, saying to himself: "I have killed this man; why should I not be strong and confident and kill this other one who has insulted me?" As far as we could understand a Vedda might thus work himself up into a condition of berseker fury, but this was only done after very serious insult, as when a man's wife had been carried off or been unfaithful, or when his bow and arrows had been stolen or an attempt made to take his land or caves[1].

[1] It was doubtless an exaggerated account of this practice that led Gillings to accuse the Veddas of cannibalism (*Journ. Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, 1853).

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

ward, shoot their long-bladed arrows in the soft fleshy part under the forearm, and so disable him.* 224

They have a great dread of meeting elephants at night, and have charms to protect them from them—not only to turn them from their path, but to render innoxious the bear, the leopard, and the wild boar. And I must here record, that they are the only charms I have entire faith in. 825 789

I never shall forget the first time one of these Veddah charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation. The moon had not quite risen, and the stems of the trees and the gigantic pendent creepers were flickering in the uncertain light cast by the torches, which my Veddah guides, gliding through the forest, bore before me. I was chatting to an intelligent Veddah by my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms, having been till then, like Tennent, ignorant of the fact.† I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant "behegang! wirooowee! wiroowah!" which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success.‡

Honey, and the grub in the comb, before it becomes the bee, are both staple food with the Veddahs, and their acuteness in discovering hives, when bee-hunting, is very remarkable. I have seen a Veddah stealing through the forest, suddenly stop—listen for an instant with uplifted hand—dart off into the jungle and return in an incredibly short space of time with a fresh honey-comb; while I have been in vain endeavouring 222 [262]

* This fact I established beyond a doubt. I questioned many Veddahs on that practice, which Knox treats as a fable, p. 63, viz., striking an axe into the sole of an elephant's foot; and I was assured by several that, though they never practise it themselves, the Veddahs of Batticaloa do, and that they even hamstring elephants. To those who know the pluck and dexterity of the professed elephant catchers in the north of the island, there is nothing extraordinary or incredible in a Veddah approaching sufficiently close to an elephant to wound his foot or to hamstring him. But I have inquired, and cannot satisfactorily establish the truth of the statement; and I confess that I am inclined to doubt their physical power to do either.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 448, 2nd edit.

‡ Tennent, vol. i, part ii, chap. i, p. 139, gives a lamentable account of the inefficacy of a charm for bears. I dare say the unhappy moorman there mentioned would have been more fortunate had he known the Veddah charm. The Singhalese have charms for the same purpose; but they differ from those of the Veddahs. [171]

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

differ from the Singhalese, and those which, though Singhalese, are, in the sense here used, peculiar to the Veddahs. It has been suggested to me that some of the former are derived directly from the Sanskrit, but as I am incompetent to judge of the accuracy of these suggestions, I do not venture to give the conjectural derivations which I have received. 197

I have, myself, noted down, and caused to be noted down from dictation, several Veddah charms, which are not, I am informed, known to the Singhalese, though in some there is a certain resemblance to charms in use by the latter. Whether corrupted during the many ages in which they have been unintelligently repeated, or whether they are in a form of Singhalese now obsolete, or both, they are not easily translated. They are charms used in illness, and for protection against elephants, leopards, bears, and wild boars. 789 [755]

The Veddahs are at present chiefly known by names similar to those in use among the neighbouring Singhalese, and it is curious to observe how oddly they are jumbled together. In one family are to be found names which would only be appropriate to Kandyans of the highest caste, and names which could only be borne by the lowest. Some of their names, too, belong to Hindoos, and not to Singhalese. Some are not proper names at all; while, most strange of all, others, though utterly unknown in Ceylon, either to Tamils or Singhalese, are in common use in Bengal, and refer directly to Hindoo deities, or personages mentioned in the Puránas. 551 171

The names of the preceding generation appear to have differed in a very marked manner from the Singhalese names by which the Veddahs now are for the most part known; and those in the list appended to this paper are chiefly the names of the fathers and mothers of the present Veddahs. Most of these I was able, by the kindness of Colonel Vincent Eyre, C.B., R.A., to submit to the inspection of Professor Lees, of Bengal, and they are pronounced by him to have a decided Sanskrit affinity. [197]

It is a singular and significant fact, that not only are many of their names unknown in Ceylon, but their meaning is utterly unintelligible to the Veddahs themselves, among whom they were family designations which have descended to them from father to son for ages.

It is strange that so many have written of the Veddahs, and have been contented with information at once scanty and inaccurate. Davy believed that they had no names.* Tennent affirms that they have no charms—no "instinct of worship"—and doubts 114

* Davy, *Account of the Veddahs*, p. 118 of his work.

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot 782
be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, 776
with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to pro- [346]
tect their votive offerings.

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medi- 755
cine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the 769
patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, [775]
so universal amongst Buddhists.

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it 771
can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often 174
repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded.

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematised" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, [821]
although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakko, spirit of the rock; Wedde-Yakko, spirit of the chase; Oonapána-Yakko, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakkhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Weddi-Yakko is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapána-Yakko is known to the Singhalese of the Weddiratee, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not 789
known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild bears*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon,

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 Almost omnivorous, I have before remarked their scrupulous
171 abstinence from the flesh of cows and fowls, though they can assign no reason for it. Now, though good Buddhists as well as Hindús reject the flesh of cows, yet since the Veddahs have never associated with their Buddhist neighbours, they cannot have acquired this prejudice from them.

And though all over the south-east part of Ceylon, where even the superstitious awe of Skanda extends, the cock, the device on his banner, is to a certain degree respected; yet, since the Veddahs care no more for Skanda than they do for all the other gods in the Hindú Pantheon—the very names of whom, *as gods*, are unknown to them, they would not respect his sacred cock.* In

789 but Pasé-B'uddho—the only single allusion to Buddhism among them; but the very meaning of this and other charms is unknown to the Veddahs. They are repeated by rote; they do not pause to understand them, and could not if they would. It is enough for them, as for most Oriental people, that a particular formula is to serve a particular purpose.

Veddah Charm for Protection against a Wild Boar.

539

Ira deyené ôkma.	Boar (!) of the sun-god!
Sanda deyené ôkma.	Boar (!) of the moon-god!
Pasé budené ôkma.	Boar (!) of the Pasé Buddha!
Situ ôkma situ.	Stay, boar, stay!

Singhalese Charm for Tooth ache.

Ira deyené myâ!	Worm of the sun-god!
Sanda deyené myâ!	Worm of the moon-god!
Pasé Budené myâ!	Worm of the Pasé Buddha!
Daté nositee dat myâ!	Stay not in the teeth, thou tooth-worm!

171 These are identical; yet the Veddahs and the Singhalese certainly do not associate so closely as to borrow one another's charms. Have they descended in each race since the time they were one? The term *ôkma* I can get no satisfactory explanation of. It is not Singhalese, certainly. I assume it means "wild boar", as this is the charm to arrest a boar in the path; but it is not the term used by the Veddahs for a boar in ordinary conversation. The allusion to the Pasé, or Pachó, Buddha, is curious as occurring in both; the one people being anything but Buddhist, while Buddhism is the religion of the other. As Gotama Buddha visited Ceylon long anterior to the final establishment of Buddhism in Ceylon, and descended in Binteanne, may not this solitary allusion to the religion have been handed down in this form among the Veddahs from a period even before the invasion by Wijalja? In the form of a charm which is repeated by rote, such an allusion would be most naturally retained. So far from having any Buddhist tendencies, they do not even show the slightest outward respect in the presence of a Buddhist priest. The other Veddah charms are, I believe, quite unlike those of the Singhalese, but on that point I am still making inquiries; aided, as I have been throughout, by Mr. De Loyza, the able and intelligent modhar of Beniotte.

* The far-famed Hindu temple of Katragam, which attracts thousands of pilgrims annually from India, and is regarded with awe by the Singhalese, is dedicated to Skanda, the Indian Mars. The temple is built on a spot which, according to tradition (though it is not mentioned in the Skanda Puranas), is the site of Skanda's camp in his wars with the Asuras.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
593 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

361 "But surely there are Veddas in Galmede; everybody told us so," I insisted.

"Veddas of a sort, yes," was the reply; "and perhaps among them, one or two good ones; but the best live away in the caves, in those rocks yonder. Now if you'd come yesterday you'd have seen two of them who brought me some goes in exchange for betel and tobacco."

000 Disappointment melted into sudden hope. So, there were real Veddas still left. But oh! these people. Was ever chase so disheartening? Always the promise, never the fulfilment. Were we chasing phantoms of the wilderness, mocking spirits of a dead race, intolerant of the intrusion on their tranquil sepulchres?

There was no possibility of visiting the cave-Veddas that day. So I decided to stay over and visit them the next morning, travelling across the pathless hills to the high road; while my companion,—fed up to the teeth by now at the very mention of the word Vedda, and in a bad way with festering tick-bites, heat exhaustion, and lack of fresh food—tried to dissuade me from an adventure that promised no success. But I was bent on it. So we agreed that most of the bearers should accompany him to Maha Oya by an easier route, while I remained behind with three men and a two days' ration of tinned food.

With nightfall my prospect of securing a guide to the Galmede hills was no nearer than in the morning. The only man who could be relied on was down with fever. I was seated disconsolately in the Chetty's garden after dinner, close to a chatting group, when suddenly I saw a shadow slip in out of the darkness and join them; there was some whispering; "Ah, is this the man they call Meenemaruwa?*" I heard
648 one of my bearers ask.

241 "Yes, I am he they call murderer, rogue and everything besides."
115 The answer came loud and unabashed from the man himself.

Rumour had spoken of him as far away as Kotelinda; and it had not spoken kindly. He lived three miles up the river by himself, inspiring the neighbourhood with awe of him. He was in a quandary that night. Returning home after a short absence, he had found that his brother had been taken into custody for illicit *chena* cultivation. He waxed eloquent on his wrongs, while the others listened: "Now what I want to know," he said "is why they should have taken my brother, who is a fool and cannot say a word in his defence, when they might have taken me? No, they wouldn't do that because I can talk. My brother cultivated the *chena* it is true, but it was I who gave it to him; the land is mine. They want me to pay taxes, I who am a Vedda! My grandmother was a
[826 Vedda of Veddas, you should have seen her. How well I remember the
789 piece of human liver she carried in her betel-bag. We children would take it from her and want to throw it away; she would pluck it from us, saying, 'Hu, what do you want with this, isn't it mine?' Io, why do they treat me like this? Someone is angry with me. It must be the *aralchi*. No, the *aralchi* is good to me; he and I are friends. Now *Hettyar*, what must I do? I must go to the courts myself and get a petition drawn." Thus he talked interminably, while I wondered how a Vedda could come to argue like a lawyer.

"Now leave all that aside," I interrupted, "and tell me how I am to see these Veddas of the rocks tomorrow."

*Murderer.

791

791 MAGICIANS AND DIVINERS--specialists in magic (e.g., wonder workers, exorcists, magicians, fakirs); specialists in divination (e.g., astrologers, oracles, diviners, fortune tellers, seers, mediums); characteristics of each (e.g., personality, sex, training, garb); sources of power; prerogatives and disabilities; organization; fees; etc. See also:

Magicians as entertainers . . . . . 848 Divination 797
Witches, wizards, and sorcerers . . . . . 784 Magic 799
Shamans and faith healers 786

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

other, but betel leaves and areca nut are often added and the oldest survivor of a small group of comparatively unsophisticated Veddas seen at Godatalawa stated that in the old days this offering would have consisted of yams and water, if, as was often the case, coconuts and rice—which were only to be secured with difficulty and by barter—could not be obtained. In each community there is one man called *hapurale* or *dugganeewa*, who has the power and knowledge requisite to call the *yaku*, and in the ceremony of presenting the offering called *Nae Yaku Natanewa* (literally the dancing of the *Nae Yaku*), this man calls upon the *yaku* of the recently dead man to come and take the offering. It was stated that *dugganeewa* was an older word than *hapurale* and was in fact a Vedda word, though it was soon obvious that only a minority of Veddas knew it. The *dugganeewa*, who throughout this book will be spoken of as the shaman, becomes possessed by the *yaku* of the dead man who speaks through the mouth of the shaman in hoarse guttural accents, declaring that he approves the offering, that he will assist his kinsfolk in hunting, and often stating the direction in which the next hunting party should go.

Each shaman trains his successor, usually taking as his pupil his own son or his sister's son (i.e. his actual or potential son-in-law). Handuna of Sitala Wanniya learnt from his father. At Henebedda we were told that a special hut was built in which the shaman and his pupil slept, and from which women were excluded. It seems probable that this is only done among Veddas who have come under Sinhalese influence, as among them, but not among the wilder Veddas, women are considered unclean, and there was no isolation of the shaman and his pupil at Sitala Wanniya.

Sella Wanniya of Unuwatura Bubula was instructed by his father, and during his apprenticeship he resided with him in a hut into which his mother was not allowed to come.

The pupil learns to repeat the invocations used at the various ceremonies, but no food is offered to the *yaku*. At Sitala Wanniya we were told that the shaman recited the following formula, explaining to the *yaku* that he is teaching his pupil:

(1 See footnote, p. 16.)

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

791
[539]

(Ayu bowa. Mama ada sita man golayek hadanawd
Eyin kisi waradak ganda epa.
Mage golayata man kiya denawa me puda topata denda

"May (your) life be long! From to-day I am rearing a scholar of the mind. Do not take any offense at it. I am explaining to my pupil how to give this offering to you."

The yaku understand that although the formulae invoking them are recited they are not really being called, and so the pupil does not become possessed while learning, nor do the yaku hurt him. The puil avoids eating or touching pig or eating fowl in the same way, as the shaman, and Sell of Unuwatura Bubula stated that while learning he avoided rice, coconuts and kurakan, eating especially the flesh of the sambar and monitor lizard.

The shaman exercises complete control over his pupil and, we believe does not usually train more than one disciple. We heard of one instance in which a shaman, considering his pupil unfit, advised him to give up all idea of becoming a shaman. This happened among the Mudigala Veddas, apparently between 20 or 30 years ago. No man, however highly trained, is accounted the official shaman of a community during his teacher's life, although with his teacher's permission he will, when he is proficient, perform ceremonies and become possessed by the yaku.

791
826

At Sitala Wanniya we discovered that a shaman must not cut his hair unless he takes special precautions. One of us was collecting specimens of hair, and on asking Handuna for a lock, was answered affirmatively but told that as he (Handuna) was a shaman a cloth must be held over his head "because of the yaku." As we had used a great deal of cloth, we asked if a piece of newspaper would do: Handuna replied that it would be as good, but he must keep it always to cover his head when he danced. We explained that the paper would probably rot: the said he, "I shall die." He said he did not know why, but he believed this, as his father had told him that even should his son want a lock of his hair (hair is given as "seisin") he must cover his head with a cloth when it was cut, and ever afterwards must cover it when dancing, or else the yaku would kill him. Yet such was his politeness that rather than refuse our request

791 826 he was ready to suffer this inconvenience. Of course under these conditions we did not take a lock of his hair.

His son-in-law Kaira, although he assisted Handuna in dancing, offered no objection to our collecting a sample of his hair, nor did any of the other members of the community.

769 791 Besides the shaman one or more of the near relatives of the dead man may become possessed, but this though common is not invariable. The yaka leaves the shaman soon after he has promised his favour and success in hunting, the shaman often collapsing as the spirit departs and in any case appearing in an exceedingly exhausted state for a few minutes. However, he soon comes round when he and all present, constituting the men, women and children of the group, eat the offering, usually on the spot on which the invocation took place, though this is not absolutely necessary, for on one occasion at Sitala Wanniya when a rain squall threatened, the food was quickly carried to the cave a few hundred yards distant from the dancing ground.

769 It was clear that this eating of the food which had been offered to the yaku was an act of communion, and an essential part of the ceremony which was thought to bring health and good fortune, for some communities even anointed the heads of their dogs with the milk of the offering, explaining that this was done because of their value. This was the case at Henebedda, while the patriarch of the Godatalawa Veddas explained that some of the offering was always given to their dogs to eat, for the reason that they depended upon them in hunting. In one Nae Yaku ceremony (Bandarsduwa) the shaman fed the nearest relatives of the dead man immediately after the yaku left him, holding the bowl containing the offering to their mouths, while among the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, not only did the shaman, while still possessed, feed the children of the group from the bowl and smear its contents over their faces, but a number of members of the group, including the grandchildren of the dead man whose yaka possessed the shaman at the time, place a small portion of the offering in the shaman's mouth. The strength of the desire for the companionship and communion with the spirits of the kindly dead was very strong, and it was generally felt that shamans, and those frequently possessed by

becomes a *yaka*, for it appears that properly speaking the word *yaka* should not be applied to the spirit of the dead for the first few days after it has left the body. During this short period the word *prana hareya* (living one) should be used for the spirit of the deceased, for it has not yet attained the condition implied by the term *yaka*. Among the Henebedda Veddas it was thought that the *prana hareya* resorted to Kande Yaka a few days, perhaps three or five, after death, and then obtained permission from him to accept offerings from the living, and thus become numbered among his attendants, the *Nae Yaka*; but beyond a vague idea that the spirit might perhaps exist for a short time at the site where death had occurred, these folk had no knowledge of its state before it reached Kande Yaka. The Bandaradawa Veddas, who had come more under Sinhalese and Tamil influence, asserted that the spirit of the deceased spent some days in the neighbourhood of the death scene, which it only left to seek the Kataragam God and obtain his permission to become a *yaka* and pass into the train of attendants on Kande Yaka, and so become a *Nae Yaka* capable of accepting offerings from the living and in return helping or injuring them.

The method of invocation of the *yaka* is essentially the same in all Vedda ceremonies; an invocation is sung by the shaman and often by the onlookers, while the shaman slowly dances, usually round the offering that has been prepared for the *yaka*. Sometimes the invocations are quite appropriate and either consist of straightforward appeals to the *yaka* invoked for help, or recite the deeds and prowess of the *yaka* when he too was a man, as when Kande Yaka is addressed as "continuing to go from hill to hill [who] follows up the traces from footprint to footprint of excellent sambar deer." But at other times the charms seem singularly inappropriate; probably in many of these instances they are the remains of old Sinhalese charms that have not only been displaced from their proper position and function, but have been mangled in the process, and have in the course of time become incomprehensible. As the charm is recited over and over again the shaman dances more and more quickly, his voice becomes hoarse and he soon becomes possessed by the *yaka*, and, although he does not lose consciousness and can coordinate

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

his movements, he nevertheless does not retain any clear recollection of what he says, and only a general idea of the movements he has performed. Although there is doubtless a certain element of humbug about some of the performances, we believe that this is only intentional among the tamer Veddas accustomed to show off before visitors, and that among the less sophisticated Veddas the singing and movements of the dance soon produce a more or less automatic condition, in which the mind of the shaman, being dominated by his belief in the reality of the *yaku*, and of his coming possession, really acts without being in a condition of complete volitional consciousness. Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that although they never entirely lost consciousness, they nearly did so at times, and that they never fully appreciated what they said when possessed, while at both the beginning and end of possession they experienced a sensation of nausea and vertigo and the ground seemed to rock and sway beneath their feet.

Some men, including Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, whom we consider one of the most trustworthy of our informants, said that they were aware that they shivered and trembled when they became possessed, and Handuna heard booming noises in his ears as the spirit left him and full consciousness returned. He said this usually happened after he had ceased to dance. We could not hear of any shaman who saw visions while possessed or experienced any olfactory or visual hallucinations before, during, or after possession. The Veddas recognise that women may become possessed, but we only saw one instance of (alleged) possession in a woman, which occurred at a rehearsal of a dance got up for our benefit on our first visit to Bendiyagalge, during which we are confident that none of the dancers were really possessed. Although we did not see the beginning of this woman's seizure we have little doubt that there was a large element of conscious deception in her actions, for when we became aware of her she was sitting bolt upright with her eyes shut and the lids quivering, apparently from the muscular effort of keeping them tightly closed, while opposite her was Tissahami the Vedda Arachi muttering spells over a coconut shell half full of water with which he dabbed her eyes and face.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It is not suggested that the conscious element is entirely absent from the Vedda possession dances, it is impossible to believe that such a sudden collapse as that occurring in the Henebedda *hirikoruha* ceremony (p. 222) (when Kande Yaka in the person of the shaman shoots the sambar deer), followed by an almost instantaneous recovery, is entirely non-volitional. and the same holds good for the pig-spearing in the Bambura Yaka ceremony (p. 243) at Sitala Wanniya. We believe that these facts can be fully accounted for by a partial abolition of the will, that is to say, by a dulling of volition far short of complete unconsciousness. The shaman in fact surrenders himself to the dance in the fullest sense, and it is this, combined with a high degree of sub-conscious expectancy, which leads him to enact almost automatically and certainly without careful forethought the traditional parts of the dance in their conventionally correct order. Further, the assistant, who follows every movement of the dancer, prepared to catch him when he falls, may also greatly assist by conscious or unconscious suggestion in the correct performance of these complicated possession dances. Again, we do not think there can be any doubt as to the non-volitional nature of the possession, by the *yaka*, of the bystanders, near relatives of the dead man, which may take place during the *Nae Yaku* ceremony[1].

One remarkable fact may be chronicled here, viz. that we have never met a Vedda who had seen the spirit of a dead man, that is to say, no Vedda ever saw a ghost, at least in his waking hours. We have never been able to obtain any corroborative evidence for Bailey's assertion that "the spirits [of the dead] appear to them in dreams and tell them [the Veddas] where to hunt." Veddas certainly dream, but Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira, two most trustworthy informants, said that they did

[1] There was nothing about the general behaviour of any of the Veddas with whom we came in contact that suggested a specially neurotic or hysterical tendency. The graver stigmata of hysteria such as would warrant a diagnosis of functional disease were always absent and the Veddas, even when ill, were in no sense fuss makers or inclined to magnify their ailments in the way so many Melanesians do. We are indebted to Dr C. S. Myers for the suggestion that possession by the *yaka* can best be explained as an affection (dissociation) of altered personality. If this be so the condition is comparable to a number of well-known cases in the sphere of mental pathology.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

many places the flesh of the jungle cock is avoided as well as that of the domesticated bird. Many Veddas when questioned about fowl said, that though they did not eat it themselves other Veddas would, and some alleged that the reason for their abstinence was that fowls eat dirt. The lay members of the Sitala Wanniya community had no objection to eating fowl, though Handuna avoided it because he was a shaman. 262

Further, those Veddas who eat fowl, avoid eating it when about to take part in a dance. When discussing this matter at Sitala Wanniya, Vela, who was not a shaman, was about to take part in the Dola Yaka ceremony described in Chapter IX, and it was then explained that this day he must avoid fowl, though at other times it would not matter if he were to eat it or not. The reason was not clear, while one man said that it was because the *yaku* did not like fowl, and so would not readily enter him after he had eaten it, another said that should a man become possessed after eating fowl it might be difficult to regain consciousness. It is equally necessary for shamans to avoid eating pig, though the reason for this was more definitely stated, namely, that the *yaku* disliked this animal. 262 787

Although shamans will not eat pig, they have no scruples with regard to killing it, but they must not touch it or cut it up. If they were to neglect this observance they would be ill and shiver for four or five days afterwards, even when seated comfortably in the cave. The arrow with which a pig had been killed must be cleaned by a man who is not a shaman, and may then be used again by the shaman. The shaman of the sophisticated Veddas said that he would eat only rice, coconut milk, salt, bananas and cow's milk for some days before invoking the *yaku*, and this man insisted on having a daily ration of rice for several days before the *Nae Yaku* ceremony held after the death of Tuta. But as all these foods are foreign to the wilder Veddas and must be obtained by trade, these abstinences have assuredly been introduced, and certainly no custom of this sort is observed at Sitala Wanniya or even at Henebedda. 262 791

The suggestion that these prohibitions have been taken over from Hinduism will not explain the equally strong objection to 262

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

301 among the wilder Veddas at the present day. It therefore appears that although beads are worn as ornaments by the members of certain communities in the Bintenne there is no [184] evidence for their use as such among the Veddas to the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road.

301 751 We may next consider certain facts which seem to indicate that beads may be sometimes treated as amulets, or at least as having magical power. At Bandaraduwa where there has been a great deal of Sinhalese influence, one woman wore a piece of knotted string round her throat which had been charmed and put on by a Sinhalese to cure her of some ailment. When we gave her a string of beads she was very pleased and immediately broke the old charmed string and put the beads round her neck in place of it.

At Bendiyagalge all the women were particularly anxious for us to give beads to their children and immediately put these round their necks, but those given to themselves were not usually put on in our presence. In both these cases there is only the suggestion that beads were regarded as anything more than ornaments, and this also holds good as regards the beads of bear's bone worn by Kaira of Bingoda already recorded, but in the following cases the relation of beads to the *yaku* is perfectly clear. The women of Unuwatura Bubula, though they possessed beads of the same kind as those worn by the 301 women of Omuni, were afraid to wear them, and gave them 791 to the shaman to keep and use in *yaku* ceremonies. In this village we found that women would not accept red beads as presents because "they were afraid," though they readily took the white beads offered them, and the shaman when dancing to the Alut Yakini wore cross shoulder straps of old beads, and similar beads were kept for Indigollae Yaka.

There is equally strong evidence of the definite association 301 of beads with the *yaku* in other communities, though the reason 782 for this association could not be determined. At Sitala Wan niya a band of bast was placed upon the offering to the Rah Yaku, and our informants said that they would have used bead instead of the bast had they possessed them. At the sam place when preparing for the dance to Dola Yaka, who give

793

793 **PRIESTHOOD**--specialists in organized religious activities (e.g., priests, priestesses, clergymen, rabbis, mullahs); status and means of support; selection, training, and consecration; hierarchical organization (e.g., chief priests, bishops, cardinals, popes); prerogatives and disabilities of priests; characteristics (e.g., sex, garb, paraphernalia); distinctive behavior (e.g., celibacy); activities (e.g., conducting ceremonies, preaching, teaching, comforting); special priestly personnel (e.g., acolytes, temple prostitutes); etc.

See also:

Celibacy 589
Theocratic forms of government 648
Military chaplains 709
Shamans 786
Theologians 812
Divinity schools 874

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1]. 776

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. *Y*) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe. 535 755

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaram* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated. [292] [782]

The stone *pilliyar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pilliyar* or *kudaram*. 177 778

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarala*. 793

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaram* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1 535 796

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

796

796 ORGANIZED CEREMONIAL--systematization of religious ritual; ceremonial calendar (e.g., fixed and movable religious holidays, rest days, and festivals); detailed description of the ceremonies regularly associated with each (e.g., participants, ceremonial attire and paraphernalia, prescribed succession of rites, accompanying music and dancing, symbolism); church and temple services; religious dramas and spectacles; notions of propitious and unlucky days for ceremonies; etc. See also:

Agricultural ceremonies 94
Music, dancing, and drama 88
War ceremonies* 72
Specific cult practices. 78
Annual cycle of economic activities. 221
Housebuilding ceremonies 542
Leisure-time activities 517
Secular holidays, rest days, and festivals. . . 527
Spectacles 541
Weddings 585
Installation of chiefs and kings. 643
Shamanistic performances 755
Mortuary ceremonies 764
Calendar 865
Rites of passage 88, 581, 810

1:Seligmann & Seligmann 2-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

presented to Kande Yaka the hunters would expect bad luck in future, and might even be bitten by snakes or attacked by bears. 778 782

The *Nae Yaku* are the spirits of the dead, they must report themselves to Kande Yaka as the chief of all the *yaku* and from him obtain permission to help the living and accept their offerings. Kande Yaka comes to the *Nae Yaku* ceremonies since the spirits of the dead could not be present without him. It was definitely stated that the spirits of the dead did not become *yaku* until the fifth day after death, but my informant knew nothing of the state of the spirits during this period though it was surmised that at least part of the time would be passed in seeking Kande Yaka or in his company, though there was no idea as to where Kande Yaka had his being. It was however stated, that the spirits of the dead were in hills, caves and rocks. The *Nae Yaku* including the spirit of the dead man are invoked on the fifth day after death. An offering is made of coconut milk and rice, if these are obtainable, but if not one consisting of yams and water is substituted. The shaman dances, holding in his hand a big ceremonial arrow for which no special name could be elicited, while the remainder of the community gather round. The shaman invokes the *Nae Yaku* and also Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka. The shaman becomes possessed and is supported lest he fall while the spirit of the deceased promises that yams, honey, and game shall be plentiful. He then sprinkles coconut milk or water from the offering on the relatives of the deceased as a sign of the spirit's favour. One or more of the relatives of the dead man may also become possessed. The shaman gives the relatives water and yams, putting their food into their mouths himself while he is possessed, and it appeared that this might cause the relatives to become possessed. At the end of the ceremony he asks the *Nae Yaku* to depart to where they came from and the spirits leave the offering. 775 782 769

Nothing was known concerning the Kataragam God or the *Ininadu* ceremony, though our informants said that they had heard of other Veddas performing this ceremony. Gale Yaka was not known, nor yet Wanagata Yaka. 796 796

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 for the simple scrape of the ground. After some time when the circle had become quite broken the three dancers grunted loudly "Oh-h-h," and held their arrows up to the sky toward which they waved them before suddenly falling flat on their backs. They were lifted up and supported by a companion, and they then approached the Sinhalese headman who was present and promised him and one of us a white buffalo each for the next day. This was done in a manner we afterwards recognised to have been an excellent imitation of the actions of one possessed by the *yaku*, though it is certain that this dance was not a real possession dance; while the condition of the pulse in the dancers, surprisingly quiet in view of the violent exercise they had taken, showed that the falling down was not due to exhaustion. In other figures no arrow was planted in the ground and the dance did not begin with a circular movement; in some of these figures the point of the arrow which is in the right hand may be lowered almost to the ground, and the obliquely inclined arrow swept forward and backward perhaps in imitation of a shaman possessed by Kande Yaka tracking the sambar in the manner described in the account of the *kirikoraha*.

THE KIRIKORAHA CEREMONY.

796 The pantomimic ceremonial dance by which the favour of the spirits (*yaku*) of the hunting hero Kande Wanniya and his brother Bilindi is secured is called *kirikoraha*. It must be noted that this term, literally translated, signifies "milk bowl," and though the presentation to the *yaku* of a *kirikoraha*, i.e. a pot containing coconut milk, is essential in several other ceremonies they were not called *kirikoraha*. The "milk" consists of the [272] fluid which can be squeezed from the shredded meat of the coconut and is mixed with water. If the coconut juice be not diluted excessively the fluid so produced has a very pleasant flavour, and in appearance is not unlike milk[1]. Whenever "milk" is spoken of as offered to the *yaku* this fluid is meant; the "water" of the coconut is not valued, and though it may be used in preparing the milk instead of water (as was the case a

[1] This is the usual method throughout Ceylon of making the coconut milk largely used as a flavouring agent.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the Henebedda *kirikoraha*) it is usually poured on the ground without any ceremony. 796

A description of the phenomena of "possession" of the Vedda shaman by the *yaku* has already been given in Chapter VI, so that nothing need be said on that matter in connection with this dance or any of the ceremonies described in this chapter, in all of which "possession" occurred. 796 787

The essential features of the *kirikoraha* are two in number. The first of these is the offering of coconut milk and generally of other food to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka and sometimes other *yaku* regarded as their attendants. Secondly the pantomimic representation by the shaman, while possessed by Kande Yaka, of Kande Wanniya tracking and shooting a sambar deer. This pantomime seems to occur only when "possession" by Kande Yaka takes place, for whenever any pantomime of this sort was enacted, even in the most shortened and conventional form, as in the Nae Yaku ceremony (described on pp. 233 to 237 of this chapter), the shaman was held to be possessed by Kande Yaka. [782]

We witnessed four *kirikoraha* ceremonies during our stay in the Vedda country. One was performed by the Henebedda Veddas in thanksgiving for a fine buck which one of them had shot, and the other three were undertaken at our request, but we have no doubt that they were accurately performed; for the Veddas were always pleased to perform any ceremonial dance provided the correct offering were given, as thereby they gained the favour of the *yaku*, and it was seldom that they were able to offer such food as we gave them for the purpose. The *kirikoraha* ceremony appears to be held equally as a thanksgiving for game killed and in order to obtain success in the future. 796

The Kirikoraha at Bendiyagalge. A fine buck was killed late in the afternoon of the 7th of February, 1908, and was carried to a flat rock between our camp and the Bendiyagalge caves and rapidly skinned and cut up during the short tropical twilight. A *kirikoraha* ceremony was performed the next morning, before taking part in which all the men went to the neighbouring stream and bathed, and afterwards made an offering of food to the *yaku*.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Some rice with coconut and chillies had previously been cooked at the cave together with certain portions of the deer, the flesh from the head, sternum and front of the ribs, and the whole was brought down to the *talawa*. This food formed the offering (*aduk*), and the ceremony of *adukku denawa* or "offering the food" was performed before the dance began. The shaman, Randu Wanniya, squatted in front of the food, and with his hands together repeated a dedicatory invocation to Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, which lasted nearly ten minutes, and consisted mainly, if not entirely, of repetitions of invocation No. XIX. It was performed in gratitude for all deer and sambar killed, and in it the *yaku* were invited to accept the offering of food which was left for them for a short time and afterwards eaten by the Veddas themselves. Fig. 2 of Plate XXVIII shows the shaman invoking the *yaku* with the offering in front of him. This ceremony, called *adukku denawa* (literally "the giving of cooked food"), is always held before a *kirikoraha* when game has been killed, but it is not itself part of the latter ceremony.

An open part of the *talawa* near the caves was selected as a dancing ground, and a tripod called *mukkaliya* was made by binding three sticks together on which an earthen pot, the *kirikoraha*, was placed, and a ceremonial arrow (*aude*) laid upon it.

The shaman took a coconut and the *aude*, held them to his head and salaamed while Poromala smeared some resin on a stick and afterwards censed the *aude* which was held so that the smoke might eddy round it, for thus would Kande Yaka smell the incense and be pleased (Plate XXIX, fig. 1). At the same time the shaman repeated the invocation (No. XIX) to Kande Yaka.

This appeared to be one of the many incidents pointing to the fact that when *yaku* are invoked they first come to their special vehicles (Kande always to an *aude*, other *yaku* to leaves, swords and various articles), and from these enter the person of the shaman.

796 All sang the invocation, and the shaman danced round the
535 tripod holding the *aude* and coconut together in both hands and
787 waving them rhythmically as he performed the orthodox Vedda step, i.e. one pace with each foot followed by a couple of pats on the ground with the ball of the same foot, every step being

Plate XXIX

796
787
535

[417]

Fig. 1. Kirikurahe ceremony, cooking the *ende* and coconut (Hennebedde)

Fig. 2. Kirikorahe ceremony, the shaman dances with the *ende* and coconut (Hennebedde)

[facing p. 220]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
1787
535

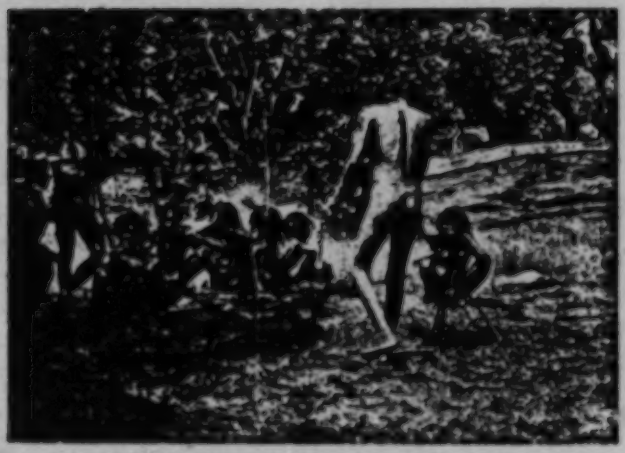


Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman dances with the *anda* and coconut (Henebedda)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman breaking the coconut (Henebedda)

[facing p. 220b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1909) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
787
535

followed by a half turn of the body to the accompaniment of sounds produced by some of those who were not dancing slapping their sides. The shaman next sang the invocation to Bilindi Yaka (No. XXI), and after a short time he showed signs of becoming possessed; he shivered and shook his head, and with the *aude* in his right hand he struck the coconut which he held in his left and broke it in half (Plate XXX, fig. 2), letting the water fall into the *kiriberaha*. The way in which the nut split was prophetic; if a clean break was made the animal to be promised later would be a female, but if the edges were jagged a male would be shot. The shaman was now possessed by Bilindi Yaka, and with half the nut in each hand came to each of us in turn, placed his arms on our shoulders, and in the hoarse gasping voice of the *yaka* promised us good hunting and protection from wild animals.

Two of the younger Veddas, Poromala and Sita Wanniya, scraped the meat of the coconut with the *aude* to make the milk, and afterwards placed one half shell on the end of one of the sticks forming the tripod, and the other below the *kiriberaha*. Leaves taken from any tree, but said to represent betel leaves, were also placed in the *kiriberaha*. There was no reason for the particular position of the coconut shells, but as they were considered part of the offering to the *yaka*, it would have been considered disrespectful to the *yaka* to place them on the ground. This rule was observed in all the dances that we witnessed. All sang the invocation again, and the shaman, Randu Wanniya, continued to dance, holding the handle of the *aude* in the right hand and the point of the blade in the left, turning it with a rotatory movement as he danced, gradually swaying his body more and more and lifting his feet higher from the ground. He went to the *kiriberaha* and inspected the milk, letting it run through his fingers (Plate XXXI, fig. 1), and dropping some on the *aude* to see if it was rich enough. Apparently he was satisfied with its quality, and soon he fell back into the arms of Sita Wanniya who supported him. After a short time he revived with much quivering of muscles and gasping for breath, and taking a handful of the coconut milk he shouted and approached Tissahami the Vedda Arachi[1] (who

[1] This man, concerning whom something has been said on p. 41, was known to

796 535 787 was then staying in our camp) and scattered the milk over him, while with the right hand on his shoulder he expressed his pleasure in seeing him and promised him luck in hunting. Then after prophesying good hunting to each of us in turn and to several of the Veddas, Bilindi Yaka left the shaman.

Randu Wanniya again danced eastward round the *kirikoraha*, holding the *aude* in both hands, but soon he began to crouch and point it to the ground, and then pretended to thrust it at imaginary footprints (Plate XXXI, fig. 2). His excited manner showed that he was now possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he represented following the slot of a sambar. Soon Sita Wanniya took the *aude* away from him and gave him a bow and arrow, and the tracking continued amidst intense excitement (Plate XXXII, fig. 1). Sita Wanniya followed closely, ready to support the shaman if he should fall, while others pointed out the slot to him till at last, a basket having been placed on the ground, he drew his bow and transfixed it.

796 787 Plate XXXII, fig. 2 shows the group round the shaman as the arrow left the bow. As the arrow sped the shaman fell back seemingly exhausted and almost senseless. The *yaka* did not, however, finally depart from the shaman, but merely went to the quarry to ascertain if his arrow had proved fatal. The shaman soon came to himself, apparently satisfied, and bent his head (Plate XXXIII, fig. 1) over the *kirikoraha*, and then shouting "Ah, ah!" in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaku* came to each of us in turn and placed the *aude* on our heads, thereby granting us jungle favour, after which he went to several of the Veddas prophesying good luck in hunting to each of them (Plate XXXIII, fig. 2). Then taking the half shells of the coconut in either hand and waving them about, he danced round the *kirikoraha* and bent his head over the pot so that the *yaka* might drink, and afterwards fell into the arms of Sita Wanniya, who had been following, ready to support him. Again the shaman revived, and, putting his arms on our interpreter, promised him victory in all undertakings. Then returning to the *kirikoraha*, and having given the *aude* to one of

the Henebedda community and was much respected both because of his Vedda blood and because of his renown as a charmer and medicine man (*vedavale*).

Plate XXXI

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kirikorala ceremony, the shaman examines the offering of coconut milk (Hembodda)

Fig. 2. Kirikorala ceremony, the shaman tracking the amber (Hembodda)

[facing p. 222]

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kiriboraha ceremony, the shaman tracking the number (Hunubedda)

Fig. 2. Kiriboraha ceremony, the shaman shoots the number (Hunubedda)

[facing p. 222 b]

796
535
787

Fig. 1. Kirikuwin ceremony, the shaman bends his head over the coconut milk (Henebedde)

Fig. 2. Kirikuwin ceremony, the shaman possessed by Bilindi Yaka promises good hunting (Henebedde)

[facing p. 222 S]

●rR6
535
r187

Plate XXXIV.

Kirikovha ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot (Bandarawela)

[facing p. 222 d]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the onlookers, who were all willing assistants, he filled the palms of his hands with milk and bounded forward, and raising his hands with every step he scattered the milk, and in this manner the *yaka* within him showed his pleasure. Next he took the *kirikoraha* from the tripod with both hands (Plate XXXIV, fig. 1), spun it on the ground, and immediately it left his hands he fell back. The spinning was prophetic, for in that direction towards which the bowl dipped as it came to rest, there game would be found; and on this occasion it dipped to the north. When the shaman revived a few seconds later, Kande Yaka had left him, and he was possessed by Bilindi Yaka again. With shouts, gasping and trembling, he came to most of the onlookers and promised good hunting in the usual manner, then he took the *kirikoraha* and spun it, but when it left his hands the spirit departed from the shaman and he fell back. 796 787

The dance was now over, and all were eager to partake of the coconut milk which had been offered to the *yaku*, for none of it might be wasted. All the men took a little, and also fed the children with it, but the women were not allowed to partake of it. However, as the mere contact of the milk had virtue the shaman rubbed some on their heads. In other less sophisticated communities women were not looked upon as unclean, and they shared in this and other food offered to the *yaku*. As has already been stated there is little doubt that the idea of women being unclean has been borrowed from the Sinhalese, among whom it is very strongly held. A little of the contents of the *kirikoraha* might also be rubbed on the heads of the dogs which were supposed to be more likely to hunt successfully after this. 796 562 783 [177]

The Kirikoraha at Sitala Wanniya. Kande Yaka, Bilindi Yaka and Indigollae Yaka were all invoked at the *kirikoraha* held at Sitala Wanniya. Indigollae was held to be the principal attendant of Kande Yaka, and though the invocation sung to him refers to "seven pots of blood" our informants were unable to give us any meaning for this[1]. 796

Handuna, the shaman of the Sitala Wanniya community, did

[1] This matter is briefly discussed in Chapter X after the invocation (No. XXXII) to Indigollae Yaka.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 not possess an *aude*, having given his to a white man who knew not its value, but since an *aude* must be used when invoking Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, Handuna unfastened the blade from one of his shooting arrows to represent an *aude*. Having put on the *hangula* he burnt some resin and censed the *kirikoraha*. This had been placed on a support of the usual form in the centre of the dancing ground, and the arrow blade and some betel leaves had been placed in it. Two pots of boiled rice had been placed upon a small platform or altar (*maesa*) which had been built for, and used in, another ceremony.

The shaman raised the coconut and salaamed to the 796 *kirikoraha* and then danced round and round it, singing the 535 invocation given in Chapter X (No. XVI) and exhibiting the 787 nut to the *yaku* and thrusting at the pot as he danced though not actually hitting it. The step was the usual one with many half turns and performed clockwise. Handuna now invoked Bilindi Yaka (Chapter X, invocation No. XVIII) and soon he fell back and was supported for a few seconds, but revived almost immediately, when he became possessed by Bilindi Yaka. An axe was given him by one of the Veddas with which he hit the coconut so as to split it, letting the water pour out on the ground. Then with a half coconut in each hand he danced up to Vela shouting "Houh! houh!" and held the nuts against his chest while with head bent and body swaying he said "You have offered me coconut, and I have come, why did you call me?" For coconut, instead of the usual word *pol* he used *sudu ewa*, literally "the white one" or "the white thing." Again he danced round the pot and bent his head low over it, in this way showing his satisfaction with the offering. Whilst he continued to dance Vela and Kaira made the coconut milk putting the remains of the flesh of the nut on the pots of rice which had been placed on the *maesa*. Handuna now took the arrow blade from the *kirikoraha* and danced with it, holding it ends in either hand and twirling it round between his fingers taking it in his right hand, he stabbed sharply at the pot as he danced round it, taking care, however, never to hit the pot. He dipped the arrow into the pot and examined the milk on the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

1796
535
1787

blade, then scattered it to show that he was pleased, shouting several times *Has Bilindi! Has Bilindi!* to which Kaira always answered *divas* or "Lord." He danced again, stretching alternately his right and left arms, and about this time Bilindi Yaka left and Kande Yaka entered him without any outward signs, so that we did not recognise the change which had taken place until presently he danced round the *kirikoraha* with one arm extended and holding the arrow blade by its centre. We were told that he was possessed by Kande Yaka, who in his person performed the traditional pantomime of tracking the sambar by its slots, pointing at them with the arrow. This scene was not acted so thoroughly as it was at Bendiyagalge. Handuna picked up a few leaves and held them across the arrow to represent a bow whilst he crouched in a position ready to shoot; then, dipping his hand in the *kirikoraha* he dropped some milk on the leaves and got up and danced. Filling the palms of his hands with the milk he went to Kaira and said: "The sambar you shall shoot shall bleed like this milk dripping." Coming to one of us he placed one arm on his shoulder, holding a betel leaf moist with milk in the other outstretched hand, and prophesied sambar to the bow of Kaira. With head slightly thrown back and rapt expression he told of Indigollae and the seven pots of blood—and now it seemed that Kande Yaka went and Indigollae Yaka came[1]. Before going back to the *kirikoraha* Handuna gave one of us (C.G.S.) a betel leaf as a sign of favour, and then taking another from the *kirikoraha* he allowed some milk to drip over it before he let it fall to the ground. Then with the arrow head he made two slits in the leaf not quite extending to the base, and again dipped it in the milk. Next he went to Vela and passed the slit leaf slowly over his head and finally slapped it on his chest. He did the same thing to Kaira with an uncut leaf, and it was noted that when the leaves fell to the ground off the men's chests they were picked up carefully and put in the *kirikoraha*. The cuts in the leaf denoted that the sambar promised to Vela would be horned. The manner in which the leaf falls is also considered prophetic; when, as in this case, it falls with its

[1] His invocation is given in Chapter x, No. XXXII.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

under surface upwards, the quarry will take long to kill; if, on the other hand, the leaf fall with its upper surface upwards, death will be speedy.

After this Handuna again danced round the *kirikoraha*, holding the arrow in it, and showed his favour to each of the male onlookers by passing a milky betel leaf over their heads and placing it on their chests. This was repeated several times alternating with dances and quiverings over the pot before Handuna finally shook his head over the pot and fell back with a shout, the *yaka* having left him.

Now Indigollae Yakini, the wife of Indigollae Yaka, was invoked, and we were told that Kaira who performed this dance would have worn beads on his wrists had he possessed them. He danced in the usual way round the *kirikoraha* with the arrow head which transfixed a betel leaf in one hand, when suddenly dropping his head over the *kirikoraha* he shouted and apparently became possessed by the *yakini*. Gasping and shaking he went to both Handuna and Vela and put milky betel leaves on their chests, and spoke to them, raising his arms alternately and shuffling his feet. He returned to the pot and danced, stretching his arms and then crossing them across his body as he would have done had he been holding a couple of *aude*, swaying his body and moving vigorously. Several times he bent over the *kirikoraha* and each time leapt back with a shout and danced again. At last Handuna pointed to the offering of rice on the *maesa*, which he approached and inspected while gasping and shaking, then evidently satisfied with this he sprang forward to the *kirikoraha*, dropped his head over it and fell back exhausted, but no longer possessed by any *yaka*.

The Kirikoraha at Uniche. The *kirikoraha* performed at Maha Oya by Wannaku of Uniche seemed to be intermediate between the ceremony of the wilder Veddas where the original idea, namely Kande Yaka tracking the elk, was the dominant feature, and that danced by the village Veddas at Unuwatura Bubula where this *motif* was omitted.

A *maesa* was built (though not elaborated into a *kulutyaka* as at Unuwatura Bubula), a white cloth was laid over it and betel leaves, areca nuts, bananas, coconuts, and two pots o

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

cooked rice were placed on it, as well as the *kirikoruha* itself containing the coconut milk, in which two *aude* had been placed. All these offerings were then covered with a red cloth, the red colour being said to be necessary.

796
535
787

Before describing the dance it must be explained that the Uniche Veddas had come to Maha Oya, some twenty-four miles from their home, and the shaman had not brought his *aude* with him, so we offered to lend him two, a small one we had collected at Unuwatura Bubula, and a particularly fine one lent to us by Tissahami, the Vedda Arachi, the Sinhalese headman already referred to, who in his youth had lived a great deal among Veddas, and from whom he had received the *aude*. This *aude*, evidently an old one, pleased Wannaku greatly and he exclaimed with joy: "This is indeed an *aude* for Kande Yaka[1]." We did not tell him whence we had obtained them, but he seemed impressed that a white man should possess such a good Vedda *aude*.

Wannaku put on the *hangula* and salaamed to the *maesa*, and whilst the drum was beaten sang the invocation given in Chapter x, No. xxii, to Bilindi Yaka. He danced in front of the *maesa* facing east, slowly at first, but gradually he began to sway his body more rapidly and with greater vigour and soon became possessed by Bilindi Yaka. The shaman now picked up the large *aude* and, after dancing with it in his hands for a few seconds, flung it from him to the ground with disgust, exclaiming angrily: "This is not my arrow, this has been used by a Sinhalese." Someone handed him the small *aude* and he seemed satisfied and danced with this. Of course it was quite possible for Wannaku to have discovered the history of the *aude* from our servants or from the villagers, or it may even have been mentioned quite casually in conversation with them and not have made much impression on him at the time, but flashing into consciousness in the excitement of the dance it may have appeared an important and till then unknown fact. On questioning Wannaku after the dance he denied any previous knowledge but said quite simply that he was possessed

[1] However, when the dance took place the next day he used this *aude* when invoking Bilindi Yaka.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
787

by Bilindi Yaka and "as a man knows his own betel pouch so Bilindi Yaka would know his own *aude*."

The shaman bent his head over the *kirikoraha* and inspected it, then putting his hand into it he scattered the milk on the ground two or three times, before filling his palm with milk and letting it fall over the *aude*, in this way testing the quality of the offering. With the arrow in one hand he stood in front of the *maesa* shaking and shouting. Now he took a betel leaf from the *kirikoraha*, fixed it on the point of the *aude* and as a sign of favour put this on an old Vedda's chest, asking at the same time why he had been invoked: "Is anyone sick?" The old man replied that no one was ill, they had merely called him to take the offerings on the *maesa*. So the *yaka* was pleased and with rapt expression the shaman danced, and again dripped milk over the *aude*, saying at the same time that he must go. He repeated this several times, all the while quivering and gasping and saying that now he would leave, but before finally departing the spirit again showed favour to the old Vedda, influencing the shaman to put a milky betel leaf on his chest; then the shaman leapt back suddenly and the *yaka* left him.

After a short interval the shaman danced again and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka, whom he called by the invocation No. XVII; soon he made signs that he wanted something, when the Veddas understood that he lacked a second *aude*, and not having another, one of the Veddas gave him a knife, which the shaman preferred to the rejected *aude*. He held the *aude* and the knife crosswise, these now representing the bow and arrow of Kande Yaka, and dancing wildly the shaman feigned to test the imaginary bow, then leaning both arms on the *maesa* he shivered and shook, at the same time declaring that the bow was a strong and good one. Again holding the arrow blade and knife like a bow and arrow he followed the track of an imaginary sambar for a few yards; he pointed to a spot on the ground and said the next *kirikoraha* should be built there. Then taking some milk from the *kirikoraha* he let some fall on the arrow and spilled some on the ground, and we were told that this represented Kande Wanniya

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

drinking after the kill. After a little more dancing the shaman fell back into the arms of his supporter and the spirit left him. 796 535 787

The Kirikoraha at Unuwátura Bubula. When dancing to Kande Yaka at Unuwatura Bubula the Veddas made a *bulatyahana* (Plate XXXV); this, we were told, would be built when invoking many *yaka*, but the *kirikoraha* would never be danced without it. The *bulatyahana* seemed to be an elaborated *maesa* with the framework carried up to form a back and slanting roof over which a cloth, specially kept for this purpose, was hung and fastened down. On the shelf of the *bulatyahana* two *aude* and a trident of the ordinary Hindu pattern were placed together with betel leaves and areca nut. The *kirikoraha* containing coconut milk and betel leaves stood on a rice-mortar beside it and a pot of cooked rice was put on the ground.

The shaman danced in front of the *bulatyahana* holding in his hands a new piece of cloth (a coloured handkerchief which we gave him) specially obtained for the purpose. He swayed his body and raised the cloth to his head while lifting his feet and patting the ground alternately with his right and left foot, but not moving from the front of the *bulatyahana*, that is to say confining his dancing to a space three or four feet long. He exchanged the handkerchief for the trident and placing a betel leaf on the point he danced with this and soon became possessed by Kande Yaka. Putting his hands into the *kirikoraha*, he examined the milk and expressed his satisfaction by shouting and clapping his hands. Again he danced to and fro in front of the *bulatyahana* with the trident in his hand. The *kirikoraha* was taken off the rice-mortar and put on the *bulatyahana*, and the pot of cooked rice was put in its place on the rice-mortar.

The dancer then approached a sick shaman who, as mentioned on p. 263, had coughed up a considerable amount of blood at the end of the *alutyahagama* ceremony performed previously, and fed him with some rice which he brought to him in a betel leaf. In this way Kande Yaka showed his benevolence towards the sick man, for it was considered that the *yaka* food would cure him. Returning to the *bulatyahana* the shaman quivered and shook his head and examined the [755]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 535 787 rice, then he came to us and in the usual agitated manner of one possessed by the *yaku* said that he had come because we had asked for him. After some more dancing a little longer in front of the *bulatyakanu* and after much bending and shaking over it and the rice pot the *yaka* of Kande Wanniya left the shaman and the ceremony ended.

NAE YAKU CEREMONIES.

769 535 The large part the *Nae Yaku* play in the life of the Veddas and the great deference paid to them have been treated in the chapters on religion. We witnessed two *Nae Yaku* ceremonies which took place at Sitala Wanniya and Bandaraduwa respectively. The Bandaraduwa ceremony was performed on the seventh day after the death of the individual whose spirit was invoked, and we were allowed to prepare a dancing ground in the jungle, where it seemed that a tolerably good series of photographs might be obtained. However, the Veddas were obviously apprehensive of the spirit of the deceased until the ceremony had taken place, and insisted on performing it early in the morning with the result that the photographs obtained were all underexposed. We have however thought it best to publish a number of these without retouching them, an exception being made in the case of the two photographs reproduced in Plates XXXVI, fig. 2, and XXXVIII, fig. 1, the value of which do not depend on the facial expression of the performers while they were so underexposed that all detail would have been lost in a reproduction.

The ceremony performed at Sitala Wanniya was danced expressly because we wished to see it, but Handuna, the most important man in this community, was delighted when we suggested that they should dance to the *Nae Yaku*, because he said it would please the *yaku*, for when alone the community could seldom provide such good things to offer them as we promised to give.

Nae Yaku Ceremony at Sitala Wanniya. Although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas told us that the *Nae Yaku* could not come without Kande Yaka, Kande Yaka was not invoked at

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XXXV

796
787
535
417

Fig. 1. Kirikoraha ceremony, the *bulatyahana* (Unuwatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Kirikoraha ceremony, the shaman before the *bulatyahana* (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 230]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

to his assistance when he began to quiver and sway, then moved and put both arms round one of the dead man's brothers as a sign of kindness from the deceased. (Plate XXXIX, fig. 2.) The brothers said: "It was good of you to come. See we have given you food, now do not come back again," and the *yaks* agreed. The shaman then took the *aude* and transfixed a betel leaf with each and danced and again showed favour to the relatives by giving them each another betel leaf, after which one of the relatives danced, but the shaman threatened to stab with the *aude* the men who were not relatives of the dead man. (Plate XL, fig. 1.) Soon both the shaman and the two brothers fell back and the Yaka departed from them. When the shaman revived, he bent his head over the *kirikoraha* as a sign of respect; then holding both hands over the rice pot he repeated a silent charm, asking any of the other *yaku* who might have come to the ceremony to depart peacefully. After this he fed each relative of the dead man, holding the *kirikoraha* to their mouths, as is shown in Plate XL, fig. 2.

769
535
787

The Invocation of Bambura Yaka.

The Veddas invoke Bambura Yaka for help in getting pig and yams, both staple foods, the latter being an extremely important element in their diet. The dance is pantomimic, and depicts a boar hunt in which Bambura, the boar-hunting hero, was aided by a Vedda woman, who killed the pig with an arrow she shot from her husband's bow and whose spirit is therefore called Dunne Yakini (Bow Spirit), while the spirit of this woman's husband who turned the boar with his yam stick (*ule*) has become Ule Yaka, that is (Yam-stick Spirit). This ceremony, though not so widely spread, is as dramatic as that in which Kande Yaka stalks and kills sambar deer. We saw it danced by Kaira of Sitala Wanniya and by Wannaku of Uniche.

776
535
773
796

The invocation of Bambura Yaka at Sitala Wanniya. The dance at Sitala Wanniya will be described first, since the story was told us here in its more complete form. Once long ago many Vedda men and women went out in search of yams,

776
773
796

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

776 and they took their dogs with them. While all were busy
digging yams, the dogs strayed in the jungle and soon put up
773 a boar, to which they gave chase, giving tongue. The men
796 hearing the dogs followed them and soon came up with the boar
at bay, which immediately charged them. None of the men
could kill the boar, but a woman, whose spirit afterwards became
Dunne Yakini, picked up a bow and arrow and killed the boar
with the help of her husband Ule Yaka and his brother, who
became Kuda Ule Yaka, i.e. Little Yam-stick Yaka. Although
Bambura Yaka takes no part in the story as it was told us, he is
the important *yaka* of the ceremony; it is he who is especially
invoked, Dunne Yakini, her husband and brother-in-law coming
in as his attendants, as do a varying number of other *yaku*, presumably the spirits of those who joined in the boar hunt[1].

535 During the dance Bambura Yaka and all his attendants
796 were present, so that it was not at all clear which part of the
dance represented the actions of Bambura Yaka himself, since
after the first complete possession *yaku* entered and departed
from the shaman without any obvious signs. But we were told
after the dance that Bambura was returning to his cave at
Lewangala carrying yams and a couple of the large monitor
lizards when he came across the hunt.

The properties for this dance are rather complicated and
were carefully prepared on the dancing ground, all the men
helping in the work and charms being sung the while. The
necessary sticks were cut and two flat reddish stones found by
a stream were placed below the *maesa* which was built with
a double platform, a bundle of grass, leaves and twigs bound
together to represent the boar being suspended from the lower
platform. The stones were called Kuda Lewangala and Maha
Lewangala respectively, and represented the red rocks or rocky
hills of Lewangala, the unknown land in which Bambura lives
and which is still the chief abiding place of his *yaka*. The
majority of these properties are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig.

[1] We may here refer to a matter we discuss at greater length in Chapter x. It is
certain that the invocations (Nos. XXVII and XXVIII) used at the Bambura Yaka
ceremony and specially addressed to Bambura, which were only partially understood
by those who sang them, originally applied to honey collecting.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

On the stones Handuna and Kaira mixed their pigments, lime, turmeric, water and charcoal, while all chanting together they decorated with spots and bars the various sticks which were to form the bows, arrows, yam sticks and carrying sticks sacred to the *yaku* who were soon to be invoked[1].

As already stated the boar was suspended below the *maesa* by a creeper, and another creeper fastened to the "boar" was held by a small boy who stood a little back in the bush.

The objects prepared for the Bambura Yaka dance at Sitala Wanniya were as follows:

(i) The *mulpola itiya*; the meaning of these words is doubtful, though *itiya* was said to signify an ancient weapon. This was said to be for the use of Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and is a rough stick about 5 feet 6 in. long (figure 9*a*) pointed at one end, above which the bark is shaved off for about 6 in., which part was decorated with bars of red and black pigment. This was said to be a yam stick, and it was explained that because of this the bark was not peeled except at the point, for a man would cut any stick in the jungle and dig up yams with it.

(ii) The *ule* (figure 9*b*) or ceremonial arrow belonging to the Yaka is a peeled stick about 6 feet long, pointed at one end and decorated with rings of red and black pigment. Three pieces of bast are tied to the upper end, a few inches from the top, to represent the feathers of an arrow.

(iii) The *hariwitiya* is a stout stick about 3 feet 6 in. long, decorated with rings of red and black pigment, and was used by Bambura Yaka as a staff.

(iv) The *haelapeta* (figure 9*c*) is a peeled stick nearly 6 feet long, spattulate at one end and decorated with bars of red and black in the manner indicated in the drawing.

(v) The *ran kaduwa* (literally "golden sword") is similar to the *haelapeta*, and totally unlike the *ran kaduwa* used in the Rahu Yaku ceremony and figured on p. 256.

(vi) The bow of the Dunne Yakini has the bark stripped from the outer surfaces only, and is decorated with spots of red

[1] On asking the reason for this ornamentation of the properties we were told that the *yaku* would be pleased when they saw the decorations, for the spots of pigment represented the flowers of Lewangala.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796
293

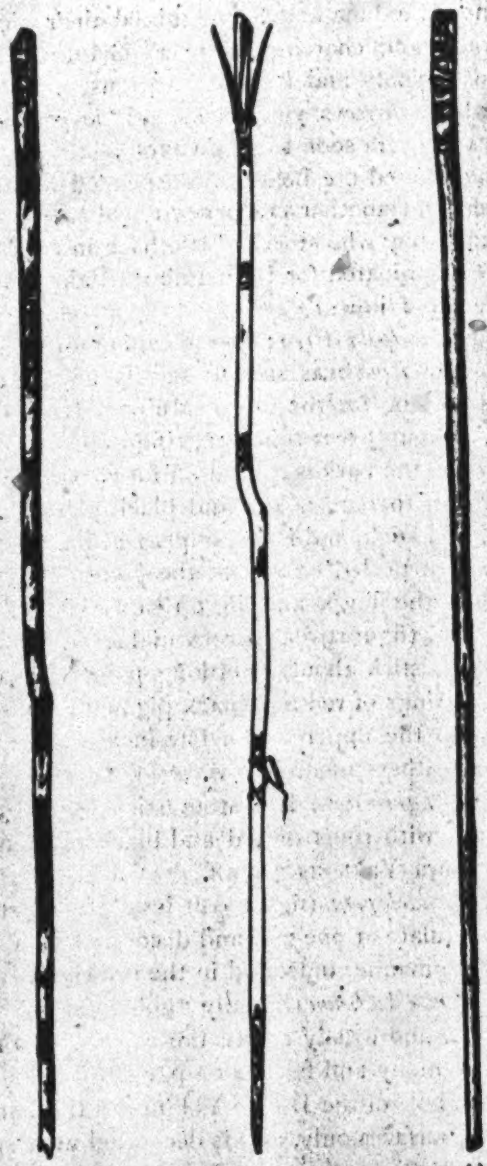


Fig. 9. Some of the objects used in the Bambura Yaka ceremony. (a) *Mulpola ätiya* × $\frac{1}{10}$. (b) *Ulu* × $\frac{1}{10}$. (c) *Hanlapata* × $\frac{1}{10}$.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

and black pigment. It closely resembled that used in the Bambura Yaka ceremony at Uniche.

(vii) The *tadiya* is well seen in Plate XLI, fig. 1. It is a short stout stick, and represents a carrying stick or *pingo* which is used throughout Ceylon; however, it was quite unlike one, as these are long and springy and resemble a bow; moreover, Veddas usually unstring their bows and use them as carrying sticks.

(viii) The *nimiti* or book (explained as book of omens, and said to be borrowed from Sinhalese ceremonies) was made of a couple of broad strips of bark in imitation of the *ola* books used in Ceylon[1].

[787
177]

The *haelapeta* and *ran kaduwa* were said to belong to Devatayo of those names, but nothing was known about them. Devatayo or Dewa are Sinhalese spirits distinct from the *yaku* according to Sinhalese beliefs, but Handuna, our best informant at Sitala Wanniya, said Devatayo were the same as *yaku*. Obviously they had been introduced and assimilated to the Vedda *yaku*.

After all the sticks had been painted some cooked yams were tied up in leaves and bound to one end of the *tadiya*, and some wisps of grass were tied to the other to represent monitor lizards (Plate XLI, fig. 1), the whole was then put on the lower stage of the *maesa* with cooked yams for all the *yaku*, while a portion of yams was placed on the upper stage for Koriminaala Yaka, but no reason could be discovered why his food was kept apart from the rest. The dance began by Handuna singing an invocation (No. XXIX) to Mulpola Itiya Yaka, and Kaira, who wore a *hangala*, held the *mulpola itiya* in his right hand, letting the decorated end rest in his left, then he danced slowly round and round in front of the *maesa* facing east, the direction whence the boar of the story came. The *mulpola itiya* was soon changed for the *ran kaduwa*, and now Kaira made long leaping steps, widening his circle as he moved in front of the *maesa* and

[1] The *nimiti* omen or book is perhaps the most curious of all the properties. It was said that Bambura Yaka could read and write, and that he was the only Yaka who had these accomplishments, though nothing was known as to how he had learned them. But certainly this part of the ritual was old and must be the result of quite ancient contact with a Buddhistic people.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

turning the stick over in his hand. At this time he became possessed by Ule Yaka, and after dancing in a circle for a few minutes he began to leap to and fro in front of the *maesa* and thrust at the ground with his stick, at the same time warning the *yaku* that the boar he was hunting was very dangerous and that they must be prepared to help him should it charge him. Then he approached Handuna and one of us, saying "The boar is very fierce but I will kill it." Again he went to Handuna and laid the *ran kaduwa* across the latter's chest and held it to him with both arms and repeated his boast of killing the boar, but he also begged for assistance if he should meet with an accident. He again leapt to and fro beating his sides, and taking the *tadiya* from the *maesa*, held it first on his shoulder then behind his head and brandished it in the air so that Bambura Yaka might see the good things attached to it, and if he were pleased with the offering he too might come to assist Ule Yaka if the boar should attack him. Then taking Vela by the hand, he spoke to him quietly and pointed as though he saw the boar, and crouching, he stepped forward noiselessly, but again sprang back and danced with the *ule* and *tadiya*, then putting the *tadiya* down, turned the *ule* over in his hands and danced with long leaping strides. Soon he left off dancing and merely bounded to and fro trying to thrust at the "boar" below the *maesa*, but the small boy holding the creeper attached to it pulled the "boar" away each time Kaira thrust at it. After a few attempts he came to each of us in turn, pressing the *ule* against our chests, and with head bent forward and taking short steps alternately to the right and left he spoke to us as though we were Bambura Yaka and said, "This boar is difficult to kill, grant that I may succeed." As he spoke he raised his hand and pointed. Then shouting *usi usi nam* (the words with which dogs are put on a trail) he called the dogs (mentioned in the story) Sanjala, Bahira Pandi, Neti, and Kali, and went through the pantomime of laying them on the trail, gasping and panting the while and hitting his chest saying, "This is a fine big boar and I will kill it." Again he leapt to and fro and thrust at the "boar" without success, then with a great charge and a shout wounded the "boar" and fell back exhausted into

535
796

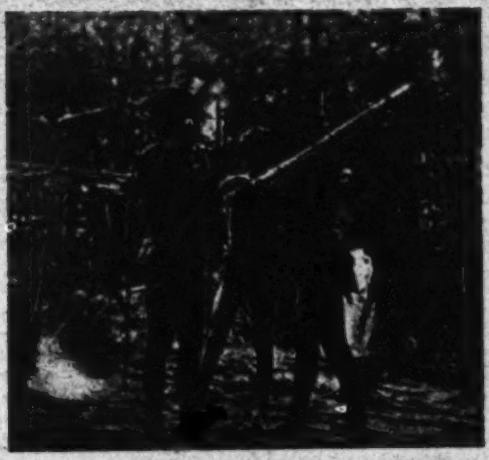


Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, preparing the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[417]

Fig. 2. The Bambura Yaka ceremony begins by Handuna singing an invocation (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 a]

535
796

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar wounds the hunter (Sitala Wanniya)*

[917]

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the boar is at length killed (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 242 b]

Plate XLIII

535
796

Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, the bow of Dunne Yakini (Sitala Wanniya)*

[482]

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Kaira dances with the *tadiya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 742 c]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

the arms of his supporter. However, the "boar" was not yet dead and the *yaka* did not leave Kaira, who rested for a few seconds, and when he sprang forward with a shout and danced again and spoke to Handuna, saying, "I have succeeded in wounding the boar, now I will kill it" he was still possessed by Ule Yaka. Then the whole pantomime was repeated, the boasts, the attempts to kill the boar, and the laying of the dogs on the scent. At last the "boar" was wounded again, for a squeal was set up by the small boy who manipulated the creeper; then with a final thrust the *yaka* killed it, and as the *ule* was carefully withdrawn the "boar" gave a long dying squeal. Then the yaka left Kaira.

Soon Kaira began to dance again still holding the *ule*, and moving slowly at first but soon more energetically, and now he became possessed by Koriminaala Yaka. He danced as before, calling the dogs in the same way as when he was possessed by Ule Yaka and thrust at the boar in like manner, but this time the boar must have turned on him, as with a grunt "honk, honk," the boar swung forward and Kaira stumbled and then hobbled painfully supporting himself on the *ule*, his right leg dragging stiffly on the ground (Plate XLII, fig. 1).

The other men came forward and "medicined" the leg, that is, while one of them supported Kaira the other took a leaf and hurriedly wiped the limb from the back of the knee downwards. This evidently cured him, and he made another attempt to kill the boar, and was again wounded and again cured in the same way. Then he made one more charge, and the *ule* pierced the back of the "boar," wounding it mortally, and as Kaira fell back exhausted the Yaka left him (Plate XLII, fig. 2). As the *ule* was extracted the dying boar again gave forth a last squeal. After a short rest the ceremonial bow prepared for Dunne Yakini was wrapped in a cloth, and Handuna knelt down and held it on his head with both hands while Kaira and Vela sang an invocation almost certainly to Dunne Yakini, but unfortunately no note was taken of this (Plate XLIII, fig. 1)[1]. Kaira salaamed

[1] There was some experimenting before Kaira took the bow; the plate shows one of the younger members of the community holding it, but as he was not found satisfactory Handuna took it himself.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535 796 to the bow and said, "Behold this golden bow is brought, covered by a clean cloth," and taking it from Handuna proceeded to dance with it at first holding it behind his head, then bringing it forward unwrapped it, placed it on Handuna's shoulder, and spoke in the usual *yaka* voice. He again danced with the bow and tried the string, and expressed his pleasure by gasping and hitting his chest. Then he put it on the *massa* and fell exhausted.

Although we have no definite note it seems quite evident that at this time Kaira was possessed by Dunne Yakini.

Kaira then danced with the *hariniliya* taking the usual dance steps but supporting himself with the *hariniliya*, and he soon became possessed by Bambura Yaka. One of the lads now held the *tadiya*, then Kaira made a mock search for it for some minutes before he took it from the child. He danced with it over his shoulder with body bent and the *hariniliya* still in his hand (Plate XLIII, fig. 2). He thus enacted Bambura Yaka returning to the cave with good things on his *tadiya*, and he shouted as every Vedda does when within hearing of home. Seeing the children he seemed to threaten them with his stick, and they ran away laughing; this was repeated several times. He tried to frighten the children away as he did not want them to see the food he had procured. Then he led Vela behind the *massa*, and pointing and speaking in a whisper with a great air of secrecy told him that if he went to a certain place where "there was high land by a stream" he should find a wild pig and kill it. For pig he used the *yaka* word *hozza dikka*, which apparently means "long snout." He led Handuna in the opposite direction, and speaking with like precaution promised that he should find and kill sambar, using the *yaka* name *gowra magalla*.

He took the book, spoke to Handuna and Vela, and next taking yams from the *massa* presented some to each of us and to all the Veddas present, for in this way Bambura Yaka showed his good will. All the time he was distributing the yams Kaira hurried, gasped, and trembled. Before Bambura Yaka left him Kaira hit the upper stage of the *massa* with the *hariniliya*, and shouted "Hoi, hoi," to drive Koriminaala Yaka

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

away. Then he fell back, Handuna took the *tadiya*, and the dance ended. 535 796

All the properties of Bambura Yaka and his attendants were replaced on the *massa* and some water was sprinkled over them, this we were told being water for them to drink, for as no man eats without drinking afterwards, so the *yaku* require water to drink after food has been offered to them.

Handuna repeated charms over them, saying, "We have given you food and treated you well; if we have made any mistakes excuse us and do no harm to our families or ourselves." The whole ceremony was remarkable for the general feeling of cheerfulness and goodfellowship, jokes were frequently made, and obviously the Veddas had nothing to fear from the *yaku* in the ordinary course of events.

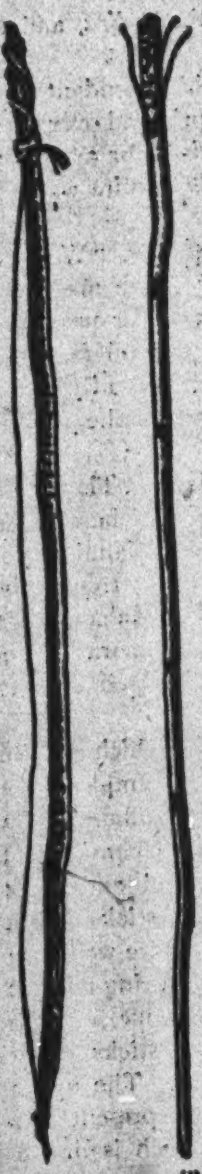
The Bambura Yaka Ceremony at Uniche. The dance to Bambura Yaka performed by Wannaku of Uniche differed only very slightly from that performed at Sitala Wanniya, yet in order to show these differences it will be necessary to describe the dance in detail. Wannaku, who visited us at Maha Oya in the Eastern Province, told us that Bambura Yaka was sometimes called Ala Yaka, i.e. Yam Yaka, as he helped men to find yams.

A *massa* was built and leaves laid on it over which a white cloth[1] was laid, and on this yams, a coconut, and a pumpkin were placed, while some of the properties of the Bambura Yaka ceremony leaned against the *massa*. These objects consisted of a roughly made bow decorated with bars of red and black (figure 10 *a*), two ordinary arrows and two long sticks which represented the special arrows of the *yaku*. They are well seen in Plate XLIV, fig. 1, leaning against the *massa*; a ring of bark is left at the top of each stick, and this is split to represent the feathers of an arrow, the peeled portion of both sticks being decorated with bars of red and yellow pigment. The upper ends of these sticks are pared down so as to represent two flattened surfaces as is shown in figure 10 *b*, which is drawn 535 796 293

[1] Among the Sinhalese and Tamils it is customary not only to hang a ceiling cloth but even to cover the walls, table and chairs with cloths when receiving an honoured guest.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796
[253]



(a) (b)

Fig. 10. Ceremonial bow and arrow of Bambura Yaka. $\frac{1}{4}$

to a scale of about one-tenth. Below the *maesa*, suspended by a creeper, is the *welewula*, which is merely a bundle of leaves filled with sand to represent the wild boar.

Wannaku, the shaman, put on a *hangula*, and salaamed to the *maesa*, and then sang a curious invocation (No. XXVIII), while a lad beat the drum. Wannaku now exhibited all the *yaka* properties, dancing with each in turn. Wannaku did not tell us the story of Bambura Yaka, and as our many questions did not elicit it we may presume that he did not know it, so we did not find out whether all the properties belonged to Bambura Yaka or whether, as at Sitala Wanniya, which we visited afterwards, some belonged to his attendants.

After a short time Wannaku bent his head over the *maesa*, shouted, let down his hair, and became possessed. He picked up each of the big *yaka* arrows in turn and danced with them shouting, and thus showing that he was pleased with them. Up to this time he had not danced round the *maesa*, only in front of it, that is, facing east towards Inginiyagala, the home of Bambura.

The shaman next took up the bow and arrow and danced wildly in all directions, pulling at the bowstring to see if it were strong enough, although he did not let fly. Being at last satisfied with his weapon he aimed at the *welewula* and shot, and although he hit it he only wounded the "boar," so the shaman continued to dance as though following the animal, but although he occasionally pulled hard on

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796
417

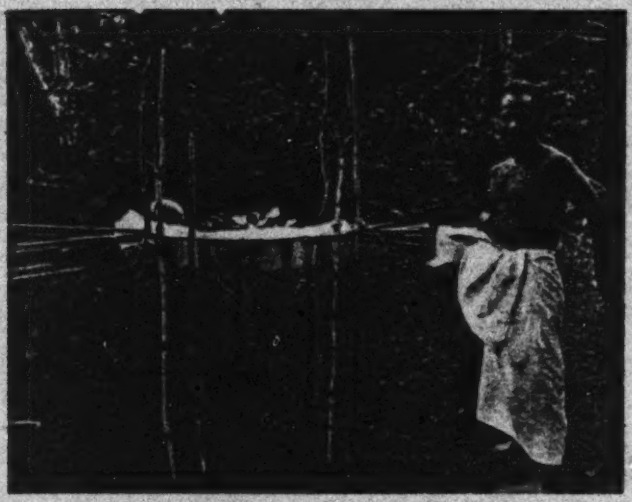


Fig. 1. Bambura Yaka ceremony, offerings and properties prepared for the ceremony by Wannaku of Uniche (Maha Oya)

Fig. 2. Bambura Yaka ceremony, Wannaku kills the boar (Maha Oya)*

[facing p. 246]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the bowstring aiming in the air he did not loose his arrow. Soon he slipped down on one knee letting the other leg trail on the ground, and we were told that the wild boar had turned and charged him. Immediately one of the Vedda onlookers sprang forward and "medicined" the leg, that is to say, he wiped it down with a leaf as though he swept the pain from the leg to the earth, and the shaman, apparently cured, continued to hunt. Three times he shot at the *welemula* and hit it each time, then leaning back in the arms of his supporter he gasped: "I have shot the boar, now I am going." After more gasping and quivering he fell into his supporter's arms and the *yaka* left him.

535
796

After the ceremony all the food was eaten except the pumpkin which was left to rot on the *maesa*. Wannaku told us that the *yaku* would come and eat this, getting under the *maesa* and sucking the goodness out of it; the pumpkin would remain there and would look perfect, but should anyone cook it and try to eat it, he would find its substance was gone, so that it would be like trying to eat grass. As we asked to keep the bow and arrows, which would otherwise have been left to rot on the *maesa*, Wannaku sprinkled some water over them and muttered an explanation to the *yaku* before giving them to us.

The Pata Yaku Ceremony.

All Veddas recognise childbirth as a time of extreme pain and even danger to women, and the individuals of the Sitala Wanniya group invoke the aid of the *yaku* as soon as pregnancy is diagnosed[1]. A week before we arrived at Sitala Wanniya this ceremony had been held on behalf of Bevini, the wife of Vela, who did not appear to be at all far advanced in pregnancy. On the other hand, Mari, the wife of Pema, on whose account the Pata Yaku dance which we witnessed was performed, appeared to be quite six months pregnant. The delay had probably been caused only by the lack of the good things which it was necessary to offer to the *yaku* on these occasions, and both Pema and his father-in-law Nila seemed very gratified when

843
796

[1] We did not hear of this ceremony among the Veddas of any other group.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 we provided the rice and coconut necessary for the ceremony.
796 This food is always eaten by the community after the *yaku* have inspected it.

The *yaku* invoked to ensure safety during pregnancy and
843 childbirth are three in number and are called Pata (bark) Yaku.
796 No story could be discovered concerning them, nor could any
796 reason be elicited for the name Pata (bark) or the large quantity of bast which is used in the dance. This can be taken from any tree in the jungle, and is torn into strips about half-an-inch broad. It may, however, be suggested that these particular *yaku* require the *inner* bark of trees as a resting-place just as the *yaku* invoked to come to the *kolomaduwa* or *alutyakagama* come first to the leaves used in making these structures, and then may or may not enter the person of the shaman, while they may take refuge again in the leaves after they leave the shaman. In the instances cited the leafy structures were beaten with sticks after the ceremony to drive the *yaku* away; this ritual was not observed in the Pata Yaku ceremony, but it must be remembered that only three *yaku* were invoked and the shaman may have been thoroughly satisfied that they had gone away from the place, while, on the other hand, in the two other ceremonies we were told that hosts of attendant *yaku* rested amid the leaves, and that the more important spirits alone entered the persons of the dancers.

The properties used in the Pata Yaku ceremony held for
843 Mari at Sitala Wanniya were as follows: three stout posts,
796 which were thrust into the ground in a line; the tallest was about 2 ft 6 in. high and the shortest somewhat less than 2 ft, the upper ends of all being forked and large quantities of strips of bast lashed to them. These bast covered stakes are called
[293] the *usmukaliya*, *medamukaliya* and *balakanua*, i.e. the high, middle and young post respectively, and each one belongs to one of the Pata Yaku. The *wilakodiya* or *kude* (umbrella), which belongs to all the Pata Yaku, is a similar bunch of bast strips tied to a rather longer stick which is not driven into the ground. The *amamula* is a stout stick about 18 inches long, to which bunches of bast are tied at each end and doubled back so as to present somewhat the appearance of a dumbbell. All these

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843.
796

properties had been used previously in the ceremony performed for Bevini[1].

843.
796
535

Two dancers must take part in the ceremony, and one of them should be the woman's father, whether he be shaman or not; if the woman has no father, or if he is unable to dance, her paternal uncle or her husband may take his part. In the ceremony we witnessed Nila, the father of Mari, and Vela, who was no relation to her, both wore the *hangula*. Nila also wore wristlets and cross shoulder straps of bark which represented beads.

As usual all the women and children collected at one side of the cleared space to watch the ceremony, and Mari joined the other women in preparing the offering of cooked food. An arrow was struck (Plate XLV, fig. 1) in the ground beside the *usmukaliya*, and Nila, standing in front of the three posts, began an invocation (No. XXX) which was soon taken up by the other men. Nila salaamed, took the arrow out of the earth and began to dance round the three posts, and then in and out between them, without observing any particular order, holding the end of the shaft with one hand and the head of the arrow with the other. The usual steps and movements were performed, the knees bent, the body inclined from the waist and swaying to and fro, the arms with the arrow between them being moved to and fro, but not raised higher than the chest. Vela followed Nila closely; it appeared that he should have held an arrow, but not having one, he did the next best thing and pretended that he had one, holding his hands as though there was an arrow between them.

Suddenly when between two of the posts Nila dropped the arrow on the ground and leapt over it. Kaira, one of the onlookers, immediately picked it up and returned it to Nila. Nila then dropped the arrow between the other two posts and again leapt over it. This was repeated several times, Kaira always picking up the arrow and returning it to Nila, whose movements Vela imitated. Although we asked numerous questions as to the meaning of this figure no reason could be supplied, "Our fathers did it" was all the information we could obtain. The movements had gradually become quicker and

[1] See genealogy, p. 61.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 wilder till after a final leap between the posts Nila fell supine with outstretched arms, and was immediately supported by one
796 of the onlookers. The *yaka* of the high post now possessed Nila
535 who, after a few minutes' immobility, began to shiver and gasp, then springing forward he danced to the posts with shuffling feet and head bent forward, and examined each one in turn. This he did by dropping his head on them so that his face was partly buried in the bast, his supporter always close behind him (Plate XLV, fig. 2). We were told that Nila was now possessed by all three *yaku*, who appear to have entered him as he bent over the posts. The exact moment of the entry and exit of the *yaku* into the person of the shaman was often very ill-defined, although in this instance, and indeed in most cases when more than one *yaku* was present at a dance, it was clear when the first *yaku* arrived, it seemed that the other *yaku* entered the shaman without giving any immediate sign of their presence.

The *yaku* speaking through Nila signified that they were pleased with the posts built for their reception. Then Nila picked up the *wila* and shouting, apparently with approval, held it up by each end and whirled the handle round making the bast strands fly out, then he approached Mari and waved it over
[787] her head and rested it there, so that her head was buried in the bast for several seconds while Nila predicted a male child (Plate XLVI, fig. 1)[1]. Nila then danced to Handuna and waved the *wila* over him. No particular reason was given for
[654] this, Handuna being no relation to the woman, but he was the most important old man in the community.

After covering Handuna with the *wila*, Nila danced wildly, always with the rapt expression of a man possessed by a *yaku*, showing his pleasure by holding the *wila* aloft and whirling it round and round. Then Nila put down the *wila* and took the *amanula* and dancing with it in his hand he approached Mari stretching it out towards her, but he only stayed a few seconds and passed on to Handuna and falling on the latter's chest spoke and again foretold the birth of a male child to Mari.

[1] The sex of the child is determined by the position assumed by the strips of bast as they fall over the woman's head. If most fall over the woman's face the child will be a girl, if over the occiput a boy.

843
535
796

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman buries his face in the *uramaliya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XLVI

843
535
796
[787]

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman predicts the sex of the child (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, Nila prays for his daughter's safe delivery (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nila exchanged the *asamula* for the *wila*, and coming to Mari again, raised the *wila* above her head and lowered it to the ground, letting the bast strips brush her face and body and then sweep the ground. This was done in order to wipe away the pain of labour. Then he leapt back to the centre of the cleared space and danced in and out between the three posts, hitting them with the *wila*. This was probably a sign of pleasure, for the driving away of *yaku* by striking their resting place would probably only take place at the end of the ceremony. He again approached Mari and fell back into the arms of his supporter, only remaining quiet for a few seconds until, trembling and gasping, he bent his head over the *usmukaliya* and buried his face in the bast. After doing this over each post he returned to the *usmukaliya* and said he must go, speaking in the usual husky and gasping *yaku* voice; then he fell exhausted into the arms of his supporter. All the Veddas now began to sing the invocation, and it was clear that the *yaku* had not departed from Nila for he soon began to quiver and gasp again, and sprang forward and danced between the three posts; then he began to search for something, lifting the strands of bast on the *usmukaliya*, and after an exaggerated pantomimic search he found the *wila*, turning this in his hands so that the bast swung at right angles, he waved it over each of the three posts; then turning to the *usmukaliya*, bent his head low over it and fell back exhausted. The *yaku* now left him and he recovered consciousness without any quivering or trembling, salaamed to the *usmukaliya* and sat down to rest. All the properties were immediately piled together under a tree. It may be noted that although Vela began to dance with Nila, he did not become possessed and so took no part in the latter portion of the dance.

843
535
796
[194]

After a short rest Nila went to the pile and holding a few strands of bast in one hand (Plate XLVI, fig. 2) repeated the following prayer to the Pata Yaku for his daughter's safety a number of times:—

[539]

Ané! mapé daruwata hiri antarówak wenda aphi ané wara.
Goda yanta denda ónae.

Ané! (May) any harm not happen to my child this time.
(You) must permit (her) to land (i.e. to escape from her sea of troubles).

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The Dola Yaka Ceremony.

222 437 Collecting honey is almost as important to the Vedda as hunting, for not only is honey valuable as food but it is one of the most important articles of barter, and every year at the end of the honey season the Moormen pedlar[1] penetrates into the wildest parts of the jungle with iron, cloth, pots and beads to exchange for the highly prized jungle honey.

222 776 796 Nor is honey collecting without risk, for the "Little People of the Rocks" can be very angry, and their sting is deadly. Hence the Veddas ask for success in honey collecting from their natural protectors the *yaku*, and Dola Yaka is especially invoked for this purpose. Although there is no tradition concerning his actions or his dwelling place his aid is invoked for success in collecting *bambara* honey from trees, and for the more dangerous task of cutting the combs from the craggy hill tops and rock faces in which the colonies of the rock bee make their homes. The successful invocation of Dola Yaka can only take place in the early afternoon at the time when the bees are most active in visiting flowers.

796 778 A *massa* with a single platform about 4 ft 6 in. from the ground was built, and two arrows were fixed in the centre of the space cleared for the dance (Plate XLVII). A betel leaf was placed on the top of each and pressed down on the shaft so that it rested on the feathers, and a small bead necklace was looped over the head of each arrow and rested on the betel leaf. These leaves were said to represent the large bundles of leaves which the Veddas use to smoke the bees from the comb, and the necklaces represent the creeper by which the twigs would be tied together and by which it would be lowered over the cliff edge. It was noted that one arrow was taller than the other, and we were told that the taller arrow was the one which would be used in cutting the comb, and that when the honey was taken it would be thrust through the withy binding the bundle of leaves used

[1] The term Moormen is applied to the numerous Mohammedans who make their living as shopkeepers and pedlars. Many of them are proud of their alleged Arabic descent, but it is only in a minority that skin colour or features suggest Arab blood, and the appearance of the majority of Moormen scarcely differs from that of the Tamils of the East Coast, among whom their most considerable settlements are found.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XLVII

796
778

Dola Yaka ceremony, the offering to the Yaku (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p.252]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

as a smoker; the other was "just an arrow" and did not appear to fulfil any specific purpose. Small leafy twigs from the surrounding trees were placed on the ground round the arrows, and on these a number of betel leaves and areca nuts were placed as an offering, the twigs being a device for preventing the offering to the *yaku* from touching the ground. 796 778

All the adult men of the community decided to take part in this dance, as only those who become possessed by Dola Yaka would derive benefit from the ceremony, that is, obtain special favour and help from him in gathering honey. In order to provide a supporter for each man, the dance was performed in two parts, Nila, Kaira and Pema taking part in the first performance. The ceremony began by these men walking several times round the arrows singing an invocation (No. XXXI) as they moved clockwise and occasionally salaamed to the arrows. Soon they began to dance and at times passed their hands, palms downwards, over the top of the arrows. This was the old custom; the reason for it was not known. After a little while Nila fell and was supported, soon all three dancers became possessed and bending forward shook their heads over the arrows. Then Nila taking the lead, they all moved to one end of the dancing ground, where they assumed the strained attitude of men listening attentively for the distant hum of bees, with body bent forward, one hand to the ear and the other raised as if to impose silence on their companions. Suddenly they all leapt back to the arrows and danced round them wildly, and shook their heads low over them; again they listened for the bees and beat their chests with joy, crying, "We hear many bees, there will be plenty of honey." 796 535 787

Returning to the arrows they danced round them again, at times falling back into the arms of their supporters, and again springing forward to dance. Nila gave each of us a betel leaf as a sign of favour from Dola Yaka, and then spoke in a gasping voice to Handuna who answered him. All beat their bodies with both hands, driving away imaginary bees. Again they listened for the bees, and this time picked up some leafy twigs and pretending they were alight shook them beneath the *maesa*, which now represented a comb, but they soon sprang back and 796 535

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 535 rushed to the opposite side of the dancing ground to get away from the angry bees. After repeating this pantomime, Nila, with much gasping and shaking of the arrows, promised *bambara* combs to Handuna, wherever he went. More dancing round the arrows followed and another mock smoking was performed, after which the three men fled from the *maesa* brushing the bees away and even feigning to pick some off their bodies. Then they returned to the arrows round which they danced until they all fell back and Dola Yaka departed from them.

Handuna explained to us that in dancing to Dola Yaka it was usual to hold a cloth over the head, and that Dola Yaka had remarked on the absence of cloths and warned the dancers that evil might befall them if they were to slip and fall with their heads uncovered. So two pieces of white cloth were provided for Handuna and Vela, who put on *hangala* and repeated the dance. The ceremony was identical with that already described except in two respects; in the first part of the dance Handuna and Vela held their cloths in their outstretched arms, frequently putting them over their heads and always doing so when listening for the hum of the bees, and when they prophesied to their fellows each held his cloth so as to cover both the man to whom he spoke and himself. Both men, however, put down their cloths just before the end of the dance and, pulling the arrows out of the ground, went through the pantomime of cutting the combs from below the *maesa* with them.

The Invocation of the Rahu Yaku.

776 796 Sitala Wanniya was the only place at which we saw this ceremony, though the Rahu Yaku were also invoked at the *alutyakagama* ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula. At Sitala Wanniya the Rahu Yaku are called upon to cure sickness and to give good luck in collecting honey from trees. It seemed that they were not invoked to grant protection or good fortune when rock-honey was sought, this being the function of Dola Yaka. The offerings necessary to propitiate them are coconuts and rice, and each dancer must wear a piece of white cloth and cross shoulder straps of bark.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The story relates that there was once three brothers, and one day the youngest was very angry and quarrelled with his wife. He left her in his cave and went out hunting, and when he returned he found a strange man in the cave with his wife. The stranger escaped so quickly that the angry husband could not shoot him; but he then beat his wife, and though he did not kill her he jumped into the fire and was burnt to death and became Gini Rahu Bandar or Yaka. When they died his two brothers became Rahu Yaku also. 776 773

A post was placed in the centre of the cleared dancing space, the upper end was split and bound so as to form the support for a pot containing coconut milk, a few areca nuts and betel leaves. This was called the *wilkoraha* (lake pot), for once in the old days water was required to make the coconut milk for an offering to the Rahu Yaku, and as there was no stream near by it had to be fetched from a lake; hence the name *wilkoraha*. A *maesa* (well seen in Plate LXVIII, fig. 1) about 4 ft 6 in. high was built of sticks at one side of the dancing ground, and two pots of cooked rice and coconut milk were put on it as an offering to the *yaku*. A piece of bark to represent a necklace was put on the *wilkoraha*; it was not known why it was necessary to offer a necklace to the Rahu Yaku, but it was always done[1]. Wooden *kaduwa* (swords) were used when invoking Rahu Yaku; these were two flattened sticks about 18 ins. long decorated with bands of red and yellow pigment and with guards made of twigs of fresh green leaves. One of these *kaduwa* without its guard is shown in fig. 11. 796 535 778

The use of the sword (*kaduwa*) and the objects themselves are both curious, for Veddas have never used any weapon but the bow and axe, and Handuna explained that though these were called *kaduwa* they really represented ceremonial arrows [177]

[1] It was quite clear that Vedda men never wore necklaces, but *yaku*, especially dangerous *yaku*, as the Rahu Yaku were declared to be, were sometimes offered necklaces or pieces of bast to represent them. Thus at Unuwatura Bubula, Indigolne Yaka was considered especially dangerous, and the shaman kept a particular string of old and highly valued beads and used it only when making invocations to this *yaku*. These and other instances strengthen the idea expressed in Chapter VIII that beads are prized among the Veddas for their magical properties, the idea of ornament being quite secondary.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 535 778 177

or *aude*, yet *ran kaduwa* the "golden sword" is mentioned in many of the songs and invocations, so that it seems that the whole of the Vedda ceremony of the invocation of the Rahu Yaku has been taken over from the Sinhalese, among whom the cult of Gini Rahu Bandar occurs. This borrowing must have occurred in ancient days, perhaps as long ago as the time when the Sinhalese invaded the Vedda country and carved the drip ledges on the caves, for as already mentioned the Sinhalese Rahu Bandar has become identified with three Vedda brothers whose spirits have retained only traces of the fierce nature of the Sinhalese demon. Once having borrowed the idea of a sword (*kaduwa*) and invocations in which it was mentioned, its name would remain, though in course of time the implement would become assimilated to the Vedda *aude*.

796 535

Fig. 11. *Ran kaduwa.* ×⅓.

Handuna and Kaira put on *kangala* and stood in front of the *wilkoraha* with the *kaduwa* in their hands, and Handuna began to recite the invocation to the Rahu Yaku (No. XXXV). Kaira took up the words and repeated them, always a few words behind Handuna. Soon they began to dance slowly round the *wilkoraha* holding the *kaduwa* in the same way as the *aude* is held in dances, i.e. right hand on point and left hand at the base of the handle, and as they danced they twirled them slowly in their fingers (Plate XLVIII, fig. 1). After a short time they both swayed their bodies more and the dance became more vigorous; then they began to shiver and shake their heads and became possessed by the two elder Rahu Yaku. They shouted, leaped and raised their *kaduwa* in the air, twirled them round with their

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

arms straight above their heads, and then stretching over the *wilkoraha* exchanged *haduwa*. They danced a few steps and exchanged *haduwa* again, and yet once more before they bent their heads low over the *wilkoraha*, by which action the *yaku* inspected the coconut milk and pronounced it very good. The exchange of swords was merely in imitation of the Rahu brothers who were said to have done this in their lifetime.

After approving of the offering of milk Handuna and Kaira, both followed by their supporters, danced to Nila, and Handuna placed his sword on the latter's chest while swaying his body and moving from one foot to the other, prophesying that Nila would have good luck in hunting and would take many combs (Plate XLVIII, fig. 2). Nila answered; Handuna and Kaira still gasping and trembling said that the *yaku* possessing them must go now, and that their brother the Fire Chief would come. There was more wild dancing round the *wilkoraha*, and both men were so overcome that had their supporters not held them in their arms they must have fallen. We could not determine the exact time of the departure of the two elder Rahu Yaku and the advent of the younger brother[1]. Handuna and Kaira bent their heads simultaneously over the *wilkoraha*, inspected the milk, were satisfied and continued to dance, and while a bundle of grass was brought and set on fire they raised both arms, and after holding hands over the *wilkoraha* they rushed to the burning grass and danced on the fire till they put it out, then again holding hands they danced and bent their heads over the *wilkoraha*. More grass was set alight, and after repeating their dance on it both fell back into their supporters' arms. In a few seconds they sprang forward and danced up to Nila: Handuna spoke in the gasping *yaku* voice and covered the swords with a cloth. More grass having been set alight the dance continued as before, first round the pot, then on the flames, and then round the pot again. While Handuna placed his sword on the chest of Nila the spirit within him spoke saying he must go soon, but both Handuna and Kaira danced again before

[1] It was perfectly clear that the idea of one *yaku* possessing two people at the same time presented no difficulty to Handuna and the rest of the Sinala Wanniya community.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXE Vedda AXE

796 returning to Nila and giving him their *kaduwa* to hold. This they did because they wanted to put them down, and they considered them too sacred and dangerous to be put on the ground, or even to be held by anyone who was not a grown man who had frequent intercourse with the spirits.

796 535 Handuna took the necklace from the *wilkoruka* and showed it to one of us (B. Z. S.), to whom he gave it, asking for a red necklace instead of the bast one. Kaira followed Handuna and gave to each of us betel leaves from the *wilkoruka* as a sign of favour from the youngest of the Rahu Yaku. Then both went to the *mawa*, looked at the offering, and then fell back into their supporters' arms. We were told that the *yaka* was well pleased with the offering and was about to depart from them, but Nila sang the invocation and soon the two dancers began to tremble and shake their heads, then shouting hah! hah! they sprang forward and danced again. They picked up their *kaduwa* from the *wilkoruka*, where they had been put for safety, this being considered a sufficiently sacred spot. Using the leaves which formed the hilts of their swords, they scooped out the coconut milk from the *wilkoruka* and scattered it about, and those on whom it happened to fall considered themselves lucky. Then the *yaka* spoke to Nila saying that he wished to go, and Nila answered "It is well." But before the *yaka* left Handuna and Kaira, the two men danced toward that side of the cleared spot where the women and children were grouped together, raising their *kaduwa* and pointing at the group. One woman was [155] carrying a baby suffering from yaws, and Handuna held his *kaduwa* over the child's head and promised that its sores should be cured. Then Handuna and Kaira gave their *kaduwa* to Nila; both bent their heads over the *mawa* and the *yaka* left them.

796 The necklace was replaced on the *wilkoruka* which was put with the *kaduwa* on the *mawa*. Handuna and Kaira repeated a charm over them and all were removed from the *mawa*. Handuna picked a few leafy twigs, put them under a tree, then took the leaves from the *kaduwa* and placed them on the freshly picked leaves, so that the hallowed leaves might not touch the ground; he then poured the remains of the coconut milk from the *wilkoruka* over them.

796
535

Fig. 1. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

[787]

Fig. 2. Rahu Yaka ceremony, the shaman prophesies good luck in hunting and honey gathering (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 258]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

When later we asked Handuna for the *kadurus* as specimens, the request was not granted until something was given in exchange to the Rahu Yaku, as Handuna said they might cause trouble if their property were taken from them. 796

WANAGATA YAKU.

The story of the Wanagata Yaku was that once a family became imprisoned in their rock-shelter by the fall of rock which blocked the entrance to the cave, so that the whole family died and their spirits became Wanagata Yaku, who are now invoked for help in hunting. In spite of this the ceremonial with which these *yaku* are invoked did not appear to have any reference to the story. 776 773

A sapling rather more than six feet high with its head and branches was stripped of its bark and thrust into the ground in the centre of the space cleared for dancing; its upper end had been split previously so as to form a support for small objects, and long strands of bast were tied to it. A handkerchief was thrown over the top and pressed down between the split ends, and some betel leaves were placed on this. 796 535 778

The shaman wearing a *hangala* danced slowly round the post with a handkerchief in his hand, while the invocation was sung. The handkerchief was soon exchanged for an *aude*, and it was noted that this was not the same one that had been used when invoking Kande Yaka in a previous dance. In order to avoid putting the handkerchief on the ground the shaman tied it round his shoulder. Then taking some betel leaves he danced with these and the *aude* in his hands, then transfixing the betel leaves on the point of the *aude* he raised them to his head, thus offering them to the Wanagata Yaku (Plate XLIX, fig. 1). Soon he became possessed and bent his head, shaking his hair over his face as he clung to the post with one hand while his whole body quivered and shook. With a shout he seized two *aude*, and holding one in each hand came to one of us (C. G. S.) and holding both *aude* over his shoulders said, as he quivered and shifted from one foot to the other, "You have called us, what do you want?" He returned to the post, when a rice 796 535

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1909) 1911
AXS Vedda AXS

796
535

mortar was brought and a bowl containing coconut milk in which betel leaves floated was placed upon it. The shaman placed a betel leaf from the bowl on the *ande* and presented one to each of us in turn, as a sign of favour on the part of the Wanagata Yaku, speaking in a hoarse gasping voice and raising his arms alternately the while. He returned to the post, and, grasping the bast streamers, bent his head (Plate XLIX, fig. 2) and quivered all over before dancing round it with both *ande* in his hands; finally he clasped the post with bowed head, and the *yaku* left him.

The Alutyakagama Ceremony at Unuwatura Bubula

796

The structure of the *alutyakagama* is well shown in a number of the figures illustrating this ceremony, and is especially clear in fig. 1 of plate LII.

It seems probable that this is not a pure Vedda ceremony, but is to be regarded as an amalgamation of a dance to Kank Yaka and the Nae Yaku, whom this people called the Alutyaku (i.e. New Yaku), and of a dance to Gale Yaka only met with under this name here and at Ocnuni. We were unable to determine whether the *alutyakagama* structure had always been used when dancing to Gale Yaka, and had been carried from his cult to that of the Nae Yaku, or had long been considered necessary for the invocation of the Nae or Alut Yaku. Perhaps neither of these events occurred; indeed, we consider it most probable that both dances have been confused with the *kohimadawa* or one of its early forms such as the *rumala* ceremony which is described later on in this chapter, and which is almost certainly of foreign origin.

Unuwatura Bubula is a small and extremely poor settlement of Veddas, of whom a general description has been given on p. 47.

796
535

The dance began by Sela Kaurala repeating an invocation with a handkerchief on his head[1], while Naida Kaurala holding

[177]

[1] Unfortunately we have no exact note stating to whom this invocation was sung. It is most probable that it was to Gale Yaka, as this was the *yaku* by whom the shaman was first possessed. If this is so the fact of the handkerchief being held over the head is of interest, as Mr Parker identifies Gale Yaka with the Sinhalese Gale Devaya who is depicted with a three-cleaved hat, which is also worn by his dancer, called

Plate XLIX

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Wanagala Yaku ceremony, the shaman offers betel leaves to the Yaku (Unuwatura Bulale)

Fig. 2. Wanagala Yaku ceremony, the shaman possessed by the Yaku (Unuwatura Bulale)

[facing p. 260]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

a handkerchief between his hands danced first round the *alutyakagama*, and then in and out between the posts, at times holding the handkerchief over his head (Plate L, fig. 1). We were told that these handkerchiefs would be kept apart for the *yaku* and would never be used for any purpose other than dancing. The shaman, Sela Kaurala, soon became agitated and was supported, and the Gale Yaka entered his person. Now he assumed the rapt expression of one possessed, pulled down his hair, and with a shout caught hold of the leaves hanging from the *alutyakagama*, where he continued to dance in and out of the structure, shaking and hitting the hanging leaves as he passed, but frequently stopping at the west front to take hold of the bunches of leaves while quivering all over and shouting (Plate L, fig. 2). Now a rice-mortar was brought into the *alutyakagama*, and the shaman placed the offering of cooked food upon it for the *yaku* to see and appreciate the good things provided. The *aude* was then placed on the rice pot, and the shaman, holding the leaves with both hands, shouted and shook his head, and then, taking an *aude* in either hand, picked up a few grains of rice on one of them (Plate LI, fig. 1), which he smelt, and although he did not eat them the *yaka* now pronounced the food to be good. About this time the shaman became possessed by one of the *Nae Yaku*. Three times the shaman inspected the rice, being possessed by a different *Nae Yaku* each time, and each spirit shouted his satisfaction. We were unable to discover the names of these as the shaman was taken ill after this dance, but there seemed no doubt that the dancer would know the *Nae Yaku* by whom he had been possessed. The shaman now wore two long necklaces of beads, putting them round his neck and under his arms, so as to form cross shoulder ornaments; we were told that these were for the *yakini*, but we were unable to discover whether this was one of the Alut Yakini or Gale Yakini who was mentioned in this locality.

The ceremony continued for some time as before, the shaman frequently shaking the leaves, shouting and gasping, and again inspecting the food. There was very little dancing, but this may

ornamentals, when dancing to him. Sometimes, however, when a three-tiered hat could not be obtained the dancer held a handkerchief over his head.

[177]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, the beginning of the invocation (Umwetura Bubale)

Fig. 2. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman and his supporter at the *alutyakagama* (Umwetura Bubale)

[facing p. 261 a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LI

796
535

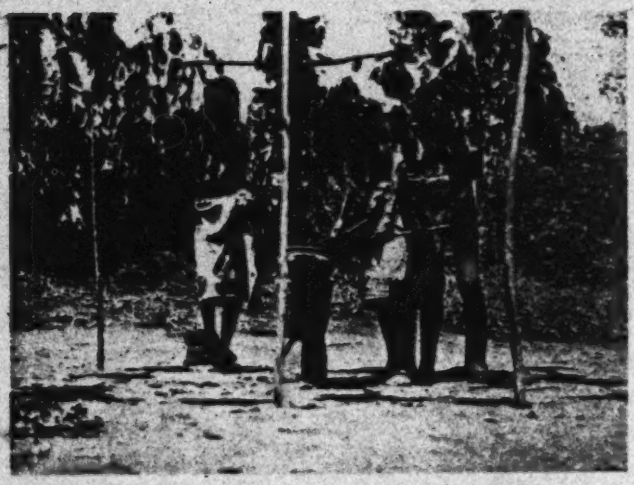


Fig. 1. Alutyakagama ceremony, testing the offering (Unuwatura Bubula)

Fig. 2. Alutyakagama ceremony, the shaman comes to us with an *aude* in each hand (Unuwatura Bubula)

[facing p. 261 b]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

have been because the shaman was an old man who suffered from a severe cough. At one time, instead of picking up the rice with an *aude*, he did it with the corner of his handkerchief. Great care was always taken that neither the *aude*, the beads nor the handkerchief should be put on the ground, and when the shaman wanted to get rid of either of the two former he placed them on the rice pot; at one time when he did not require the handkerchief he tied it over his shoulder, for to place anything belonging to the *yaku* on the ground would be to offer a serious insult to them.

After some time the first rice pot was removed, and a second one was brought. Sela Kaurala squatted beside it and sang, while Naida Kaurala danced with the handkerchief in his hands. One pot of food was for the *yaku*, and one for the *yakini*. The shaman exchanged the handkerchief for an *aude* and danced with that, but soon picked up another *aude* and danced with one in each hand singing an invocation (No. XXXVII). Now he became possessed by Rahu Yaka, with the usual accompaniment of shivering and quaking and pulling at the leaves hanging from the *alutyahagama*. Some grass was brought and put under the *alutyahagama*; this was lit, and the shaman danced on the fire: more shaking and holding of the leaves followed, and then with an *aude* in each hand, which he held by the blades, he approached us (Plate LI, fig. 2) and spoke. He returned to the *alutyahagama*, and, holding the leaves with both hands, bent over the rice pot, and then danced round and in and out of the structure, hitting the pendant leaves. Meanwhile the Rahu Yaka song was repeated; at last stopping at the west side he bent his head over the rice pot and fell back. After a short rest Sela Kaurala put on the *hangala* and danced in the same way that Naida Kaurala had done, becoming possessed by Gale Yaka. There was no exceptional feature in this dance; the shaman danced at one time with the handkerchief and afterwards with the *aude*, and inspected the food, and there was much holding on to the leaves and shaking and speaking in the hoarse *yaku* voice. Before the *yaku* left the shaman he took the rice pot from the pounder and spun it (Plate LII, fig. 1); the second pot of food was brought and he spun that too. After the *yaku* had left him the shaman,

796
535

Fig. 1. Aluyakagama ceremony, the shaman about to spin the pot of food (Unuwatura Bubula)

417
415

Fig. 2. Ruwala ceremony, the *ruwala* prepared by Wannaku of Unichi (Maha Oya)

[facing p.262]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

still dancing, stripped the leaves from the *alutyakagama*, and, holding on to the horizontal cross bar, shook the framework violently in order to drive away any of the *yaku* who might still be resting there.

7AL 535

Unfortunately we were not able to get much trustworthy information about this or any of the other dances at Unuwatura Bubula, as Sela Kaurala, who appeared to suffer from asthma and chronic bronchitis, coughed up a good deal of blood after this dance, and was unable to discuss the ceremony with us afterwards. His pupil, Naida Kaurala, was not nearly so well informed. There were several points which we were unable to settle satisfactorily; Gale Yaku, we were told, were many and not one Yaka, yet Gale Yaka or Yaku seemed confused with Kande Yaka, for we were told that the big *aude* was for Kande Yaka and the smaller one for Bilindi Yaka. Nevertheless the shaman held both when dancing to Gale Yaka, and he spun the pot of rice, which in several other communities had been done by the shaman when possessed by Kande Yaka.

[114]

The Ruwala Ceremony.

This ceremony was danced by the Veddas of Uniche. It began by Wannaku, who was wearing a *hangala* of new white cloth, moving slowly round the centre post of the *ruwala* holding a bunch of leaves in each hand and reciting an invocation to Ruwala Yaka and Yakini, who live on Nuwaragala. He stood close to the central pole of the *ruwala*, and at first faced towards the north, that is, not in the direction of Nuwaragala but towards the quarter whence came the *yaku* who live on Nuwaragala and other hills who are invoked in this dance. These *yaku* were not the spirits of the dead, but had always existed as *yaku*. The original home was on the other side of the ocean in Handun Kaela, the "sandal-wood jungle," which the educated, but not the peasant, Sinhalese recognise as being in India. Long ago the *yaku* made a raft and crossed the ocean, and the sail (Sin. *ruwala*) and mast of their raft are represented by the centre pole (*ruwala*) of the structure of that name, while the streamers represent the "silver" and "golden" stays of their mast.

796
535

Plate LII, fig. 2 shows the *ruwala* built by Wannaku and his comrades at Maha Oya.

796
535
796

The dance began by Wannaku moving slowly round the central post. As he did this he sometimes waved the bundle of leaves which he held in his hands, at other times he held his hands close together in front of his body. As his dancing became quicker and more vigorous, Sina, his eldest son, placed himself behind him, and following his movements prepared to support him when he became possessed. Suddenly Wannaku fell forward assuming a cruciform attitude, his arms held stiffly at right angles to his body and his neck rigidly extended so that his head was pressed against the centre post of the *ruwala*, his supporter bearing the whole strain of holding him in this position. He still grasped the leaves in his hands, and his face was buried in the leaves tied to the centre post of the *ruwala*. He remained in this position for perhaps half a minute, then shaking violently he clutched the post in both hands. It was explained that the *yaku* were in the leaves tied to the *ruwala*, and that thence they passed into the body of the shaman, in whose shaking and quivering person they inspected and approved the structure of the *ruwala*, while the shaman clutched the central post. After a few moments the shaman danced again, this time more energetically than before, moving in and out of and round the structure of the *ruwala*, while he struck at the leaves pendant from its framework with the twigs he held in his hands. His movements became more violent, and he shouted several times. All this was explained as play on the part of the *yaku*, who thus showed their pleasure in the *ruwala* that had been built for them. Wannaku clutched at the side posts and bast streamers, and struck these with the leaves he held in his hands. The *yaku* thus examined the streamers to ascertain if they were properly made and of the right number. Wannaku then danced very energetically, and leaving the *ruwala* dragged Sina to where Mr Perera stood a few paces from the *ruwala*, and shaking and gesticulating violently spoke to him promising him success in all he undertook[1].

[1] Mr Samuel Perera, Forest Ranger, was an old friend of the Uniche community, and it was owing to his presence and assistance at our first interview with Wannaku and his fellows that we were immediately on the best of terms with them.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535
78

Wannaku again danced in and out and round the structure, then after striking the leaves and clutching the uprights of the *ruwala* he dragged his supporter towards an elderly Vedda onlooker, before whom he quivered and shouted as he had done before Mr Perera. We were told that in this case he prophesied success in hunting. After this he returned to the *ruwala*, and, still dancing and quivering, took a streamer in his left hand and shouting and dancing wiped its length with the bunch of leaves that he held in his right hand. He began this manœuvre at the east front of the *ruwala*, and taking each streamer in turn, went round in the opposite direction to the hands of a clock, but he soon turned and went round the reverse way; we were afterwards told that he should have gone clockwise all the time, and that when he did otherwise "it was a mistake." After this he danced round the central post, clutching at the leaves that hung from the roof of the *ruwala*, and at last moving so energetically and violently as to get away from his supporter Sina, who had been following his movements as best he could. About this time Sina himself became possessed, and after a few moments of extremely energetic dancing both men fell supine at the north front of the *ruwala*. Wannaku came to himself almost immediately, but Sina appeared to remain unconscious, even when lifted up and propped against the central post of the *ruwala*, while Wannaku shook bunches of leaves in his face and over his head, Wannaku meanwhile dancing energetically and repeating two words, to which the onlookers answered "Eh-h." We were told that the *yaku* in this way announced their satisfaction with the *ruwala* which had been built for them, and indicated that they were now ready to go.

Then Wannaku stumbled to the central post, to which he clung in a seemingly exhausted condition, partly supported by a Vedda, who had been following him since Sina fell to the ground. As Sina, who had been helped up by another man, still appeared in a semi-conscious condition, water was splashed over him, with the result that he soon came to himself. This was the end of the ceremonial as far as Ruwala Yaka and Ruwala Yakini were concerned, but after a short break another Vedda invoked two other *yaku*, Milalane Yaka and Milalane

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5. (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796 Yakini, who live on a hill called Milalanegala. This Vedda
535 danced in very much the same way as Wannaku had danced,
786 and the few differences noted, such as his less energetic steps, were doubtless due to personal idiosyncrasy. However, he did not bury his head in the leaves tied to the central post on becoming possessed, but shook the leaves which he held in his right hand in his own face, having previously struck these against those pendant from the *ruwala*. After dancing for a short time he staggered up to Wannaku and spoke, the spirits possessing him asking why they were called and whether there was sickness amongst the people. To this Wannaku answered "No," telling the spirits that he had called them at the request of the white man who wished to know them. After this the celebrant again danced in and out of and round the *ruwala*, striking at the pendant leaves. Soon he buried his head in the leaves tied to the central post, his whole body quivering, then he quickly jumped away from the pole and made his way to the Ratemahatmaya of the district, who was an onlooker, and shook the leaves in his right hand against the latter's chest, telling him he would be successful in the business he was about to undertake. This was in answer to a question that the Ratemahatmaya had shouted a short time previously. There was more dancing round the central pole, the performer striking it with the leaves which he held in his hand; after a few minutes he approached Wannaku, and striking him with the leaves said something, and again danced round the central pole which he seized in his hand and shook four times, once facing each of the cardinal points of the compass, shouting loudly as he did so. This was the means adopted by the *yaku* to test the solidity of the structure. We were told that this dance was generally per-
[755 formed in order to cure sickness, and if the pole fell or the
787] structure came to pieces the patient for whose benefit it took place would die or others would become ill. At last with many quiverings and clutchings at the central post the *yaku* took their departure.

796 A similar dance lasting a shorter time, during which the
535 dancer was possessed by Moranegala Yaka, then took place, after which Wannaku, who appeared to have quite recovered

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

from his previous fatigue, invoked Walimabagala Yaka and Yakini. The dancing of these *yaku* exactly resembled that described at the beginning of the ceremony, and is therefore not further recorded.

796
535

THE KOLAMADUWA CEREMONY.

It seems very doubtful whether the *kolamaduwa* as it exists at the present day should be described as a Vedda ceremony at all, though as it was danced by the Henebedda Veddas at Bendiyagalge it merits a description. It is in any case certain that the *kolamaduwa* is not often performed, as the amount of food and other properties necessary could scarcely have been found by one small Vedda community[1]; also its main objects, the curing of disease in cattle and epidemic sickness among men, would not appeal greatly to small communities of hunters dwelling in healthy surroundings. At the present day the Henebedda Veddas make rough chena and herd cattle for the Sinhalese, but the cattle have not yet become an important factor in their lives, and the people themselves do not suffer from epidemics. Further, at Bandaraduwa, on the borders of the Eastern Province, the only other place where this dance was known among Veddas, we were told that they would perform it for the Sinhalese, and that each dancer would be paid Rs. 5 for his trouble besides being given his food. Our aged Sinhalese informant, mentioned on p. 31, told us that the *kolamaduwa* was not danced by these Veddas when he was a boy, and that he considered it had arisen as an elaboration of the *ruwala* ceremony which used to be performed in those days. The *ruwala*—already described in this chapter—itself shows signs of having been introduced from the Tamils of the east coast, though probably at a comparatively remote period. Great numbers of *yaku* and *yakini* should be invoked at the *kolamaduwa*; some,

755
535
177

[1] According to Tissahami all the following offerings were necessary for a full ceremony. Eight measures of rice and two large pots in which to cook it, 10 coconuts, 3 bundles of yams, 50 plantains, 1 sugar canes, 100 betel leaves, 12 candles, 1 lb. sandal wood, 100 balls of jaggery, ½ lb. turmeric, 1 lb. of resin, 4 coloured cloths, 3 yards of white cloth, 4 necklets of beads, 8 small baskets and 8 cloths to cover them, 4 pairs of metal bangles, 1 bottle of ghee and flowers of various kinds.

782

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the spirits of people who frankly were not Veddas, such as Peradeniya Bandar; others, spirits of men like Panikki Vedda already referred to, famous for catching elephants and buffaloes, who were Veddas in little more than name. Others, if Veddas in name, yet behaved like Kandyan chiefs, if we may judge from their deeds quoted in the invocations, such as building dagabas and bringing paddy fields under cultivation. Some of the Maha Yakini are regarded as the wives of such chiefs, and Unapane Kiriamma is in this community regarded as the wife of Unapane Wanniya, the chief who first brought the paddy fields at Unapane under cultivation.

The Kolamaduwa Ceremony at Bendiyagalge.

This was admittedly not a full ceremony. Although the bower was built the correct offerings were not made nor were all the *yaku* invoked, and a disturbance which took place the next evening was said to be due to the anger of the *yaku* on account of the lack of offerings (see p. 125). Plate LIII, fig. 1 shows the *kolamaduwa* with bunches of leaves hanging from the horizontal bars of the framework and a circle of leaves called *kolawgeas* suspended from the centre, that is, the crossing of the horizontal bars. The shaman, Sita Wanniya, Randu Wanniya and Kaira, holding bunches of leaves in their hands, walked round the circle within the upright posts while they sang an invocation to the *yaku* to come to the leaves of the *kolamaduwa*. Soon they began to dance (Plate LIII, fig. 2) with the usual step, gently at first, but gradually swaying and bending more and more they brushed the leaves of the *kolamaduwa* with those they held in their hands at each step.

A basket covered with a cloth had been placed on a tripod in one corner of the bower, and this should have contained various offerings for the *yakini*, including flowers and beads; not having either to offer, a few leaves had been put in it. Sita Wanniya seized this basket called *pakudama*, and danced with it in both hands, then after a short time he shouted "Ah, ah!" and became possessed by the Maha Yakini. When the Sita

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Kolomadwen ceremony, the kolomadwen (Hambolds)

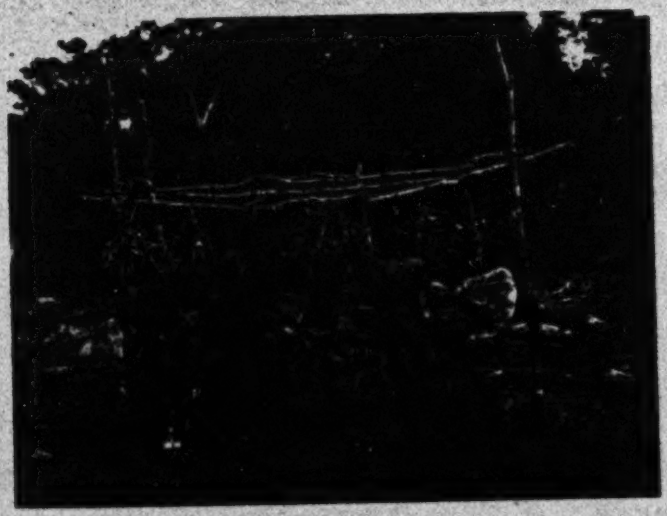


Fig. 2. Kolomadwen ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Hambolds)

[facing p. 268a]

796
535
778

Fig. 1. Kolamaduwa ceremony, the shaman and Sita Wanniya become possessed (Henebedda)*

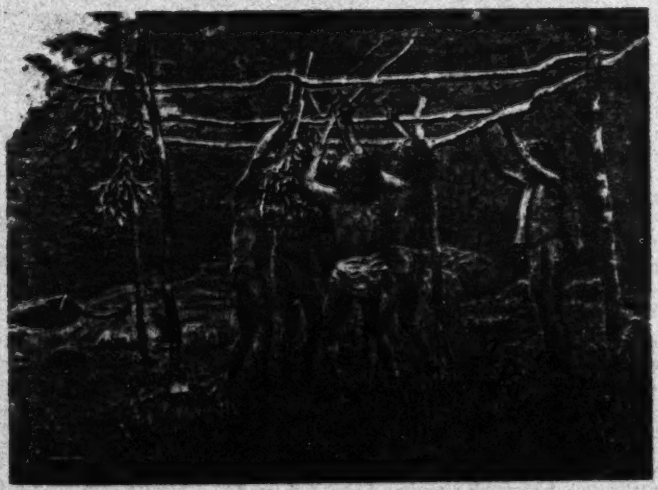


Fig. 2. Kolamaduwa ceremony, slashing the leaves from the *bolawaduwa* (Henebedda)*

[facing p. 268]

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

796
535

Wanniya picked up the basket the shaman put his head inside the circle, and a Vedda immediately made ready to support him if he should fall. The shaman, now possessed, held on to the horizontal pieces and trembled violently, while his head and the upper part of his body were hidden by the leaves. Soon he left it and danced in and out of the *kolamadurus*, followed closely by a Vedda ready to support him. Sita Wanniya hid himself in the leaves of the circle in the same way for a few seconds, his whole body swaying to and fro the while. On leaving the *kolavegrus* he danced about wildly, but soon returned to put his head into the circle again, and then, swaying and tottering, danced up to us, and, speaking with the voice of the *yakini*, said, "Why have you called us? there is nothing in this basket for us, and there is no food provided." Then he returned to the circle, into which he thrust his head, while several men surrounded him and fanned him with leaves. When he emerged he again came to us, and in the person of the *yakini* asked us for bangles, and again returned to the *kolavegrus*; then several of the dancers pushed their heads into it at once. Sita Wanniya returned to us and placed the basket on each of our heads in turn, presumably as a sign of favour. Then the shaman put his head into the *kolavegrus*, and all the other dancers, having put down their bunches of leaves, now held peeled sticks to represent swords, and raised these over the shaman's head, and then slashed the leaves off the *kolamadurus* (Plate LIV, fig. 2). Shouting and gasping, they all came to us, those possessed by the *yaku* gasping out that they must leave; then they returned to the *kolamadurus* and danced in and out, raising and crossing their sticks. This was continued for a little while, the shaman several times putting his head into the circle and all using their sticks as before. The spirits left those who were possessed quietly, without producing collapse, and the performers ended the dance by silently putting their sticks on the top of the *kolavegrus*, this being done to avoid putting them on the ground, as they were now sacred to the *yaku*.

After the dance the shaman cut the *kolavegrus* from off the *kolamadurus* and tore off the leaves still remaining on it, in order to prevent the *yaku* returning to it.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1811
AX5 Vedda AX5

THE AVANA CEREMONY.

796 The *avana* ceremony which we saw at Henebedda may be described here. Mr Bibile told us that he had heard of it having been performed in his father's time by Sinhalese in the neighbourhood of Bibile, and the former Korala of Bakiella in the Eastern Province, a man particularly versed in magic and spiritual matters, knew all about this custom, while on the other hand many Veddas did not know of it. Our impression is that we are here dealing with an original Vedda custom, consisting of an offering of part of the game killed, which has been modified by the peasant Sinhalese of the Vedda country, and again adopted from them in its modified form by the Veddas.

The following account of the *avana* custom records what we
796 actually saw done on the night of February 7th, at Henebedda
224 on the occasion of the death of a fine buck. The stag, which
782 had been shot a short distance from Bendiyagalge caves, was carried to a convenient slab of rock between our camp and the caves and there cut up, an arrow being most skilfully used to skin and disjoint the animal; the throat was opened low down in the front of the neck, one or more big veins being severed, and three double handfuls of blood were smeared upon a heap of *mora* leaves which had previously been laid on a rock. Then six long narrow pieces of muscle called *anda mala* (eel flesh, because the strips of muscle are long like eels) were cut from the root of the neck as well as two morsels from the tongue, the nostril and the ears. These twelve pieces of meat, constituting
796 the offering called *avana*, were put on the blood-smeared leaves
782 for the Kadawara Yaku, who were said to be the spirits of eleven
773 Veddas who were named and described as follows:

Avana Vedda, the first Vedda who instituted the rite.

Lē Vedda, the first man who smeared blood on the heap of leaves.

Mas Vedda, the first man who laid meat upon the heap of leaves.

Buta Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who sent the animal whose blood and flesh were used at the first *avana* ceremony.

Atu Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who makes noises in the

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

forest near the hunter to make him believe that the game he is following has run away. 796 782 773

Bedi Holaman Vedda, the *yaka* who breaks sticks and causes dead branches to fall and so frighten game away.

Kili Mas Vedda, the *yaka* of the Vedda who cut up the animal whose flesh and blood were used at the first *avana*.

Polu Mas Vedda, who smoked part of the meat of this animal.

Melihi Vedda, the *yaka* who blinds hunters so that they cannot track the wounded game.

Ahuru Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first snapped his fingers to call his dogs.

Ihurun Gahana Vedda, the Vedda who first whistled to his dogs to come hunting.

These eleven *yaku* are considered strong enough to kill folk and to send sickness; it appeared to us that the individuals of this group were not carefully differentiated but rather regarded as one power. [753]

The Korala of Bakiella who has already been mentioned said that a leaf cone (*goṭuwa*) containing blood was placed on a heap of leaves with flesh from the throat, tongue and ears of the kill and the whole offered to the 64,000 Maralu Yaku and 64,000 Kadawara Yaku. The leaf cone is a distinctly Sinhalese feature and the ceremony described by the Korala had become entirely Sinhalese in character. This is borne out by the invocation which was written down for us by the Korala. 796 782 177 539

Atu avanā lī dena mantraya Kaḍawāra Rīri Yakaṭa Yakinniṭa.

Vēdāla uwara sīnāpoti bisawun wahansīge hradaya palā bihi nam Kaḍawāra Riri Yakshayā Yakshinīṭa atu awanak aetun koṭu awanak aetun, amu mas amu riri aetun.

Adat mama anḍagusā kaṭa kera denā. Mama yana issaraṭa rahera an munayak gendāiṇ, ellī pāḍu kera dīlā, veḍī wunā id(uru)ṭa kera dīla, awaren giyat (a) marug piṭat wilā, marana pathera dīlā, maessī langaṭa mīden ennā wāgē, hambe hanuweṭa megul aetak baenda palikera wāge, ella pāḍu (ka) ra denḍa Kaḍawara Riri Yakshayā Yakshīgen warami.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AXI Vedda AXI

9116
782
177
539

"The invocation to Kaḍawara Riri Yaki and Yakini, when presenting blood in the shelter (made) of branches.

"There was (on a former occasion) an (open) shelter of branches, there was an enclosed shelter, there were fresh meat and fresh blood for the Kaḍawara Riri Yakshayā and Yakshini, who having guarded (?) the pool of the General Queen at Vēṭiya Nuwara (the Goblin city) became demons.

"To-day also having summoned (you) I present the (same) offering. Before I go I solicit from the Kaḍawara Riri Yakshayā and Yakshini that they will bring a head with beautiful horns (to me), that they will make good all deficiencies, make my shots unerring [lit. present (the game) before the point of the shot], should I get into difficulty that they will overcome it, decree that I shall kill (game), (enable me) to approach a calf (fem.) like the buffalo cow comes up (to it) [i.e. without alarming it], rope a lucky tusk-elephant to the post, as though defending it (?), and that they will make good all deficiencies."

The above transliteration and translation have been prepared by Mr Parker who points out that the written invocation is full of errors, and therefore difficult to translate, but it does not contain any "Vaedi expressions" and "only a few difficult words." We have consulted Mr Parker in the hope that he might be able to throw some light on the matter of the origin of the *ceremony*, but although his remarks are in many ways interesting and suggestive, they do not really explain the origin of the ceremony, though he is inclined to agree with us that the ceremony is of Vedda origin[1].

[1] Mr Parker writes: "The Sinhalese have also some Vaedi Yakas though these have no connection with the eleven spirit yakas of your ceremony, who are chiefly protective. There are also 'Vaedi' Kadawara who are minor subordinates of the Kohomba (Margosa) demon or Yaka. *Kaḍawara* is a compound Tamil word meaning according to a story that was related to me both in Ceylon (N.C.P.) and at the Tanjore temple, 'the celestial who escaped' compression by Siva the Indian god, when he slaped in his embrace six others created by his wife, and thus made them into the Kataragam God Shanda, the Indian war God, called also Kanda Kumara, with six faces and twelve arms."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clear what opportunities existed for obtaining it. Deer and pig would be killed and eaten, and snakes were said to be killed without a scruple though one informant denied that he would kill a cobra.

Time did not allow of any systematic study of the religion of the Verdas, but it was clear that this had been much affected by Tamil influence while yet retaining some of the more obvious outward features of the Vedda cult of the dead. Unfortunately we had no opportunity of ascertaining definitely whether the Verdas have also retained the essence of the Vedda cult, i.e. the belief in the loving-kindness and the guiding influence of the spirits of their dead, though since the leader of the dance seen at Vakarai showed the classical signs of "possession," there seems to be every reason to hold this belief at least provisionally. The dance we saw rehearsed at Vakarai was said to be performed for sickness and in thanksgiving when a good harvest had been gathered. The dance took place at night, the men dancing in relays till daylight, the women squatting on the ground, but taking no part. No food is taken during the dance, but some is placed upon the "altar" *kudaram* (lit. cage or small shed, *T*) which is eaten by all in the morning.

The temple seen at Pellanchenai, of which a rough plan is given in fig. 14, was a building some 12 feet long by about 10 broad; it faced east and the roof was carried forward for a few feet beyond the front wall in which was a door. A stout pole (marked *P*), thought to be some 30 feet long and consisting of a young tree with the bark removed, stood in front of the temple about 30 feet from the entrance. To the north of the pole and about 8 feet from it was a hole in the ground *F*, really a small well containing water, while to the south of the pole and at a distance of about 12 feet from it there was a young tree before which a small platform *T* (*kudaram*) was built, on which a rough stone rested. Some distance beyond the pole and somewhat to the south of it stood a tree *H*, apparently quite dead, with a fringe of dried leaves and small twigs round its trunk, before which were the remains of a *kudaram*; to the south-west of the pole and roughly in the position of *Y* in the plan, a limb of a tree was planted in the soil. The branches

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the inhabitants of Gongolla a primitive jungle village some 20 miles from the coast in the Eastern Province[1]. 776

When the dance, of which we saw a partial rehearsal, is about to take place the inside of the temple is decorated with cloths and the green branches of trees including coconut leaves, and the model of the boat which commemorates the arrival of Kapalpei is hoisted to the top of the tall pole standing outside the temple. If the dance is undertaken in order to cure a sick man, milk is placed in the pot which is supported on the rough stand (fig. Y) mentioned above. The sick individual, and probably the dancers, are fed from this and at the end of the night's dance the last portion is thrown out into the jungle for Kapalpe. 535 755

The dancers should wear a petticoat made of strips of coconut leaves and green leafy twigs of other trees, and it was stated that the ministrant wore these just as did the other dancers. After the dance a number of these ceremonial garments are preserved in the temple where they are allowed to dry. Rice plantain and chewing material are piled on the *kudaraw* during the ceremony and camphor is burnt. Kapalpe sees the food provided and the honour done him and is propitiated. [292] [712]

The stone *pillijar* has been frankly adopted from the Tamils though Mr Kumarakulasinghe pointed out that no sacred Tamil stone was so rough[2]; further, according to the same informant Tamils do not dance round either *pillijar* or *kudaraw*. 177 778

At Kalkudah it was said that there was a special "priest" or ministrant whom we did not see. We gathered that in some way he officiated in connection with the land cultivated by the community and he perhaps corresponded to the Sinhalese *gamarala*. 793

Some idea of the actual character of the ceremony and of the nature of the *kudaraw* and pole can be derived from the dance rehearsed for our benefit at Vakarai. Plate LXX, fig. 1 535 776

[1] Cf. Brenda Z. Seligmann, "A Devil Ceremony of the Peasant Sinhalese," *Journ. Roy. Anthrop. Inst.* Vol. XXXIX, 1909.

[2] This may be true of the Tamils of the east coast, but we have seen some shrines containing equally rough stones set up by Tamil coolies on plantations. Worship may be performed at such shrines, offerings of rice and chewing materials being made at them and afterwards eaten.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-6 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

535
796

shows the site selected for the dance and the arrangements made. The dancing ground consisted of one of those sandy spaces surrounded by a growth of scrub and low trees which are so common on the east coast. A *kudaram*, the upper part of which was covered with leaves, had been prepared, the top of this was depressed so as to present a sort of tray upon which a white cloth was laid; within the tray were laid flowers, which in this case did duty for the food offered in the ceremony. No model of a ship was hoisted to the top of the pole, which was encircled by wreaths of small leafy bunches at heights of about 6 to 12 feet from the ground.

There were five dancers, each of whom held a bunch of leafy twigs in each hand, which when the dance began were held against the body just below the umbilicus.

535
796
787

The leader of the dance was an old man who held a piece of cloth instead of a bunch of leaves. Behind each dancer stood a man who supported him by clapping his hands round the dancer's body below the latter's hands, i.e. over the hypogastric and epipubic region. At first the dancers faced the *kudaram*, their hands being held low against their thighs, but soon they began to move round the altar in single file (Plate LXX, fig. 2). As they danced they began to quiver, the rippling motion of their muscles from the knees upwards becoming progressively more violent, until as the dancers moved round the altar the majority of their superficial muscles all over the body were twitching irregularly. As the dance became quicker the dancers feigned exhaustion, leaning or falling back into the arms of their supporters, but this did not last long and dancing was not interrupted; soon the men left the altar and danced round the pole, the irregular quivering of their muscles being very striking. At times they shouted and raised the bunches of leaves which they held in their hands above their heads. They continued to dance round the altar and round the pole alternately; as they danced round the pole their movements became more violent, the men supporting the dancers let go and the latter now danced and leapt round the pole and beat the leaves tied to it with the leaves they held in their hands. As the vigour of their movements lessened, their supporters, who had been following their

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXX

535
796
291

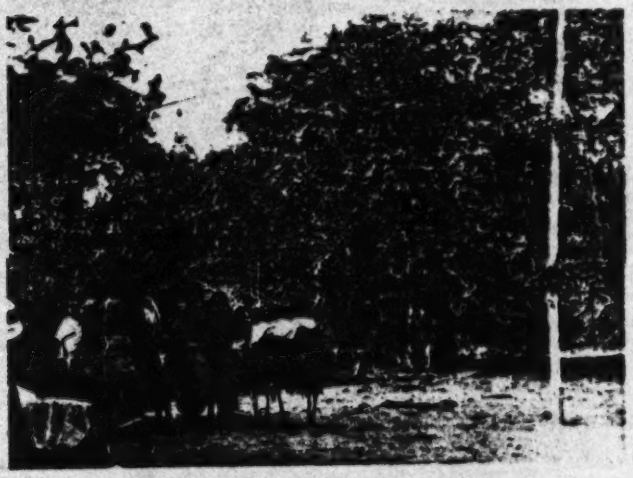


Fig. 1. Site of dance at Vakarai, showing *kudaruwa* and pole

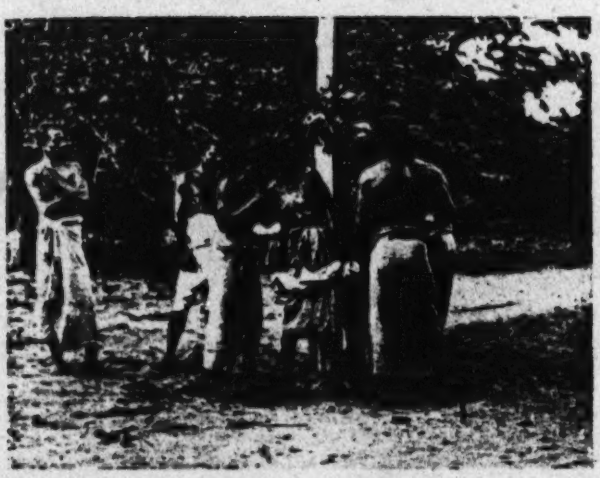
Fig. 2. Dancing round the *kudaruwa*

[facing p. 338a]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate LXXI

535
1796
291



The end of the dance at Vakarai

[facing p. 338 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

motions, once more put their arms round them, soon after which the dancers fell limply into their arms. The leader of the dance seemed especially excited at this stage and, trembling and quivering all over, stood back to the pole and wildly waved his scarf in the air. Soon his movements became less vigorous, his head nodded on his shoulders and hung down on his chest as he addressed the other dancers in a harsh and broken voice (Plate LXXI). In view of the Vedda ceremonies which we subsequently saw we have no doubt that he prophesied good fortune. It appeared to us that this old man really presented the ordinary characteristics of Vedda "possession," i.e. the dance, though only a rehearsal, had produced the customary effects associated with it, and certainly this old man's muscles continued to quiver irregularly for some time after the dance was over. As for the remaining dancers we have no doubt that the dance remained for them as it had begun, simply a rehearsal and an amusing piece of acting.

Such dances are held only to cure sickness or in return for good crops, and it was emphatically denied that anything similar took place after childbirth or death.

Very little was elicited concerning death and mourning ceremonies. The corpse is washed, and it seemed that although this is usually done by a barber or *dhobie* (professional washerman) it might be done by one or more of the relatives of the dead man. The grave must be at some distance from the habitations of the living and also from their cultivation patches. No fire is lit on the grave. A feast is held a few days after burial, which appears to be called *bati bane*, and the food for this, especially rice, is provided by the near relatives of the dead man and distributed. A *kudarom* is built upon which the food is placed for "a short time" as an offering to Kapalpei, after which it is eaten by the assembled people.

This account agrees with that given by the Sarasins, who record that a coast Vedda, Pereman, when asked about his religion "laughed and said they had that of the Tamils, they honoured their dead by cooking rice in front of their house, folding their hands, saying a few words and then eating the rice. As they did this they spoke the name of the deceased and said: 'Help

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

bours' language, customs, and manner of life. In a few of the remoter forest fastnesses of the interior there are still to be found more or less pure-blooded Veddas who continue to support life by the precarious *chena* cultivation and by hunting: but in addition to these pure-blooded Veddas, who are a very feeble folk indeed in point of numbers, the inhabitants of many of what are generally recognized as Sinhalese villages, and the so-called "coast Veddas," who have their settlements in a few places along the eastern coast to the north of Batticaloa, are to a greater or less extent of Vedda origin. The Veddas as a race have been visited and described by C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann [1] and more recently by Dr. R. L. Spittel [2] of Colombo. Of the coast Veddas the Seligmanns say,—"although these coast Veddas, or Verdas as they call themselves, have intermarried with the Tamils and have adopted many Tamil customs, they still have remains of the old clan system of the Veddas, and although they usually speak Tamil, the majority of them say they have a language of their own which they consider to be the old Vedda language, and which was found to be Sinhalese. They have roughly-built temples, and we were told independently in two settlements that the chief agency worshipped was called Kapalpe or Kabalpe, *i.e.*, "ship spirit." At first we feared some misunderstanding, but when one of us was shown within one of their temples, into which after some trouble he was allowed to penetrate, a small model of a ship partly square rigged was seen, and it was stated that at a special ceremony this was hoisted to the top of a pole some thirty feet tall which stood outside the temple." [3] The ceremony to be described in what follows appears to be in fact that conducted for the propitiation of this "ship spirit" and of the goddess Ammal, and, if so, it is that which the Seligmanns saw rehearsed, in part at any rate, at Vakarai.[4] The description, therefore, imperfect and perhaps inaccurate in some details as it may be, being

[1] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *The Veddas*. See also *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 155 *et seq.*

[2] R. L. Spittel, *Wild Ceylon*.

[3] C. G. and B. Z. Seligmann, *Spolia Zeylanica*, vol. v, Part xx, Dec. 1908, pp. 156, 157.

[4] *The Veddas*, pp. 335-9.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

written from memory aided by not very adequate notes made shortly after the ceremony, helps to fill up a lacuna in the hitherto published records of Vedda customs and ritual. 121 796

In June of 1925 I was engaged, as a junior administrative officer, in dealing with an outbreak of cholera among the Muslim tobacco cultivators in the neighbourhood of a remote coast Vedda village, about forty-four miles north of Batticaloa on the Batticaloa-Trincomalee coast road. *Investigation by the* medical officer with whom I was associated soon revealed the fact that the focus of the infection was a yet more remote inland district lying behind that part of the coast, and that to grapple effectively with the disease it would be necessary to evacuate the population of that area and to concentrate it, for the treatment of the actually sick and for the segregation of the "contacts," in the comparatively accessible locality where we had already established ourselves, not far from the spot where the first cases to be brought to our notice had occurred. I therefore found myself obliged, at short notice, to enlarge the camp of which I had already begun the construction, and in particular to begin the building of a new hospital hut on a more grandiose scale than that originally contemplated. For the work of construction, which consisted of the erection of a framework of jungle sticks and the covering of it with *cadjans*,—dried and plaited palm branches,—according to the familiar village method, it was necessary to enlist the services of the coast Veddas of the adjoining settlement. The villagers were naturally reluctant to engage in work which they not unreasonably supposed would expose them to the infection, and it called for much tact and persuasiveness on the part of the Chief Headman of the *pattu* to get them to do so. Fully realizing that, apart from all other considerations, the occurrence of even one case of cholera among them would effectively put a stop to all co-operation, the Chief Headman and I took, successfully as the event showed, every possible precaution to prevent such a catastrophe. Everything seemed to be going on without let or hindrance when the Chief Headman upset my calculations by announcing that the work must cease for twelve hours on the 8th of June, to enable the villagers to perform a ceremony in honour of the *Periya Devi* 123 [131 361] [796 776]

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 [796 776]

(Great Goddess).[8] It was in vain that I pointed out the urgency of the work and protested against any delay, even going the length of suggesting that the ceremony should be postponed. After a good deal of futile argument I was obliged to resign myself to the inevitable.

My chagrin was to some extent lessened when the Chief Headman approached me with an invitation from the people to be present at the ceremony. The invitation was welcome, for it offered an alternative to an evening spent in the company only of a book and of my own thoughts in the solitude of the one-roomed "rest house" where I had my temporary quarters. It was accordingly arranged that the Chief Headman should come to fetch me after my dinner.

The moon,—full two days before,—had already risen when the Chief Headman and his following of village notables emerged from the shadows of the jungle bordering the high road. I got up from the long chair in which I had been sitting on the verandah and joined them, and we set off northwards along the road. After walking along it for about half a mile we turned off to the right through alternate thick jungle and open spaces overgrown with *illuk*-grass, and with here and there a solitary tree casting a deep black shadow under the white light of the moon, in the direction of the mouth of the river which crossed the high road about three and a half miles to the north of our camp. We had gone in this way perhaps a mile in all when I began to be aware of the rhythmical throbbing of a tom-tom, at first only faint in the distance, somewhere ahead in the jungle. I recollect well the feeling of growing excitement as the sound grew gradually louder and more insistent with our advance. Another mile, and the path which our party was following, at that point through thick jungle, took a sharp turn to the right, and we suddenly found ourselves in a large circular clearing, surrounded by high timber. To our right as we entered were the spectators, squatted upon the ground in rows and facing towards that part of the enclosure which lay to our left. Even the fringes of the jungle seemed to be

[534]

123 796

[8] This goddess is presumably the goddess Amma, "who sends small-pox and skin disease": see *The Veddas*, p. 336.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

full of people. To our left was a shrine set up against the jungle wall in that quarter. In a space left clear in front of the shrine stood what can best be described as a sort of "maypole," and between the "maypole" and the spectators was a small area enclosed by lengths of coloured cloth stretched between upright sticks. Within this area could be seen a small temporary booth, with human figures moving about a fire, over which, the Chief Headman informed me, rice was being cooked to be offered to the goddess. 123 796

When we reached the clearing the ceremony had not yet begun. I was conducted to a seat of honour in the front row of the spectators, and sat there for some minutes looking round with interest on the scene, which was lighted here and there by the flare of torches, and listening to the monotonous throb of the tom-tom, which was apparently being played somewhere close by in the jungle. Suddenly the tom-tom took on a more staccato note. Excitement rose among the spectators; and presently, from a gap in the jungle wall on my right and rather behind me as I sat facing the shrine, there defiled into the clearing a procession which slowly threaded its way through the ranks of the spectators to the clear space in front of the shrine. In this procession there were carried two wooden ceremonial swords,* which were to be prominent in the dances which followed. In front of the shrine the procession stopped, and a ritual of some sort, the exact nature of which it was impossible to gather in the semi-darkness, was gone through. [373]

At the conclusion of the ritual at the shrine a red flag, bearing embroidered upon it the sun and moon and two human figures, and another device the details of which I was unable to distinguish, but which was possibly the figure of a ship, the emblem of Kapalpe, was hoisted upon the "maypole." This was, perhaps, the formal beginning of the ceremony, for after the hoisting of the flag flowers were brought in baskets, as a mark of respect, to the Chief Headman and myself. Under the Chief Headman's [576]

*These swords resembled the ceremonial swords (*rau hadawa*) seen by the Seligmanns *only* in the ceremony of the invocation of Rahu Yaka at Sitala Wanniya, (fifty miles from the place at which the ceremony here described was performed), and illustrated on p. 256 of *The Veddas*.

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 796 guidance I touched the flowers in acknowledgement. After this the rice which had meanwhile been cooked in the enclosure in front of the shrine was offered to the goddess at the shrine, and the enclosure itself was removed.

The offering of the rice appeared to mark the conclusion of the first stage of the ceremony, for it was followed by a procession of those who were to take part in the subsequent dancing,—apparently accompanied by the image of the goddess,—out of the clearing and, as I was informed, down to the river about half a mile away for the sacred bath.

Time dragged by. The moonlight flooded the clearing, showing the ranks of the spectators sitting in their places with oriental patience and talking in undertones. At last the procession of dancers re-entered the clearing and advanced to the open space in front of the shrine. Here a ritual was gone through which seemed to be intended to induce in the dancers a state of "possession,"[7] and after the performance of this ritual the dances began.

First of all two principal dancers, wearing what were evidently ceremonial jackets of red cloth, took, each of them, in one hand one of the wooden swords previously mentioned and in the other [535] a bunch of leaves, and went in and out among the people with a queer shuffling step and a curious rhythmic brandishing of the swords and leaves. Once or twice the leader stopped, and laying his sword upon the head of some person in the crowd began to [787] prophesy.[8] One prophecy, as interpreted to me by the Chief Headman, concerned the outbreak of cholera, and was in the form

[7] The Seligmanns, on pp. 134-5 of *The Veddas*, discuss at some length the nature of "possession" in the Vedda ritual dances.

[8] My impression at the time was that in uttering these prophecies the [114 197] leader of the dance used the Vedda language. Certainly the language used did not appear to me to be either Sinhalese or Tamil. It is true that the Seligmanns say, in the passage quoted in the text, that the "old Vedda language" as spoken by the coast Veddas was found to be Sinhalese; but (i) it seems at least possible that the Vedda language may remain to some extent in ritual use among them; and (ii) I am inclined to think that in the ceremony here described the invocation of Rahu Yaku, described by the Seligmanns on pp. 254-9 of *The Veddas*, was combined with the worship of Ammal and Kapalpe, described by

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

of an exhortation to the villagers not to be afraid, as no harm would come to them. It need hardly be said that such a prophecy was extremely *à propos* from my point of view. I began to think that perhaps the Chief Headman was right and the time spent upon the ceremony was not wholly wasted.

The two principal dancers at length finished their dance and returned to their station near the shrine; and in their place ten or a dozen people, with a very old man as *choregos*, danced a similar dance, threading their way among the ranks of the people in single file. From time to time they would suddenly break off their dance, and rushing back tumultuously to the open space about the "maypole" would beat upon the pole with the bunches of leaves which each of them held in either hand, crying "*Wach! wach! wach!*" The Chief Headman, himself a Hindu, gave me the following interesting interpretation of the symbolism of this dance:—"The pole represents Brahma, the Source of Life, and the dancers wandering about among the people represent human life, at the end of which the soul returns to its Creator for a while with glad cries."

Later this dance was again danced by the same persons, led by the two red-jacketed principal dancers. Then the announcement was made that the goddess was coming from the river, and the two principal dancers began a very solemn, ecstatic dance under a canopy. As they danced the excitement grew tenser and tenser and their motions became more and more convulsive. They were firmly held by those near them,—a precaution necessary, the Chief Headman assured me, to prevent them from running amok among the spectators,—and seemed to struggle to shake off the restraint thus put upon them. Gradually, however, their efforts slackened, and they finally sank unconscious upon the ground.[9]

them on pp. 335-9, and that the "principal dancers" mentioned were not coast Veddas, but were brought in from outside. The point is one of some interest; but as, unfortunately, I did not go into it at the time, I do not feel at all certain about it.

[9] The Seligmanns say on p. 134 of *The Veddas*, "Most sincere practitioners whom we interrogated in different localities agreed that . . . they never entirely lost consciousness." After the dance here described the

3:Naish G-5 (1925) 1930 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 It was now two o'clock in the morning, and, though the ceremony was by no means concluded, I had seen enough of it to appreciate its general nature and it behoved me to get a little sleep in preparation for the day's work before me. Accompanied by the Chief Headman I made my way back along the jungle paths and across the open spaces, still white in the moonlight,—with the throb of the tom-tom behind me becoming fainter and fainter as I pursued my way,—to the quiet of my lodging.

R. B. NAISH.

[796 789] dancers lay upon the ground and certainly appeared to be genuinely and completely unconscious for about ten minutes, *i.e.*, up to the time at which I left the clearing.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

own departed; spirits, real and intimate, inhabiting like themselves rock and tree and stream; human enough to pester or assist, to take vengeance if angered, and, if propitiated, tutelary over the Vedda's abodes. It is owing to the maliciousness of these spirits, and less from any fear of wild animals, that the Vedda is averse to travelling alone in the jungle; though, when necessity compels, he will do so, armed only with his little axe. Nor do they permit their women to adorn themselves too much for fear of attracting the *hetha* (devil).* 776

When a person dies it is the *hetha* that killed him; and the *hetha* of the dead one remains by the corpse and haunts the vicinity for years. Hence the great fear these people have of their dead; a fear that sometimes makes them cover with leaves and abandon a dying person, be he or she their best beloved, lest their necks be squeezed; a fear that keeps them away for years from caves where deaths have occurred. 761 [768]

In the course of time the spirit of a dead person loses its individuality in a general spirit world, the spirits of the more recently dead, and therefore the better known to succeeding generations, supplanting the older. A belief embodying the beautiful thought, that we really do not die until those who knew us and loved us are also dead.

The Vedda religion then is a cult of the spirits of the dead; not so much an ancestor worship, though a few names of long dead Veddas, such as Bilinde Yakka and Kande Yakka have a place in it, as a homage to spirits recently deceased (*Nae-Yakha*).† 769 771

The named demons of the pure Veddas are few, and their propitiatory ceremonies but two or three. Nevertheless, a half-Vedda devil-dancer of Galmede gave me the names of a hundred devils, and unctuously expounded a demonology as involved as it was terrible; taking special delight in describing a dance in which men with hideous masks and jangling bells attached to deer-skin greaves, their bodies stained in imitation of blood, swayed great Vedda *audes* mounted on carved handles, and made the forest echo to thundering drum-beats and demoniac yells. 776 796

Of male demons there were:—(1) Tree demons of the *Na* and *Bo* tree; seven to each tree in order of precedence: (2) Rock demons (*Gal-vanniyas*) named after various hills: (3) Flower demons (*Ravathath*): (4) *Bandara* demons; (5) *Vanniyas*—the spirits of four Veddas who were crushed to death in a cave by the fall of the rock overhead; with a shout of "ha" they were transformed into devils. Then there were innumerable female demons, a wife to each male demon (*Kalusalees*, *Peti-hanayas* and *Hanna-hanayas*). 776

From all this it will not be wondered at that the Veddas are highly superstitious, and ascribe to many an ordinary incident of life supernatural significance. It is, for instance, an ill omen to meet a Buddhist priest or Moorman when setting out on a journey, or to knock the big toe against a stone or stump. Should a gekko cry when a plan is under discussion, or a blood-sucker‡ or Brahamin lizard fall on one, the portent is bad. 787

*The Veddas seem to make no distinction between the words devil and spirit, the term *yakha* being used for either; thus *Gal-Yakha* means rock-demon, *Nae-Yakha* ancestral spirit. *Hetha* also means spirit or devil and is, if anything, the more malevolent being. *Vanniya* is another word synonymous with *yakha* and *hetha*. [196]

†The Veddas, by Seligmann; page 30.

‡A species of lizard.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

177 535

attributed to Sinhalese influence, especially the substitution of the mortar for the tripod, the drum for the slapping of hands and thighs, and the introduction of the coconut scraper and betel leaves.

The *kirihorsha* (milk-chatty)* dance has for its object the co-operation of certain ancestral spirits (*Nae Yakku*) in hunting enterprises. The occasion for it is a period of repeated ill luck, which is attributed to the disfavour of these spirits, whose names are, *Kande Yakha*, the great hunter, his brother *Bilinde Yakha* and their wives *Kudu Hora* (nest thief) and *Pol Hora* (coconut thief) respectively; also *Hath-kudu Hora* (seven-nests thief), elder brother of the two she demons. Significant signs in the ceremony are the fine bubbles that form when the coconut milk is handled, and the manner in which the coconut divides; if the halves are equal the omen is good, in unequal, bad.

535 796 [776] [787]

In a clearing was placed a mortar and on it a bowl containing a coconut with two arrows laid across the brim. Kaurala, the dancer, took care to eat no meat that morning. Having smeared his head with lime-juice and his body with saffron, he would have worn a white cloth borrowed for the purpose, had we not dissuaded him from covering his picturesque nudity, much to the disapproval of the other Veddas who feared the anger of the spirits invoked.

[262]

The dance began quietly enough. Taking up the coconut and an arrow, the performer clasped them together in his hands which he placed now on the shoulder, now on the head, now well before him, as he walked round the mortar chanting a supplication to *Kande Yakha*. Soon he began hopping alternately on each heel, making half-turns with the body so characteristic of Vedda dances, and sweeping his arms semi-circularly. Gradually the monotonous song loudened to the drum-beats, and more and more vigorous became the contortions of the dancer, whose shaggy hair covered his face and whose body streamed with sweat. So he danced for perhaps a half hour, when suddenly he became as one possessed. *Kande Yakha* had "covered" him. Shouting the fearful name he staggered to the mortar and, bending over the bowl, split the coconut in halves. He stood by panting, while the coconut was scraped, the milk prepared, and seven betel leaves were arranged around the sides of the bowl, which was then replaced on the mortar with a single arrow across it. The other arrow, with a betel leaf transfixed in its point, was now in the hands of the dancer who holding it at both ends resumed his movements. *Bilinde Yakha*, the spirit next invoked, soon possessed him. The dance was then continued to each of the other spirits, male and female, in turn. By each of these he was successively possessed. With each possession the strange, wild-eyed figure before us, apparently oblivious of his surroundings, shouted the name of the mastering demon,† and threw lifeless hands on the shoulders of one or other of the onlookers as if for support. Eventually, when the frenzy was at its height, he had just breath enough to gasp out the inspired message that the spirits were propitious and success was assured‡. With his forearm he indicated the length of the quarry's horns and, pointing to the heavens, the favourable time for starting. Then, taking up the two arrows and the bowl containing the two halves of the coconut, the milk and the betel leaves, he danced

*Coconut milk is the juice obtained by squeezing out with water the scraped kernel of the coconut.

†*Pana hiyenawa.*

‡*Hoey galgawara magalah alla thenawa.*

535 to all the spirits combined. Suddenly he stooped, twirled the chatty
796 on the ground, and shouting "hooy", fell swooning into the arms of one who had for some time been waiting to catch him. The dance was over. He was artist enough to impart something of his wild fervour to his spectators.

224 The next day at the appointed hour we set out, the Veddas buoyed up with the certainty of success. We had not gone far when Kaurala, who was leading, suddenly levelled his gun (or rather mine) and fired. A fine buck bounded away.

"Cha", he said, examining the spot where the animal had stood; "now why did that animal not fall? So close too. That was the *kirihoraha* deer right enough; did you not see the horns?" When he discovered that he had fired the barrel containing small shot and not the bullet, he fell to cursing my gun.

782 Should an animal be killed after a *kirihoraha* ceremony an offering of
224 boiled rice, with flesh from the head and chest, is made to the propitious spirits. Of this offering the hunters may themselves partake with a view to continuance of success.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

they had been called upon to pay a chena tax as well as 1·50 Rs. per adult male road tax. Of course they were unable to collect this money and they dreaded the ensuing penalty, that of serving on the roads, for should the two young men leave the settlement the old man and woman and the girl must starve, the first being too old to work and the woman a cripple. Their plight would have been just as bad had the young man gone to work on some Sinhalese rice fields in order to earn the money[1].

Degenerate Veddas in the neighbourhood of the main Badulla-Batticaloa road[2]. The main road from Badulla to the east coast passes through country that was once the centre of the Vedirata, and on either side of it at a distance of some 2—6 miles are various settlements of half-bred and degenerate Veddas who will soon be entirely lost among the Sinhalese. Plate XIV, figure 1, represents two men of this class: it is obvious that the young man would pass for a Sinhalese, indeed in spite of his bow and arrows and traditional scanty Vedda garb the condition of his hair shows that he has at least been following a Sinhalese mode of life. It is possible that the whole Vedda get-up may have been assumed for our benefit, though in view of the comparative skill with which he handled his bow we do not think this likely. The old man was doubtless one of the last degenerate Veddas of the district.

Before passing to village Veddas a word must be said concerning the Omuni folk and those of Unuwatura Bubula. Sir James Emerson Tennant, in his work *Ceylon* published in 1859, states that Mr Atherton, A.G.A., in conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries, attempted to civilise the Veddas[3]. In 1838 "cottages were built for them in their own district, rice land assigned to them, wells dug, coconuts planted, two communities were speedily settled at Vippammadvo." A

[1] This is a not uncommon practice at the present day.

[2] This road is only some forty or fifty years old, Mr Warren tells me that "the old road from Badella to Batticaloa joined the road from Alutnuwara. It crossed the present cart road about Kallodi and must have worked its way in the neighbourhood of the present road to Tumpalancholai and so to the ferry into Batticaloa." Part of this track is still used as a short cut. "There was another road from Passera through Medagama past Makakandiyaweva to Mandur; *tuwilans* travel that way now."

[3] Tennent, *op. cit.* Vol. II, p. 447.

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

177 school was founded and two other settlements fromed at
621 Oomany and Villengelavelly. However, the enterprise was soon
797 abandoned owing to the misconduct of some of the teachers. "But," continues Tennant, "the good effects of even this temporary experiment were apparent; not one of the Veddas returned to his cave and savage habits... The other colony at Oomany continues to the present day prosperous and successful, twenty-five families are resident around it, rice and other grains are produced in sufficiency and coconuts are planted near the cottages. The only desertions have been the departures of those in search of employment, who have removed to other villages in quest of it. The school was closed in 1847 owing to there being no more children at the time requiring instruction..."

177 The colony can no longer be called "prosperous and success-
62 ful," indeed, we found it in a state of semi-starvation. Before 1838, when these people were induced to settle, there can be little doubt that they were living in a somewhat similar condition to the Sitala Wanniya Veddas of the present day, but since then there has been a considerable infusion of foreign blood, for it has long been the habit of criminals and others desirous of concealment, to seek refuge with the village Veddas, who usually receive them kindly and accept them as members of their community. Since the artificial origin of this settlement is known it cannot be regarded as belonging to the village Veddas, but rather to a colony of degenerate settled Veddas.

511 Omuni. At Maha Oya three half-bred Veddas from Omuni
687 were seen who had been brought in by the Sinhalese headman to work on the road as they had not paid their "road tax." It was unnecessary for them to plead they were poor and hungry, for their miserable condition showed this all too clearly. Happily Mr. S. W. Woodhouse, the district judge, was then in Maha Oya and realising that while these men were absent from their village, their women and children would be in a worse plight than ever, he excused them their tax and sent them back to
511 Omuni. About a week later we visited Omuni and although we were met with the customary gift of honey to which were added a few berries, it was obvious that the settlement was really short of food and this in spite of a number of families having left some

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *wadia* near the caves, but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves. 342 437

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. 662

The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. 802

The "silent trade" was only a tradition even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. 437

The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantaho*. 276

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*dia lanuwa*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. 582 584 583

Widows married an unmarried brother of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls. 587 831

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane and Unapane *waruge*; each clan had its own set of caves, though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. There were people of Uru *waruge* at a little distance; their status was lower than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of 614 554 [582]

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his potential father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

425 with a hill on it containing a cave called Marulugalge and a
431 number of *Aambare* colonies. He was also given a number of
583 pools in a river in Damenagama[1].

Handuna of Godatalawa on his marriage was given a hill with a cave in it called Balugalugalge. This was handed over to him by his father-in-law and the gift carried with it the sole right to take rock honey on the hill, which was known to be the home of six swarms of *Aambare*. Kalu Hudahandar son-in-law of Handuna of Godatalawa received on his first marriage a big pool in the Tota Oya river.

When Kumi the sister of the Vidane of Bandaradowa married Tissahami, the bride's parents made over to her the hill Rajhale near Walimbagala, upon which there were about ten *Aambare* colonies. Kumi also received Nalle Kotawala, a stretch or pool—we could not determine which—in the Kalugal Oya. They also gave her husband the hill called Kuda Rasahale upon which six combs of the rock bee were known.

When Badapisi married, her father gave her husband Sinam a hill called Bala Attahale on which there were known to be eight *Aambare* colonies and a pool called Adamawala in the Kalugal Oya.

Tissahami the Vidane of Bandaradowa received on his marriage the hill Maha Yakini Hela, upon which there were over twenty known *Aambare* colonies[2].

With regard to these gifts of land we must record that although a man divides his landed property equally between his children in preparation for his death, property given at marriage to a son-in-law is counted as the daughter's share when the time comes for a man to make his final disposition.

When the land belonging to a Vedda group was not defined
423 by natural features, such as a stream or hill, a mark representing a man with a drawn bow was cut upon the trunks of trees along the boundary line. It is doubtful whether these marks are

[1] We believe this was a small stream, and the right to fish in it was not highly valued, partly perhaps because not many fish were caught, but also because Veddas do not often eat fish when they can get other food.

[2] The numbers of colonies of rock bees mentioned in these accounts are probably inaccurate, except perhaps in the case of the Bandaradowa hills, for most Veddas hesitate confused when attempting to count above five or six.

[402]

151 Our observations on Sinhalese, were very limited, but led us to consider that the acuity of hearing of the peasant Sinhalese between the ages of 30 and 40 did not excel that of Europeans, for although a few individuals had a higher acuity than ourselves, the majority fell below us.

ENUMERATION.

802 This is a convenient place to refer to the question of counting. With regard to village Veddas our observations confirm the
184 experience of others that the village Veddas have adopted the Sinhalese numerals, which they use correctly, at least up to 20, but we cannot say whether they are equally accurate when using higher numbers. This facility in counting is not found among the wilder Veddas whose method among themselves on the rare occasions on which they wish to express a definite number is to take small pieces of stick and lay them on one side saying as each stick is put down *ekamai* "that is one." Beyond this the wilder Veddas have a slight knowledge of the meaning of the Sinhalese words for the lower numbers. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya made no difficulty in picking out 2, 3, or 4 pieces of stick from a heap on being given the Sinhalese number; the Sinhalese words for 5 or 6 (though he said he knew them perfectly well) led to hesitation and sometimes to failure in picking out the correct number, while larger numbers obviously failed to convey any precise idea to him. Although we interrogated only two other elderly Veddas of the wilder groups on this matter the results we obtained from them were so like those given by Handuna that we do not hesitate to accept his behaviour as typical of the old members of the less sophisticated groups of Veddas, and in support of this view we may refer to p. 33 on which we have stated the information given on this point by a very old Sinhalese informant. We do not attribute the Vedda inability to count to any lack of intelligence but simply to their having little need to be pretty in the matter of numbers[1].

[1] For further information concerning this point cf. *Ancient Ceylon*, pp. 66 and 67.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 As may be supposed, the vocabulary of such a barbarous race is very limited. It only contains such phrases as are required to describe the most striking objects of nature, and those which enter into the daily life of the people themselves. So rude and primitive is their dialect that the most ordinary objects and actions of life are described by quaint periphrasis. As, for example, to walk is "to beat (the ground) with hammers"; a child is "a bud"; the grains of rice are "round things"; an elephant is not inappropriately termed "a beast like a mountain"; while the fallow deer of the island (*Axis maculata*) are, with the strictest accuracy, called "spotted animals"; and wild boars, "long-mouted ones."*

They use none of the honorifics so profusely common in Singhalese, the pronoun "*to*," "thou" being alone used, whether they are addressing each other, or those whose position would entitle them to outward respect. They can neither read nor write, nor
212 can I trace the faintest vestige of their ever having possessed any literature, in the lowest sense in which that word can be used.† They count with difficulty on their fingers, and so little notion
802 805 have they of time, that it is difficult to make them understand that they are to keep an engagement at a more remote period than the next day.

I have compared the scant and unsatisfactory collection of
197 words, which I have been able to make, with almost all the vocabularies of the aboriginal tribes of India, published in the *Asiatic Society's Journal*, and though in some of them I have found isolated instances of striking resemblance, these are probably merely accidental. The subject is one which requires further investigation: and a careful examination of the dialect, by any one competent to perform the task, would be interesting, although I question if it would elicit more than we at present know of the origin of the Veddahs.

I append to this paper, as a specimen of their patois, a list of some of their words, distinguishing between those which probably

* It is very curious that the Veddah term for the Ceylon elk, the Sambo deer of India (*Rusa Aristotelis*), is "gawra," *vide* Tennent's remarks in his *Natural History of Ceylon*, p. 49, on the tradition of the former existence in Ceylon of the "Bos gaurus" of Hindustan. I have myself heard the "gaur" described by old Kandyans, who have seen it in the mountain forests, as an animal with, as it were, the body of a buffalo and the legs of an elk. And there are many places still bearing the name "gaura," as, for example, besides gaura elion, mentioned by Tennent, gaura kelle—the forest of the gaur—gaura kanda; and there is a kind of grass called gaura manala. It is curious that the elk should be called gaura by the Veddahs, and by no one else.

† About ten years ago, the Government established a school for the Veddahs of Bintenne, but it proved a failure.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

123 We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow [411 carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They 412] were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

621 In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small [342] yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close [163] by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha* [164] *Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and [146] children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

144 Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially 177 the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to 142 Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

411 They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, 524 but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

342 The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry 415 grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

262 Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukkan*† 224 and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of 231 the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food 264 is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in 261 times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few 415 varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months 221 of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *hong*, or 222 *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

515 "How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

● 804 In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we [276] place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

---

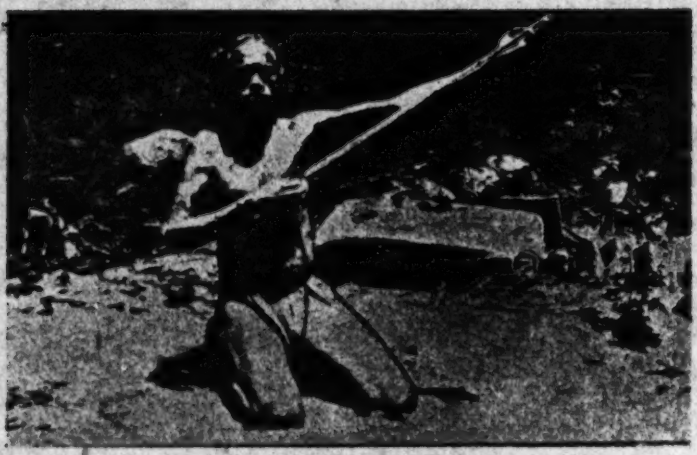
*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

[137] †*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra*, *Hemicyclia sepiaria*, *Schleichera trijuga*, *Nephelium longana*, respectively.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

804
411
516



Method of measuring length of arrow shaft. (Page 76)

411
516

Feathering the arrow. (Page 76)

[Facing p. 75]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

192 As may be supposed, the vocabulary of such a barbarous race is very limited. It only contains such phrases as are required to describe the most striking objects of nature, and those which enter into the daily life of the people themselves. So rude and primitive is their dialect that the most ordinary objects and actions of life are described by quaint periphrasis. As, for example, to walk is "to beat (the ground) with hammers"; a child is "a bud"; the grains of rice are "round things"; an elephant is not inappropriately termed "a beast like a mountain"; while the fallow deer of the island (*Axis maculata*) are, with the strictest accuracy, called "spotted animals"; and wild boars, "long-snouted ones."*

They use none of the honorifics so profusely common in Singhalese, the pronoun "*to*," "thou" being alone used, whether they are addressing each other, or those whose position would entitle them to outward respect. They can neither read nor write, nor
212 can I trace the faintest vestige of their ever having possessed any literature, in the lowest sense in which that word can be used.† They count with difficulty on their fingers, and so little notion
802 805 have they of time, that it is difficult to make them understand that they are to keep an engagement at a more remote period than the next day.

I have compared the scant and unsatisfactory collection of
197 words, which I have been able to make, with almost all the vocabularies of the aboriginal tribes of India, published in the *Asiatic Society's Journal*, and though in some of them I have found isolated instances of striking resemblance, these are probably merely accidental. The subject is one which requires further investigation: and a careful examination of the dialect, by any one competent to perform the task, would be interesting, although I question if it would elicit more than we at present know of the origin of the Veddahs.

I append to this paper, as a specimen of their patois, a list of some of their words, distinguishing between those which probably

* It is very curious that the Veddah term for the Ceylon elk, the Samba deer of India (*Rusa Aristotelis*), is "gawra," *vide* Tennent's remarks in his *Natural History of Ceylon*, p. 49, on the tradition of the former existence in Ceylon of the "Bos gaurus" of Hindustan. I have myself heard the "gaur" described by old Kandyans, who have seen it in the mountain forests, as an animal with, as it were, the body of a buffalo and the legs of an elk. And there are many places still bearing the name "gaura," as, for example, besides gaura ellea, mentioned by Tennent, gaura kelle—the forest of the gaur—gaura kanda; and there is a kind of grass called gaura mannie. It is curious that the elk should be called gaura by the Veddahs, and by no one else.

† About ten years ago, the Government established a school for the Veddahs of Bintenne, but it proved a failure.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

away more frightened than you. A scratching noise under your pillow may lead to the discovery of a scorpion or a centipede. Beetles, moths, biting ants, and insects of all descriptions investigate and experiment with you. But you soon learn to ignore these little draw-backs and drowse to the lullaby of some wood-land songster.

Tropical Nature is a stern mistress; her favours are never unalloyed. For him who would seek her she holds grievances in store, grievances that enhance the very joy they encumber; toning down ecstasy lest it pall with surfeit; giving to the contemplation of foregone experience that unfettered pleasure the reality denies, prompting us in after years to say, forgetful of all the hardships, "those were happy days we had".

The Verugal where it joined the Mahaweli was at this season an insignificant stream. Quite a colony of tobacco growers flourished here. Very picturesque are these settlements or *thethes* as they are called. Four to six huts stand some distance apart in clearings along the bank, most of them beautifully overspread with melon-creepers. Every hut has its vegetable garden; and standing before them, like sentinels, are the draw-wells, usually in couples, that feed the tobacco plots direct from the river. The lowing of cattle under the superb trees that stud the clearing, the crowing of cocks, the sound of human voices complete the atmosphere of rural domesticity in this wild land and furnish scenes which would rejoice the heart of a painter.

Putting up one evening in a coconut grove owned by a Moor we found an unkempt ill-clad fellow seated on his haunches staring at some simple wares a pedlar was displaying. They told us he was a Vedda from a village some miles away. Becoming restless under our scrutiny he walked off. I followed him to his miserable shelter, where I found his daughter, a puny girl of four, covered with ulcers. Edging up towards her father she stared at us distrustfully with the eyes of a startled doe. A few broken pots were their sole belongings. The bond of tender solicitude that united these human derelicts, of no consequence except to each other, was indeed a touching sight. I asked the man what he did for a living. He said he "earned a rupee for two months work". He knew neither his nor his daughter's age, and when pressed for an answer said irritably, "What do I know of age? Am I a man who knows anything about age?" Blessed mortal!

We gave him a coin which he at first refused, and only accepted with persuasion; he had evidently never handled one like it before, for he looked at it puzzled and suspicious; and when the amount it represented was explained to him he was not enlightened.

"He knows nothing," said the Moor vociferously. "Ask him to count six and see if he can. He's a real bull. What does he know? He's a Vedda. For thirty-six cents he will bring a kerosene-tinful of *bambara** honey, and," he added chuckling with subtle satisfaction, "he does not know what thirty-six cents is!"

The next day we saw in the distance the blue contours of Gunner's Quoin, the goal of our journey. The river had now become considerably shallower with broad stretches of its sandy bed exposed. As we punted along the shady border, we suddenly came upon a most realistic piece of ancient sculpture—the life-sized head of an elephant carved out of a

*Rock-bee, *Apis dorsata*

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

back of one of the God's bulls, i.e., one of the *tawalam* bulls, bringing provisions and salt to the temple.

Kosgama Bandar is associated with Kosgama, where he lived in the 18th century or earlier. He refused to pay tribute to the king and from his invocation given elsewhere[1] it may be gathered that he rebelled and was betrayed by an adherent whom he trusted. He was captured, tied to a tree and shot to death with arrows. Kosgama Bandar was said to be especially helpful in litigation and in recovering lost cattle, but in fact he is of assistance in all ways.

We may now return to Panikki Yaka, who Mr Parker agrees with us may safely be identified as the spirit of the 16th century "Vedda" chief, Panikki the Vedda. In the same manner as this *yaka* has been remembered and has developed the characters of a Vedda hero, so we believe Kande Yaka and other hero Yaku of the wilder Veddas have arisen, for it is as a mighty Vedda of the old days that the Veddas revere Kande Yaka.

We need only assume that such heroes were unusually successful hunters, stronger personalities than their neighbours, so that their names were held in honour among a people more numerous than their immediate family circle, to see clearly how after their death their names would be continued in memory and their spirits be invoked by those who had admired and feared them, and by their children and children's children. It is entirely in harmony with this view that Kande Yaka should have become the Lord of the Dead, to whom the lesser spirits resort to obtain permission to accept offerings and to aid their still living relatives and former companions.

No reverence is paid to the heavenly bodies, and our old Kandyan informant knew nothing of any worship of the sun or moon. He nevertheless agreed that in his youth as at the present day the Veddas would call the moon Hande Deyo or Sande Deyo and the sun Ira Deyo respectively[2].

1 "Note on the Bandar Cult of the Kandyan Sinhalese," *Man*, 1909, p. 77.

2 We found Deyo to be commonly used for "god," the proper word for which is *dewiyá*, pl. *dewiyó*; but as explained to us by Mr Parker these words are often altered to *deyiya* and *deyiyo* and the Sinhalese "always say 'Kataragama Deyiya' or 'Deyiyo.' The plural forms are used honorifically with a singular meaning."

1,Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

LEGENDS.

773
538

There is an extraordinary absence of legend among all groups of Veddas who have not been greatly influenced by Sinhalese. Concerning the origin of men, natural features, and things the Veddas seem absolutely incurious, nor do their songs refer to any of these subjects. There are no stories of talking animals or of how their rock-shelters were formed; they have not even a tale of their own origin. Apart from a few accounts of the origin of particular *yaka* and the deeds they performed (e.g. the pig-hunting of Bambura Yaka) the following two legends were all that we could hear though the most diligent inquiry was made.

The Origin of Fire.

773

There was a man who had fire; he distributed this to animals, trees and stones, but a little remained to him at the end and this he swallowed. His name was Wasawatiya. "We cannot say whether he was a Vedda. Because he swallowed this fire we all get hungry, for we all have fire within us. There were men before Wasawatiya but they could not talk; otherwise they were as ourselves. Wasawatiya made and sent the first dog to those people, and the dog barked at them; so that those people feared greatly and stammering and stuttering began to talk, and the first words were *hallakai, hallakai*—'dog will bite.'" Handuna of Sitala Wanniya was our informant and he also gave the following account of the rainbow.

The Rainbow.

[824]

When there is rain there is a "kind of yellow bow" (rainbow) in the sky. One of our women made a bow of wood like it and that is all.

How the hill Yakagala came by its name.

The following story was told by Wannaku of Uniche; a variant occurs as a song at Sitala Wanniya and is given in Chapter XV. Once upon a time two families of Veddas lived

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the huts in the Morane chena settlement at Henebedda. It was shown us with pride by Handuna who said he was keeping it for his twelve year old son. He told us that in the old days the hollow branches, the homes of colonies of these bees, were frequently kept in the rock-shelters. 231

The ladder with the help of which *bambara* honey is collected consists of a greatly elongated loop of cane, apparently derived from a species of *Calamus*, across which rungs of creeper are stretched. In Plate LV (p. 290) there can be seen the bottom of the ladder some fifty feet long, used for training the young, hung from the top of the cliff across the face of the rock mass at Sitala Wanniya. In spite of the fact that honey is usually gathered at night the Veddas do not travel or hunt at night and know only two stars by name. One of these is a star or more probably a planet which often appears close to the moon and is called *pantaru* which, we were told, is the name by which the Sinhalese know it. The other named star appears soon after sunset, always in the same place and before the other stars, and is almost certainly Venus; this is called *irabada tarua*, i.e. "side of sun star." Although the Veddas hunt in the dusk of the dawn the idea that anyone would roam about at night seemed absolutely ludicrous to them (Sitala Wanniya), they roared with laughter at it, "why should one go into the jungle? it would be too dark to see to shoot, besides bears are about, absurd idea," they laughed again, in fact it was quite ten minutes before Kaira had forgotten the joke. 222 417 821 [484] 821 522

MASTICATORIES.

All Veddas chew eagerly, but as they can rarely obtain a supply of areca nuts they commonly use instead of these the bark of the *demata* tree (*Gmelina asiatica*) and the *dawata* tree (*Carallia integerrima*). Concerning the other plants that they use as masticatories Nevill says, "They occasionally chew the leaves of several aromatic herbs, particularly *Anisochilus suffruticosus*, a sort of sage that grows on rocks. The areca does not grow wild in the Eastern Province, but Veddas are very fond of the seeds of the lakada bush, *Gardenia carinata*, a 261 276

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

no idols, offer no sacrifices, and pour no libations. They cannot 782
be said to have any temples, for the few sticks sometimes erected, 776
with a branch thrown over them, are, I imagine, simply to pro- [346]
test their votive offerings.

They have no system of medicine, though they will accept medi- 755
cine when given. In cases of sickness they sprinkle water on the 769
patient, invoking their deceased ancestors to heal him. Sometimes they simply utter the name of spirits as they dance round the sick man. Sometimes a garland of flowers is offered to the spirit who has afflicted him.* They believe in the efficacy of what are called devil dances, but are ignorant of the art of a Kattadia, or devil dancer. I can find no trace of metempsychosis, [775]
so universal amongst Buddhists.

I have now described what is the *actual* religious belief, if it 771
can be so called, of the Veddahs; and it was only by dint of often 174
repeated visits among them, and very careful inquiry, that I succeeded in obtaining the particulars I have recorded.

But, that at some period of their history they had some knowledge of a more "systematized" faith, their charms and invocations, some of their customs, and the very names they bear, seem conclusively to prove.

Such testimony is invaluable. For neither the inquirer, whose zeal may induce him to jump too hastily at conclusions, nor the people themselves, can distort it, or give it a strained interpretation. But this evidence all points to something long past, to a faith once, at least, familiar to them, but now forgotten. At the least, it indicates a former contact with civilization, and proves that they have a history more full of incident than would belong to a race which was always as barbarous as it is now.†

In their charms the sun and moon are frequently invoked, [821]
although in their daily life neither luminary is respected.‡

---

* They invoke the Gal-Yakha, spirit of the rock; Wedde-Yakho, spirit of the chase; Oonapána-Yakho, of whom I have no knowledge; and the shade of their great-grandmother. They also propitiate "Maha-Yakhini", who appears rather an evil personage. It is to her that they offer a garland of flowers. They describe her as a "foreigner", and say that they know nothing about her, but acquired their awe of her from the Singhalese. The Wedd-Yakho is known to the Singhalese; hunters offer flowers, blood, and burnt meat to this spirit, before hunting, to secure their success. Oonapána-Yakho is known to the Singhalese of the Weddiratos, but I do not think he is generally known to the Singhalese.

† Vide Tennent's account of the Veddahs, especially vol. ii, part iii, chap. ix, p. 441-2. "They have no knowledge of a God, nor of a future state, no temples, no altars, prayers, or charms; in short, no 'instinct of worship' except, it is reported, some ceremonies analogous to devil worship."

‡ This occurs in several charms. The following (which, though not 789
known to the Singhalese, as applied to *wild boars*, is identical with one known to them to drive away toothache), not only invokes the sun and moon,

2;Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

English.	Veddah.	Singhalese.	Remarks.
Clouds	Gal périya	Walakula	"Gal" is a stone in Singhalese. In Tamil "kàl peria" would signify large stone or rock.
Thunder	Dewöla andapi	Hema	"Dewöla" (Singh.), a spirit, a demon, a god; "andapi" (Singh.), has cried out.
Lightning	Ginna wetunu	Widuliya	"Gini wetunu" (Singh.), fallen fire.
The sky	Pombäna	Ahasa	
The earth	Bimi	Bima	
Water	Diya	Diya	This is also used for rain, for which the Batticalao Veddahs use "wscha" corruption of "wssa" (Singh.), rain.
Heat	Ginna	Grisma	"Gini" (Singh.), fire.
Cold	Ehna	Sitala	I find in "Notes on the Languages of Various Tribes in the Valley of Assam" by Mr. Robinson, inspector of schools in Assam, published in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journals, the word "yen" for cold, in the Khamti, Laos, and Siamese; and "aiyang" in the Khari Naga languages.
Man	Minna	Miniha	
Woman	Mehli	Geni	"Mehmli" (Singh.), an old woman.
Child	Petji, Kekula, Bilinda, Witera	Lamaya	"Petji", corruption of "pencha" (Sing.), a child; "kakula" (Singh.), a bud; "bilindà" (Sihgh.), young—a child; and "witera", a bud; are applied only to the child-spirits—Bilindoo-yakkoo; has been explained before.
Boy	Amma	Kollà	In the "Notes" before referred to, I find "amie" in the Miri, Abor, and Khari-naga languages, for man.
Girl	Petti	Keli	"Petti" for "penchi" (Singh.), girl.
Father	Appa	Appa	My father, "appa latto"; my mother, "amma latto"; "latto", particle of possession.
Mother	Amma	Amma	
Husband	Hoora	Swamaya	"Hoora" is the Singh. term for that male cousin who is the proper match for a Singhalese girl, viz. her father's sister's, or mother's brother's son. It is traditional that some Veddahs used this term "cousin" when addressing or speaking of the Kandyan kings.
Wife	Nehna	Stri	"Nsna" is the Singhalese term for the corresponding female cousin.
Head	Iya, ecoha	Issa	
Eye	Eyeyi, echel	Ehhé	
Nose	Naya	Nahé	
Hair	Eecha kola	Issa kaya	"Echa" for "issa", the head; "kola" (Singh.), leaves.
Body	Bopati	Enga	"Pett" (Singh.), the side of the body; "bo" (Singh.), great. "Pet" is stomach in the Punjabi language.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

19 metres; this occurred twice. According to the system in ordinary use the position of the letter E used is supposed to be distinguished by the normal eye at a distance of 6 metres, that is, the average sight of a Vedda would be put down as 2·33 times the normal. It is, however, well known that the results obtained are greatly influenced by the quality and nature of the light existing during the test, and comparison with the figures obtained in other countries shows that there is little difference between Veddas and other races. This was confirmed by the results of the examination of ten peasant Sinhalese whose average visual acuity was 17 metres, while if one man of distinctly subnormal vision be ignored the average acuity of the remaining nine works out at nearly 18·5 metres. The keenest sighted individual could distinguish the position of the letter E at 22 metres. 151

Acuity of vision as tested by the E method seems to decrease in middle life, but this although often quite well marked does not lead to any recognised diminution of hunting capacity, practice and knowledge fully making up for the physical changes in the eye.

Colour Vision.

The alleged absence of the full appreciation of colours among the Veddas was brought forward in Ceylon as a proof of their low mental capacity, but careful observations made with coloured wools and papers showed their perception of colour to be extremely acute. Forty-two adult males, 15 women and 3 boys were tested for colour blindness with a negative result. The majority of our subjects matched the wools quickly and accurately, and of those who at first made mistakes nearly all matched a wool with another of the same saturation but of a different colour. This was particularly noticeable in one old woman who picked out the wools and arranged them in heaps composed of varying colours of the same saturation.

Colour names were collected from 31 men and 4 women [823]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

by means of Rothe's set of colour papers and the results obtained in this way were checked by frequent reference to Holmgren's wools. When shown the coloured papers and asked the names the more sophisticated among the Veddas gave the usual Sinhalese colour names, red *ratu*; orange and yellow *kaha*; green (three shades) and blue and purple were all called *nil*; black *kalu*; white *sudu*. However few men used all the Sinhalese names, most of the men making comparison with natural objects for at least one or two of the colours, while the least sophisticated men made comparisons for all the colours. Handuna of Sitala Wanniya compared all colours to flowers and leaves except red and orange for which he gave the usual Sinhalese terms. As the flowering season had not begun at the time of our visit we were unable to test the accuracy of his comparisons with the objects themselves, therefore after the colour papers had been put away we repeated the names he had told us and asked him to pick out similar colours from the coloured wools. This he did, and we found that these matched the colour papers to which the flower names had originally been applied with extraordinary accuracy. This man and others as uncontaminated as himself distinguished the two shades of blue and the three of green of the papers, while those who had mixed more with Sinhalese applied *nil* to all shades of blue and green. In order to test whether Handuna knew the ordinary Sinhalese colour names, we gave him the bundle of wools and asked him to show us *sudu* (white), he then picked out white and the very slightly saturated colours of all shades. For *ratu* (red) he gave all the strongly saturated shades of red, purple, claret, bright pink and brown shading off to yellow; *kaha* (yellow) included yellows and a few pale pinks; *nil* (blue and green) included all strongly saturated blue and green-grey tints, violet and some dark browns; these darker shades he also said were *kalu* (black) and he compared them to the bark of trees.

It was noticed that on asking the names for the colour papers the Veddas made comparisons, likening the red paper to a red flower or saying "red like blood," while the purple paper was compared to a blue flower; the three shades of green shown would often be compared to three different kinds of

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

leaves, whereas the rural Sinhalese would say *ratu* for the two first colours and *nil* for the four last. 151 822

Other comparisons frequently made by Veddas were "like *hatu*" used both for orange and black, a source of great bewilderment till it was discovered that *hatu* was a general term for fungus, a bright orange and a black species being brought to us to clear up the difficulty.

Red was compared to fire, black to the coat of a bear, pure white to coconut milk and dirty white to the wax of the *bambara*. Generally speaking it appeared that the more unsophisticated the Vedda the less he used the Sinhalese colour terms, using in their place references to familiar objects. "Like blood" was a frequent comparison, sometimes used for red and sometimes for purple. Though colours were occasionally compared to bird's feathers we did not note any compared to butterflies. When shown purple, violet and blue, most Veddas said they did not know those colours or had never seen anything like them, and one said the same of yellow.

Forty-eight rural Sinhalese were tested for colour blindness and no case was found. The coloured wools were usually matched quickly and accurately. Colour names were collected from 25 men, the usual names given were *ratu* for red and purple, *kaha* for yellow and orange, *nil* for all greens and blues and sometimes for violet and purple, *kalu* for black and also often for indigo, *sudu* for white. Other words occasionally given were *dumbutu* or *dumburu*[1] once given for black, three times for violet, once for blue and once for purple, and on one occasion when wools instead of papers were shown the same word was applied to a shade of claret. *Illalu*[2] was used once for purple, and once for violet. *Guru*[3] which means mud was given on one 500

[1] Mr Parker informs us "that *dumbutu* is the same as *dumburu* and means a dark reddish purple or according to Clough 'a compound of red and black' and is sometimes applied to the dark rain clouds of the evening."

[2] *Illalu* is stated in Clough's Dictionary to be applied to "a fair complexion, light red, brown."

[3] Mr Parker writes, "In Clough's Dictionary the meanings of *gurugala* are 'red chalk [Pisterite], red orpiment, gold' but '*guru* colour' is applied colloquially to a purple sky." In the invocation to Punikkin Yaka (Chapter x, No. XIV) *guru* is applied to the sky and the earth at dawn.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

occasion for orange and on another for violet; *tamba* (copper) was used for violet and blue, this word was also given for the colour of our hair when it applied equally to dark and red hair. Sinhalese hair was called *kalu*. *Pachha* was once used for yellow-green, this being a Tamil word for green.

Whereas the Veddas seemed to think of colours by a mental reference to the appearance of leaves, flowers and other natural objects, the Sinhalese far more usually made use of colour terms, and none distinguished as many shades as the Veddas except Tissahami, "the Vedda Arachi," whose keen comparisons make his observations worthy of record in full. Several Sinhalese likened red and purple to blood, and compared green with the colour of leaves. Tissahami was first shown the colour papers, for red he gave *ratu* and said it was like fire; yellow he said he did not know; bright green *nil*, blue-green *nil*, blue *kalu*, these three he compared to different kinds of creepers; purple he said he did not know; violet like the small stingless bee; black *kalu*; white *sudu*. He was so interested in looking at colours and comparing them that we showed him several other objects. The outside of a pig-skin pocket book he called *dumburu*, the cleaned and unpolished side of the leather he compared to clay. He was then shown the bundle of coloured wools which he examined at will, comparing and naming those he chose, a grey approaching violet he called *dumburu*; dark greyish-brown he said was like a certain kind of leaf; golden yellow like monkey's fat; a light yellow-brown like a spider's web; greenish-blue like the leaves of a particular kind of yam; a deep claret almost brown he compared to the bark of a tree which is chewed with areca nut and dark greyish-violet to a village potato. It seems that this man whose keen intellect we have referred to in Chapter II had retained something of the Vedda mode of thought acquired during his contact with them in his youth.

[pl] p. 135, but it may be noted that Bailey clearly did not know of the existence of characteristic ceremonies and we have little doubt that the information given him, which he took to refer to demons, in fact described the experiences of possession. The "few stones...with a branch thrown over them" are clearly reminiscent of the stones upon which the offerings are placed.

The *Mahu Yakkho* are the spirits of old Vudda women, the chief of whom is the Mahu Kiriamma, who, as Bailey pointed out in 1889, is more feared than loved, and in many cases is supposed to send sickness. It was said that her name was Anami and that she lived at Ohagala near Ahamuwara, dying of old age; but in spite of these circumstantial details, which are perhaps due to the teachings of Tissahami, neither the name nor the memory of her husband has survived.

Unapane Kiriamma is another important *Mahu Yakkhi* who lived near Unapane.

Unapane Kiriamma also gives luck in honey getting, and it is thought that she in some way causes bees to build good combs, in fact, all the *Mahu Yakkhi* are associated with rich honey from the belief that they especially affect the rocky crests of hills.

Although the *Mahu Yakkhi* are looked upon as the spirits of old Vudda women and are reputed to show their fondness for children by kidnapping them, they are regarded with considerable awe, for they are considered to send disease, and it is necessary to make an offering to them in order that this may be removed. This is generally done at the *Ankumbahan* ceremony described on p. 262. With the exception of the

[1] She is known to the jungle Sinhalese of the Vuddas, who state that with her husband, Unapane Kiriamma, she made the Unapane paddy fields. She is particularly hunted by barren women, and those who have brought forth sickly children, for barrenness of cattle and milk, to prevent cattle being taken by leopards or damaging the crops and to give good harvests.

[2] Offerings of honey made to the *Mahu Yakkhi* are described elsewhere. The belief that the *Mahu Yakkhi* are especially associated with hills is also found among the Sinhalese of the Vudda country, who especially associate these spirits with hills on which springs are found or on which streams arise. One such hill near Bibgala, which at the end of the rains has many small streams running down its face, is known as Yakini Ela and is especially associated by the neighbouring Sinhalese with the *Mahu Yakkhi*, who they say can be heard moaning about the crest at night.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

[pp. 21-33 not processed]

CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE VEDDAS AND JUNGLE SHRINES

And here were forests ancient as the hills
Enclosing sunny spots of greenery

COLERIDGE

I. THE EMBRACE OF THE TREES

13 BURIED in the jungle ten miles north-west of Maha Oya lies the old Vedda
131 village of Omuna. Forest, unbroken by the meanest glade, intervenes
between. At a pool we flush a brace of bronze-winged pigeons or set a-
361 chirruping a covey of small birds; while every now and then the scurry
of unseen feet tells that the woods are live with game. Jungles darken
early; by five-thirty a cathedral gloom creeps to the songs of roosting
birds: the shama throats a rambling lay, the grubbing pitta sounds a
shrill call, the cuckoo wakes, like a curfew, the forest echoes, "while like
a long-roll drummer the night-jar thrills the treen."

It is all but dark when, through a break in the trees, the hill of Omuna stands before us; and the clamour of resenting dogs and a welcoming fire tell us we have reached the limit of an arduous walk.

13 Where the Vedda is, there is the inevitable rock. The tie between them
is intimate. To the life, animal and tree, on the timbered sides of the hill
823 the Vedda is beholden for sustenance. The boulder-bound stream gives
him water, and there lurk demons watchful for his undoing, and tutelary
ancestral spirits. Nowhere is the relation between men and rock closer
than at Omuna; for from the heart of the hill flows a spring that does not
fail in the cruellest drought. Is it a wonder the place has for ages been
144 favoured of the Veddas? But time the iconoclast breaks the oldest
bonds; the half-Veddas* there to-day are not of the ancient stock; that
died out some fifteen years ago.

000 Besides its association with the wild men, Omuna has other claims to interest. Like many another forest stronghold it is the site of ancient Buddhistic ruins—frescoed caves and headless, chest-battered Buddhas despoiled by treasure-hunters. What induced the priests of old-time to seek such sanctuaries as this, it is hard to surmise; religious persecution perhaps, by their inveterate foes the Sivaite Tamils; or merely the claims of austere devotion. Be that as it may, it was in these fastnesses that the light of Buddhism was nursed when it flickered low, till, happening

*There is almost certainly no Vedda living to-day without Sinhalese blood in his veins. The term *half-Vedda* therefore may appear superfluous, but is used to designate Veddas who have intermarried with the Sinhalese and settled down to agricultural pursuits, the word *Vedda* being used for the wilder folk that depend mainly on the jungle for sustenance.

[p. 34]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

triangle bounded on the south by the Gal Oya: on the west by the Bibile-Batticaloa road; and on the east by the coast road. Within this space are found the Veddas of Danigala, Henebedda and Bingoda, besides the few about Kotelinda, Divulana and Serangamadu. If to this tract were added that to the west and north of the Bibile-Batticaloa road, between it and the Mahaweli-ganga, we shall have embraced the Veddas of Bintenne, Gunner's Quoin, and other scattered settlements, and accounted for every Vedda extant—a mere handful of people in all.

Kaurala of Kotelinda was the first Vedda worthy of the name we had encountered on this long journey. He was a Bingoda Vedda of the Morana *warige*, but had spent most of his days at Bandaradua now derelict. He lived with his family in a crude hut in the jungle; his sole weapons were an axe, a bow and arrows. He was a simple soul, laughing uproariously at one moment, and the next assuming that troubled gravity so characteristic of his race. He knew every inch of his jungles; there was no tree, stream, or stone once passed which he could not instantly recognise again. This instinct and the sun were his sole means of orientation. We tried to press him into service, but he refused. "How can I come?" he said, tossing head and arms like a windmill. "I am a lone man. I live in the jungle. I am only a Vedda. If I go, who is there to look after my children? See here, now," pointing to the damaged trees about his hut; "this is what the *botukandas** have done. How can I come?"

Our deviation to Kotelinda was in vain. We had hoped to cut across the hills of Madana to Galmede; but the path had long been absorbed into the forest. We had therefore to double back to Bokkebedda, and thence strike north, through Gonagalla, to Divulana. With our usual ill-luck on this trip, we caught our fifth thunderstorm. It dropped plumb on us and worried us all the way; while in the unscathed beyond, over the treed parkland, the sunset wrought a panorama of opal and pearl, touching to glory the austere peak of Friar's Hood, queen of the distant hills.

*Elephants.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 being eaten by the community. A man becomes a *yaka* directly
782 he is dead, nothing is buried with him and the contents of his betel pouch are used in the ordinary way. The *Nat Yaku* ceremony is held some days after death, one, or according to another informant two, *aude* being used.

776 At Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle neither Bilindi Yaka nor Bambura Yaka was known, and these two *yaku* were also unknown at Dambani where, however, the Belligala Arachi said that Kande Yaka gives luck in hunting. This has been confirmed by Mr Hartshorne's notes, so that although our informants at Bulugahaladena and Wellampelle stated that they did not know this *yaka*, too much stress must not be laid upon this.

The other two classes of *yaku* invoked at Dambani are
776 tree and rock *yaku*. Both send sickness and are invoked with
753 dancing and offerings to remove it, the stone magic described on p. 143 being used to determine which *yaka* is responsible for the disease. The most important rock *yaku* are Mawaragala Yaka, Rerangala Yaka, Barutugala Yaka, and Mehaluku Yakini. The latter is associated with a rock Batugala near Alutnuwara, the others with the peaks whose names they bear.

776 Two tree *yaku* were mentioned, each having a number of attendants. These tree *yaku* are named Na Gaha Yaka (Na tree Yaka) and Bo Gaha Yaka (Bo tree Yaka), that is to say they are called after the trees with which they are associated, and the Arachi pointed out that tree *yaku* habitually lived in trees of the species after which they are named. We could not discover any facts suggesting that these tree *yaku* were con-
[624] sidered to represent the life of the tree.

HORABORAWEWA.

The surroundings and physical characters of the Veddas of
776 Horaborawewa have been described on p. 53. The shaman is
775 the local Sinhalese headman, who stated that the same *yaku* are invoked by Veddas and Sinhalese alike. Seren (Riri) Yaka is the most important *yaka*, Wiloya Yaka and Kalu Yaka are also known, and it was stated that the latter spirit was also called Wangata Yaka. Our informant had not heard of Kande Yaka or Bilindi Yaka, and it was certain that the worshipped *yaku*

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

element as they are in the midst of a civilized crowd. They are different beings at ease in their own forests. I have travelled by night with Veddahs for my guides over the plains and through the forests of Bintenne, and have been struck with their altered demeanour. In their own hunting grounds, they are no longer the scared and cowering creatures I have described. They are "at home;" and seem to assert their freedom. Bows in hand, their axes hanging from their shoulders, they stride noiselessly along, with head erect, and independent air as though they were every one's equal, and had none to fear.

As their chief pursuit is hunting, whether for game or honey, their constant weapons, without which they never stir, are a bow, two or three arrows, and a very small axe (for cutting honey-combs out of trunks of trees), shaped with a hollow in the lower part of the blade to enable it to hang conveniently upon the shoulder. They also carry a larger axe, stuck into the waist-string at their back.

The bow is long, from five feet eight to about six feet six inches in length, rudely made of tough elastic wood*—a bow, which a muscular Englishman would bend with an effort, long practice has taught the slightly-built Veddah to string with ease; and I have seen a boy use a bow which caused me some exertion to bend. The strings, which are exceedingly strong, are twisted of different kinds of bark and fibres.† The arrows, which are about a yard long, are headed with a sharp iron blade, often nearly six inches long and an inch wide, about the formation of which they are still as "curious" as when Knox wrote of them, and if a blade be given them, they will now, as they did then, grind or beat it out to the shape and thinness they most approve.‡

The method in which "they bespeak their arrows to be made, and their mode of barter generally, which Tennent believes *still* to exist among them, have long been exploded.§ They are not

---

* They chiefly use the wood of the following trees, doonoomadala (*stereospermum chelonoides*), the kekala (*cyathocalyx zeylanicus*), a creeper called kobbówel, or the pandóro tree.

† Chiefly the fibre of the niyanda (*sansiviera zeylanica*), and the bark of a creeper called the arelcowel.

‡ "They are so curious of their arrows that no smith can please them. The king once to gratify them for a great present they brought him, gave all of them his best made arrow-blades, which nevertheless would not please their humour. For they went all of them to a rock by a river, and ground them into another form." Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63 (folio).

§ "It hath been reported to me by many people, that a wilder sort of them, when they want arrows, will carry their loads of flesh in the night, and hang it up in a smith's shop, also a leaf cut in the form they will have their arrows made and hang by it; which if the smith do make according to their pattern, they will requite, and bring him more flesh; but if he make

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

262 bears, leopards, and jackals; and all birds, except the wild or domestic fowl. They will not touch lizards, bats, or snakes.*

They can assign no reason for their abstinence from the flesh of those beasts and birds which I have enumerated, but their objection to beef and fowls, though quite unexplained is decidedly the most marked, so much so that during my inquiries, I found that they spontaneously expressed their antipathy, though it required cross-examination to elicit the fact that they also avoid the other kinds of flesh.

They do not scruple to eat animals which have died a natural death, and have (in common with the Kandyans) a decided preference for their game "high"—if so mild a term can describe the exceedingly advanced condition, in which venison should be to suit the palate of a Veddah (or Kandyan) epicure.

They are fond of fish, which they catch by mixing with the
226 water the juice of particular fruits and barks of trees, which stupify them. A similar practice is common among the Singhalese.

Their arrows procure for them the flesh of the animals they eat,
224 and I can find no trace of pit-falls or traps being in use among
231 them. In Bintenne, some of them employ the hunting buffalo to enable them to approach their game unseen.† Their dogs track out the wounded animals, and are also trained to catch the iguano,

Tennent is wrong in saying that they procure birds with the
223 bow. They are not good enough shots for that. They catch them with bird-lime, made from the juice of the bo-tree (*ficus*
[824] *religiosa*)—and also watch them to their nests, and take them at night. Their skill as marksmen is most indifferent, and they never exercise it at small objects.

The most choice food, in their estimation, is, of land animals,
224 the flesh of the pengolin, or of the iguano; and, of fish, the eel.
[262] Though they eat no part of the elephant, yet he is the object of their pursuit, both for their own protection and on account of
[439] the ivory, so valuable to them as an article of barter. They will steal up to an elephant, and, as he is in the act of stepping for-

* It is curious that, while in the Batticaloa district Veddahs are said to eat bats, those of the Badulla district—certainly of Nilgala—reject them.

† The use of the hunting buffalo is common all over the island. The manner in which the animal is trained is curious. When its horns are young and tender, a string is tied tightly round the base of one of them. The pain thus produced is so acute, that the poor animal is easily guided by the cord, and answers to the slightest touch. The ligature is gradually relaxed; and, when the buffalo is full grown, the recollection of the pain it occasioned is so vivid that he will answer readily to a thin string tied loosely to his horn. With an animal so trained, the hunter can easily approach the deer unseen at night. The buffalo feeds; the hunter crouches under his lee; a touch will guide him, and the hunter advances under cover.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

222 to catch the hum of bees, which so instantaneously struck his ear. Their forest life naturally quickens their powers both of seeing and hearing, and renders them, in these respects, far superior to those whose more civilized lives do not compel them to rely on those faculties for their daily food.

They take honey in the manner common to the Singhalese. The bee-hunter enlarges with his small axe the hole in the tree at which the bee enters, and putting his mouth to the aperture, blows into it. This has generally the effect of making the bees fly out; or, at least, of making them vacate the comb, and retire into the innermost recesses of the hollow tree, when the honey can be taken with the hand. If this do not succeed, however, a second puff, after the bee-hunter has chewed some aromatic substance, has the desired effect.

Taking the honey of the bambera (*apis Indica*), a large and
222 very venomous bee, is a much more serious affair. This bee hives
283 on very lofty trees, or in clefts of precipitous rocks. If on a
481 tree, the hunter ties tendrils to it, and armed with a bundle of blazing faggots, climbs to the vicinity of the comb and smokes the bees out, being often severely stung during the operation. If in a cleft of rock, he will, if he cannot otherwise approach it, lower himself with ropes made of creepers, and take the honey by the same process.

To the Veddahs, honey is not only favourite food, but valuable
439 as an object of barter, for the Kandyans prize it greatly for medicinal purposes. They use it, too, as Knox tells us, for pre-
251 serving flesh. "They cut a hollow tree and put honey in it, and then fill it with flesh, and stop it with clay, which lyes for a reserve to eat in time of want."* And when they are short of food, they mix honey with decayed wood, and so eat it. It
261 satisfies their craving more readily than plain honey. Davy properly describes the practice, as "not so much for nourishment as to distend the empty stomach and to allay the distressing feelings of emptiness and the pains of hunger." It is curious that Tennent should have entirely omitted all allusion to this remarkable custom. "Romba" is the term used by the Veddahs, for this decayed wood, and the practice I have described may have given rise to the epithet, which Knox applies to the "wild sort" called "Ramba Veddahs," who, he says, "never shew themselves" —but no "sort" is so called now, nor is the name remembered.†

---

* Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63.

[824] † Knox, part iii, chap. i, p. 63. The wood so used is chiefly that of the criminia creeper (*zizyphus œnophlia*, Mill.), the ettamba—wild mango (*mangifera Indica*, Quin.), the weera (*hemicyclia sepiaria*, W. and A.), the rêna, the noega, a species of fig; any wood, indeed, not poisonous, is used. They reject the wood of the kaduru (*cerbera odallum*, Gaertn.), the goda

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kadura (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

197 recognize a single expression. The following morning I taxed
198 the people with speaking in Vedda language, but they stoutly declared that they could only speak Sinhalese.

In my opinion the majority of the people of the Maha Wedirata are of Vedda origin, but have discarded their
[177 primitive customs as they dwindled in numbers, and while
178] other causes, such as marriage with neighbouring people, tended to still further break down the older customs of the isolated clans that made up the Vedda race as a whole, they still clung in secret to the language of their forefathers, as a binding link and a means of private communication.

115 At Salavai, in the Panawa Pattu, I found one family who admitted that their grandfather was a real Vedda, belonging to one of the clans occupying the country on the confines of the Kumbukkan river.

From the oldest member of this family I obtained a mass of information respecting the habits and customs of the Vedda people.

614 According to this individual, who has adopted the Sinhalese
[553] name of Dissan Hamy, the Veddas were divided up into a number of waruge or clans, each of which occupied and hunted over a specific area of country, and had no connection with the others who lived as separate communities.

The members of each clan were more or less related, and previous to the disintegration of the Veddas as a race, they could not marry any but members of the same waruge.

[462] They lived by hunting, in which only the males took part. Their habitations were caves, and occasionally leaf shelters, but the latter was uncommon.

562 The females were kept in a state of rigid subjection to the
593 males, and could not take part in the chase, ordinary ceremonials, or conversation with any but those who were immediate relations, or the closest relatives of the husband.

562 If the husband was pleased to *throw* some meat to his wife,
593 as part of his spoil in the chase, that was all the woman was
224 entitled to. She could not claim a share simply because she was the man's wife.

291 Under ordinary circumstances, both the males and females
824 were naked, assuming only for special occasions a loin cloth

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Equally they were acquainted with tobacco and betel, for I was shown a place where the Veddas established a toll that was paid usually in these particular commodities. 276 [651]

The dog was the only domestic animal reared by the Vedda, and special names were given to these pets. 231 552

The Veddas appeared to have no knowledge of melting iron for the manufacture of their particular implements, which consisted of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the small axe, or hatchet. Arrow and spear-heads were procured by barter; the method of procedure was to clear a small space round the foot of a tree by the wayside leading to a village known to contain smiths. Here the Vedda would hang up to the branch of a tree a vessel containing honey, or a piece of meat, which would be taken by the smith, who in return would hang up an arrow-head. 411 412 326 439

It was understood by both that the quantity or number of articles required would be represented by the number of parcels of meat or honey. Should the smith, however, take the meat and not leave the arrow-heads that were thus silently requisitioned, he would pay the penalty with his life, or some of his animals would be shot by the defrauded Vedda. [628]

The bow was usually made from the wood of the Dunumadala (*Stereospermum chelonioides*) and of the Bignoniaceæ. It was not always of the same length, as this appears to have depended on the springiness of the wood. The arrow was generally about 4 ft. long, or as much as a man could draw the bow to. The arrow-head appears to have been small, large arrow-heads being for ceremonial purposes only. 411 [824]

Fire was obtained by spinning, under moderate pressure, a vertical rod of Welanga wood (*Pterospermum suberifolium*) on a flat piece of wood of the same species, with the point of the former surrounded by floss, or some quickly inflammable material. Later, the flint and steel were found more effective. One example of a flint and steel was shown to me at Panawa, and I tried to purchase it at the owner's valuation, but I found he was most reluctant to sell. I understood that the flint and steel, a lock of hair, and a fragment of cloth represented a title deed, these being given by a dying man to his heir, or adopted heir, as a mode or evidence of transfer. 372 [824] 423 428

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Mussænda pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
● 824 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 few solitary examples of *S. urens*, but I feel confident that this last is an introduction. *Pterospermum suberifolium*—the Welanga of the Sinhalese—is very abundant.

[824 372 411] The young straight shoots of this plant supplied the Vedda arrow, while the wood was employed by them for the manufacture of "fire drills."

The distribution of *Helicteres isora* is curiously restricted to what might be turned "patches," the largest of which I found at Etmole. *Heritiera littoralis*—the Chomanturai of the Tamils—is scarce, but occurs near Panawa and Pottuvil.

Of the Tiliaceæ, I noticed that the distribution of Halmilla (*Berrya ammonilla*) was not very general, while its abundance or scarcity appeared to be a matter of its easy access or the reverse. This is to be expected of so valuable a timber tree.

"*Vidpani*" (Tamil) (*Pityranthe verrucosa*), so plentiful in the Trincomalee District, is comparatively scarce in the Vedda country. Of the Grewias, *G. tiliæfolia*, *G. microcos*, and *G. polygama* are the commonest, but the first of these is not so abundant here as in the dry zone of the Ratnapura District.

As representing the Linaceæ, *Erythroxylon monogynum* may be taken as an abundant typical example. It is alleged in the Panawa Pattu that meat hung in the smoke from burning wood of this plant, if eaten produces a purgative action.

Both *Hiptage madablota* and *H. parvifolia* of the Malpighiaceæ occur in the Vedda country, but in no abundance.

The bright, but pestiferous, *Tribulus terrestris*, is to be found near Pottuvil and at Panawa, in places where the soil is not too dry, but its distribution does not spread far inland.

Of the Geraniaceæ I found very few examples. In some slightly moist spots, west of "Westminster Abbey," I observed *Biophytum sensitivum*, and in some of the tanks I got *Hydrocera triflora*, but in other respects, except the introduced *Averrhoa bilimbi* and *A. carambola*—common in gardens—this order is poorly represented. The Rutaceæ is not well represented in wild species, if we except the well-known *Feronia elephantum*, *Murraya kœnigii*, and *Toddalia aculeata*. In the gardens oranges, lime, and pummalo have been introduced, but with no marked success either in the matter of quality or quantity

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 It is almost superfluous to remark that the Rhamnaceæ are abundantly represented by various forms of *Zizyphus*, both as an abominable thorny climbing bush, or in the more elegant *Z. jujuba*. *Scutia indica* is plentiful near damp spots, while *Ventilago maderaspatana* is most abundant.

Vitis quadrangularis is, perhaps, the most common example of the Ampilideæ, while *Leea sambucina* is specially noticeable in the vicinity of large streams.

The Sapindaceæ afford plentiful examples in *Allophylus cobbe*, *Sapindus emarginatus*, or soap-nut, *Nephelium longana* (*Mora*, Sinhalese), *Schleichera trijuga* (*Kon*, Sinhalese), and *Glenica zeylanica*, all of which are about equally distributed.

[824 278] In waste ground the creeping *Cardiospermum halicacabum* is plentiful; its use as a tonic appears to have been known to the Veddas.

I also observed *Dodonæa viscosa* in a few isolated places, particularly near Wattegama, but to my surprise its use as an embrocation was apparently unknown.

Of the Anacardiaceæ, if we except cultivated species, few occur. The wild mango (*Mangifera zeylanica*) is to be found near or in the Heda-oya valley, but not in great profusion. *Odina wordier* is to some extent cultivated, as it is frequently to be found preserved where there are fields. *Nothopegia colebrookiana* is seemingly unknown to the people, though I found it frequently. *Spondias mangifera* I believe to have been introduced.

Passing to the Calycifloræ, the small order of Connaraceæ finds as its best representative the widely distributed *Connarus monocarpus*, that appears to thrive equally well in the wet [824] and dry zones. I found it in abundance in some of the driest situations. It is said to be of use for buffalo ropes.

Of the Leguminosæ, space considerations oblige me to make but the briefest reference to the better known examples in a list form :—

Crotalaria retusa. In open waste places.
C. striata. Occasional, in dry fields.
Indigofera pauciflora. In abandoned fields.
I. hirsuta. In waste places and road sides.
Æschynomene aspera. In damp places or puddles.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 *Sarcostemma brunonianum* occurs frequently, especially in the bush country.

Dregea volubilis is also fairly abundant near to Liyangolla and Muppane.

Of the Loganiaceæ, the well known *Strychnos nux-vomica* is most abundant. It is remarkable, in view of its being so common, that cases of children poisoning themselves by eating the seed are rarely heard of.

S. potatorum occurs, but is not abundant. I looked out for cases where the seeds were used for precipitating muddy water, but failed to find an instance of its use in this direction.

Of the Gentianaceæ, *Exacum zeylanicum* occurs in fields, but the flowers are much paler than in wet-country examples.

Of the Boragineæ, *Cordia myxa* is fairly common. *Tournefortia argentea* occurs on the seashore, but is not plentiful. *Heliotropium indicum* is very common in waste ground.

Of the Solanaceæ, mention need only be made of *Datura fastuosa*, which appears in nearly all the more established gardens. The various "Battus" I can pass over, as being common all over the Ceylon low-country, and as probably introduced.

Of the Scrophulariaceæ I desire to draw attention to only one, *Centranthera procumbens*, owing to its presence in a dry country being remarkable. I found it on two occasions only, first between Nangalla and Danakiriya, and the second time about five miles south of Liyangolla. On both these occasions I asked the villagers if they could name it, but without success. Its presence is singular, as it is generally to be found only in the wet zone, or in a country where extremes of drought are not experienced.

Of the Bignoniaceæ, *Oroxylum indicum* is moderately common, but I think there is little doubt that it was introduced for the sake of its medicinal value. *Dolichandrone rheedii* occurs near the coast, near standing water. *Stereospermum chelonioides* is fairly common. Its wood was used by the Veddas for bows. [411 224]

Of the Pedaliaceæ, *Pedalium murex* is common near the coast, and is used by both the Sinhalese and Tamils for a demulcent. *Martynia diandra* occurs on the fringes of villages

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 *Aleurites triloba* is to be found in a few village gardens towards the west, but is nowhere cultivated in much quantity. It is an introduction.

Dimorphocalyx glabellus. Exceedingly common, except near the sea shore.

Mallotus albus. Tolerably plentiful, especially in the west.

Macaranga tomentosa. Occasional. There is reason to suppose this has been to some extent introduced merely for the sake of the large peltate leaves, that afford a useful substitute for plates. By tracing a group of these trees I was able to find one of the most important of the caves on the east flank of "Westminster Abbey."

Chætocarpus castanocarpus. Occasional.

Sapium insigne. Common, especially near rocks.

Holopelea integrifolia, representing the Urticaceæ, is very common up to within a short distance of the coast. It occurs right up the Kumbukkan valley to the foot of the Uva hills, after which it becomes scarce.

Trema orientalis I found to be locally plentiful, but more so towards the hills.

Streblus asper. Very common, and with much variation in the size of the leaf.

Ficus benghalensis (the Banyan of Europeans) is very abundant right down to the coast. It appears in all the old established villages, which leads one to the idea that it was introduced. I have, however, found it in localities where it may have been introduced by birds transporting the seed from the (?) cultivated trees, as the fruits are readily devoured by Barbets and Pigeons.

F. retusa. Very common.

F. arnottiana. Occasional, especially in rocky places.

F. tsjakela. Occasional, and appears to be singularly partial to old ruins.

F. hispida. Not uncommon near rivers and in damp forests.

F. religiosa. Common near any temple. At Kumuna I found some enormous examples, as also at Wattegama.

[824 292] *Antiaris toxicaria*. Rare. I am informed, as stated early in this Paper, that the Veddas use it for making "loin cloths" to be worn on ceremonial occasions.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kukula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botua-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way, we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut
231 stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by
[281 his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
362] open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like
[84] structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[171] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda, half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various frag-
264] ments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291 When Kauwa was young his people wore threshed *riti** bark suspended
[287] from the waist by a *riti* strip. A Vedda belle would sometimes trick
[324] herself out in such adornments as a *riti* collar sewn at the back with
nuga† fibre, anklets of red ixora blooms, lotus petals in ear lobes and as
301 garlands round neck and loins, and circlets of strung wild jasmine round
the hair knot. Difficult, though it be, to reconcile this picture with
the wretched specimens one meets to-day, it must be admitted that
Kauwa had no imagination to run loose. An old song tells of Vedda
maidens whose heads were adorned with peacock plumes.

344 Vedda man and wife usually walk the forest together, and accouche-
ments often occur away from home and female assistance; the man then
[345] does duty for midwife by placing the woman with her back to a rock
and two stones to her feet. For nine days after child-birth he feeds her
262 only on *gonala* yams and the flesh of monitors.

* *Antiaris toxicaria.*
† *Ficus altissima*

5: Spitzel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

4. FRIAR'S HOOD AND THE VEDDAS OF GALMEDE

ACCOMPANIED by Kauwa and a Tamil, we left Divulana to enter upon the wildest part of our journey. The *illuk* glades, so familiar to us for many days, now gave place to jungle sunless, forsaken, virginal and silent save for the cry of a cicala or the rustle of a jungle cock or chevrotan.

Crossing the Amankelle *Oya* we came to the deserted home of the Bandaradua Veddas—Kauwa's old home. It outlay a glade in full view of the Bandaradua rock. All that now marked the place were a cadju tree, that spread its branches in a great canopy, and a few live fence sticks all overgrown with *pussela-wel*, the pounded bark of which the Veddas soak in water rendering it soapy for cleansing their lousy heads.

Late in the evening we were at the foot of Friar's Hood, that loneliest of Ceylon's forest hills, the landmark of the old Portuguese mariners. The environing jungle was sinister with the menace of unseen things. Here our guide had once encountered a gang of no less than six bears, and indicated to us the very trees up which he and his companion had shinned. It was not the sort of place one would care to be in alone; and yet, in a clearing by the rock, a Moor had recently lived with his wife for three years, growing amidst his cassava a deadlier plant,* the joy and bane of Eastern lands.

We camped on this deserted plantation. As it darkened a sambur belled and stamped around us in high dudgeon that his accustomed pasturage had been usurped. The hooded peak before us melted into the gloom, only to stand out again under the stars more sinister and secret than ever. This lonely outlaw, standing away from the herded hills, had survived a race of men. It was there when the first paleolithic ancestors of the Veddas crossed from India, when Ceylon and that land were one. Towards it, and the security it afforded, was the best remnant of that race gradually driven by succeeding waves of civilisation through the long years. To-day around it the last of the Veddas are dying. And yet,

> The hills are shadows and they flow
> From form to form, and nothing stands;
> They melt like mists, the solid lands,
> Like clouds they shape themselves and go.

It is difficult to say where Galmede really begins. We must ascribe to it all that tract of deserted *chenas*, with their crumbling Vedda shelters and *mora* forests devastated by elephants, between Friar's Hood and the Magalawatavan Oya, on the other bank of which stand the few huts that comprise the Galmede of to-day. This place, the port of our dreams, we entered with beating hearts.

The first individual to meet us was no Vedda at all but a Chetty!

"Where are the Veddas?" I asked eagerly.

"There are no Veddas here," he said.

*Cannabis indica.

[p. 59]

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1928) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
591 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *hanawa* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some
[283 six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *niyanda*
824 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *warige*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliya*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other!

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *warigas*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *warige* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and bid his want proclaimed.

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

sticks are easily obtainable from broken branches scattered everywhere. Gama, who was entrusted with the demonstration, chose two twigs, one the thickness of the index finger and about a foot and a half long, the other as thick as the little finger and about ten inches long. Having barked these, he whittled down the centre of the larger stick, and, in the flat surface thus produced, scooped out a shallow cavity, at one border of which he contrived a V-shaped extension. A piece of cloth about two inches square was placed on the ground under the centre of the stick which was held firmly down, cavity uppermost, by the toes of the operator, aided by the hands of an assistant. The smaller stick was then placed vertically over the other—its point, rendered bluntly conical, engaging in the cavity—and briskly rotated between the open palms. The firm downward pressure with which these movements were accompanied, caused the palms to descend the length of the stick from time to time. As often as this happened, the hands were quickly disengaged and re-applied as before to the upper part, and the twirling manoeuvre repeated. This had been done but twice when smoke was seen. Soon a small heap of charred dust like coffee-grounds accumulated round the hole, to escape down the V-shaped gutter on to the cloth. The smoke increased; there was a smell of charred wood. Suddenly a spark was thrown on to the black dust and the rag caught fire. A few dry leaves were collected and set alight. Within two minutes of the commencement of the operation there was a lively fire. When the smoke is observed to come from the accumulated dust, apart from that at the point of contact between the two sticks, it is a sign that the object is achieved. The rag is then rolled to enclose the dust—cigarette-fashion—and blown into at one end, so that it soon smokes heavily and catches fire. 372

It is strange that an art so simple in adept hands (not by any means so in those of a novice) should have been allowed to fall into disuse in wild Ceylon. I have seen refinements of this method; a coconut-shell, flat stone, or skull of a small animal for instance, being used by an assistant to press down the vertical stick, and a twist of bark to rotate it but they were less effectual than the simple procedure I have described. [178]

ARCHERY

322 411

The present day Veddas, we have seen, are poor bowmen; they have, however, not yet quite lost the art of fashioning superb bows and arrows.

The bow is made from the *mahakahala-gaha* or the *kalawela*; the stone bow (*gal-dhunna*) from the *gatawela-gaha*; the bow string from the inner sheath of the bark of *erala-wel*.* [324]

The size of the bow is proportioned to the archer's strength. I have seen one six and a half feet long and as thick as a child's wrist; and, judging from its drawing power, no hand but a giant's could have wielded it. The usual length of a bow is from five and a half feet to five feet ten inches. It is made of a single stave, thick at the centre, without contrivance to give grip, flattened along the back, and tapering towards the horns which, without being notched, are tightly encircled by a few turns of cord to prevent the string slipping.

The arrow is made from the *es* or *velangi*† tree, the wood of which when dry is of remarkable lightness. A straight twig the girth of the finger

*Terminalia chebula.

†Pterospermum subscifolium.

322 is taken, barked, and straightened by being passed rapidly a few times
411 through a flame, and then bent over the knee or between the hands. It is shaved down to uniform thickness with an arecanut-cutter or arrow blade, and cut to suitable length, roughly gauged by holding it along the outstretched arm from the nearer nipple to the end of the middle finger, giving it an average measure of two and a half feet, or slightly less. An arrow belonging to the great bow I have mentioned, measured three and a half feet. The nock or notch is a quarter of an inch deep and cut square.

411 The arrow is feathered with the wing plumes of the owl, devil-bird,
237 jungle-cock, or large crane (*mana hoka*); the owl's, besides being the
284 best, are easily picked up along dry stream beds, on the trees bordering which the birds usually roost. A feather is split unequally down the rachis, only the larger segment being used. Four such segments, about two inches long, are arranged equidistantly round the shaft, an inch and a quarter from the end, and bound neatly down with *aralu* fire, the mouth helping in the process. The first turns are merely taken round that part of the shaft, which is immediately below the feathers, then round the bared lower ends of the rachis, and then carried along, at spaced intervals, between the carefully separated barbs. Should a strand not prove long enough, it is finished off by having its end tucked in between rachis and shaft, and another is similarly begun. Finally the ruffled barbs are straightened out between the thumb and fingers moistened with saliva. A few turns of fibre just below the notch serve to give grip to the drawing fingers.

411 The arrow-head is made of flattened iron obtained from local black-
smiths. It is three to five inches long, of lanceolate shape in imitation of the *na* leaf, and sharp at the edges; serving as much as a cutting implement as an arrow. By a tang it is let into the end of the shaft to which it is firmly secured with fibre. All the strung parts of the arrow,
[824] as well as the bow-string, are finally dressed with the sticky milk of *kiri-wel* to prevent untwisting. Both bow and arrow, being very liable to the ravages of boring insects, are always kept hung over the smoke when not in use.

The method of stringing the bow is by placing one end of it, to which the string is knotted, on the ground, and then pressing on its centre either with the bent knee or by a foot thrust. A correctly strung bow should measure at its centre a span between string and belly of bow; this is rather more than the "fist-mele" (clenched fist with thumb upright) the rough estimate of European stringing.

The arrow release favoured by the Veddas is that in which the cord is drawn with the first joints of the index and middle fingers, the arrow being usually placed on the left of the bow. The style of archery is often peculiar: the arrow fitted to the bow is raised head high; the right elbow is now swung up in an awkward flourish above the head, and then brought slowly down to alignment with the eye, as the string is drawn out to its fullest extent and the arrow delivered.

DANCING

177 The ceremonial dances of the Veddas have been minutely described
536 and illustrated by Seligmann. The dance we are about to describe seems to have been performed before him in its greatest purity at Henebedde. The differences between his description and ours must be

224 descend; while two or three others, with perhaps a dog, beat the jungle above and start the animal, which is shot almost at the point of the guns.

267 224 There is no flesh the Vedda loves more than that of the wanderoo (grey langur). He will sometimes be seen to halt by a tree, and strike its trunk three resounding blows with his axe-head. This is to discover the whereabouts of the wanderoo. On hearing the sound, these animals, imagining it to be that of a falling tree or rock, give vent to the "a-he-hik" so characteristic of them when startled.

252 [482] One afternoon Suthu Banda brought in a great langur slung on his shoulder, with its tail rove through its slit cheek. Within twenty-five minutes not a morsel of the animal remained. Disjointing the tail at the root, he dissected up a strip of dorsal skin in continuation of it as far as the neck; twisting this over a branch, he suspended and rapidly skinned the quarry. The meat was cut up in pieces and placed on large logs over a fire, the flames licking them all round. Bony segments, such as the spine, ribs and limbs, were pounded on a stone when half burnt, and then replaced on embers. The stomach and entrails were slit open and their contents merely scooped away with the fingers, and roasted. No water whatever was used! It was a truly sickening sight to see the relish with which the intestines with adherent faecal matter 262 were greedily eaten. When we remarked on the repulsiveness of it, the gluttonous epicure calmly remarked, "Yes, the filth gets eaten right enough. What of it? It is good medicine. If you get a wanderoo what haven't you got? No marriage is like it." How true is the saying that the pig and the Vedda are one!

226 824 Fish* abound in the forest streams, all bony and very indifferent to the taste. The Veddas catch these, not with rods or nets, but with poisons. The fruit, bark or root of certain trees† is smashed up and thrown into pools or banked waterways. The water is then stirred; as it gets stained the fish become restless, and leap on to the bank, or turn belly upwards stupefied. They are collected and boiled with a [251] little salt and a few chillies and eaten at once, or dried over a trestle 252] like meat.

222 Let us see what sort of fare the jungle trees provide. Of fruit there is plenty in season:—*Mora*, *kong*, *galseembela*, *veera*, *palu*, *damba*, jak, guavas, *ulkantha*, *hibutoo*, *bulanga*, *kothalanga*, *leyaneya*, *karambe*, *madu* never eaten raw because it causes giddiness and vomiting!). The cabbages of palms such as *inthibada* and *kitulalla*. Yams:—*Gonala*, *hatuala*, *hirathala*, *alalla*, in order of preference. Then there are the [261] various barks they chew incessantly to stay the hunger of their long fasts:—*Demata*, *bolvilla* and *thambola*, all substitutes for betel; and *davata* for arecanut; and besides these the barks of *opulu*, *galseembela*, *mora*, *habatha*, *nuga*, *kalawa*, *galkara*, and in fact anything, however, insipid, provided it is not poisonous.

757 752 Their medicines are few. There is *gonkuttudalu* which they crush up with water and apply to the head for headaches; *meelalla-pothu* which they smash up with *chunam* and use as a dressing for wounds; but for abrasions of the foot they will as soon rub in a little sand with

* *Walapotho*, *anguluo*, *lulo*, *katukanao*, *kanupatho*, *antho* (eels), *maguro*, *kungo*, *keheliyo*, *pethy*, *walihondo*, *sethalu*, *badapathalo*, *walihairiyo*, *piniweliyo*, *kovalayo*, *galpandurno*.

† *Kukurumang-gedde*, *kala-mul*, *thimbiri-gedde*, *dhamba-pothu*, *pussal-mul*.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

757
752
832
276
824

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kohomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *hansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *weagalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *mansa-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-haduragedde* (*cerbera odallam*) and *hirinthea*.

276

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *hansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat.

832
539

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams.

342
[178]
[574]

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho,*" he shouts. "*Kiribala, haria, haria, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho.*" A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them.

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

prevalence among the Sinhalese of magic having for its object the production of disease and death. Even the Henebedda Veddas, who have adopted a number of Sinhalese charms against animals, do not believe in this form of magic. The presence of a woman with wasting of both legs and contracture, the result of a long-standing ulcerative process of obscure origin which developed spontaneously, enabled this to be tested. 754 754 753

Although we discussed this woman's condition with a number of Veddas it was only once suggested, and then very doubtfully, that it might have been due to Sinhalese *kuniyam* magic[1], and it was clear that to the community generally this woman's disease was simply an accident, the origin of which they did not understand and did not trouble about.

Though Veddas, and especially Vedda women, are extremely shy there is no belief in the evil eye, or in the danger of being "overlooked." 754

Charms protective against Animals.

The bear is the only animal that the Veddas really fear, and there is no doubt that a number of Veddas and jungle-dwelling Sinhalese are mauled each year, indeed, at least one man in each community that we visited bore the marks of the bear's paws. Bear's flesh is not eaten and we doubt if Veddas ever voluntarily attack a bear, though there is no doubt that they sometimes kill one that has attacked them. Hence, the bear is called the "enemy" and his name is seldom mentioned nor is he represented among the rock paintings at Pihilegodagalge although the leopard, who steals the Vedda dogs and is hated in consequence, is represented. When questioned on the subject our male informants said nothing, but a number of women looked surprised and one said quite decidedly that no one would paint a bear. The words used in speaking of the bear are of 825 [532]

[1] That the *kuniyam* idea was foreign to the one Vedda who suggested it, was proved by the results of further questioning, when our informant gave an outline of one of the commonest Sinhalese beliefs as to the method of preparation and action of *kuniyam* charms. The reference to *kuniyam* in one of the "Vedda charms" published by Mr De Zoysa (*Journal Ceylon Branch R. A. S.*, Vol. VII, 1881, p. 103), cannot be taken to invalidate our conclusions, for many of these charms show unbridled Sinhalese influence.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The words used in speaking of the bear are of interest from this standpoint. We believe that in most Vedda communities *walaha* the ordinary word for bear is seldom or never used[1], certainly this was the case at Sitala Wanniya where the word ordinarily used for bear was *hariu*. This word was not considered a dangerous word to use when all bears were at a distance, but when there was any possibility of coming in contact with a bear the animal was spoken of as *hatru*, the meaning of this word being "enemy" or "adversary." On one occasion when with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya we came to a hill covered with irregularly weathered rocks and known to be the haunt of bears, Handuna shouted *hatru yanda* ("enemy begone") before taking an abrupt turn in the track which here skirted a mass of rock. He repeated this sentence two or three times in a loud voice and assured us that we could now proceed without running the least risk of meeting a bear, and he himself led us round the rock with every appearance of careless ease, explaining that even if bears were about they would have heard what he had said and would have moved away. Two of the Henebedda Veddas exhibited the same appearance of carelessness when guiding us to a rock-shelter which though sometimes used by Veddas had not been tenanted for some time and bore obvious signs of being the lair of a bear. Sita Wanniya, our guide, explained his attitude by his belief in the power of the charms with which he was confident he could put any bear to flight.

825
789

These charms were recited in a loud voice, in fact the last words were almost shrieked and would doubtless have turned any bear, for it is a well known fact that the Sinhalese bear fears man and only attacks when surprised or cornered. This is shown by the circumstances in which the majority of accidents with bears occur. A man coming silently along a narrow jungle track suddenly meets a bear, or disturbs one grubbing behind a white ant heap. It is then that the bear, as much frightened as the man, charges inflicting severe though seldom fatal injuries.

[184]

[1] We met with one obvious exception to this rule, the Henebedda youths Sita Wanniya and Porcmala used the word *walaha* quite freely even in the jungle, and old Porcmala, half of whose face was torn away by a bear some years ago, has been nicknamed Walaha, the Bear. This name was, however, given him by the Sinhalese.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Bailey's remarks on these charms, which unfortunately he does not quote, are extremely pertinent. "I shall never forget the first time one of these Vedda charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation.... I was chatting to an intelligent Vedda at my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms....I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant 'bahagang! wirooowe! wirooowah!' which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success[1]."

A youth, Kaira of Bingoda, wore a number of bone beads on his waist string. He refused to sell these or exchange them for other beads or cloth, and though obviously not desirous of discussing them, stated that he had made them by grinding down the bones of a bear which he had found in the jungle. Although the remains of animals are not commonly found we did ourselves find the remains of one bear which we identified with certainty by the skull which was tolerably well preserved. The wearing of these beads as a matter of personal feeling by a single Vedda, if not exactly an example of magic, seems to us to be an example of the mode of thought from which magical practices spring and perhaps an example of an early experiment in magic, which under favourable circumstances might give rise to an amulet of bear's bone.

The Veddas of Situla Wanniya have no charms against bears or other animals and the only charms directed towards this end that we could discover were a number obviously of Sinhalese origin which we collected at Henebedda. Probably these are not of very recent introduction, for we obtained some of them from old Poromala, nicknamed Walaha. Poromala is one of the oldest men of the community and is its leader as

[1] Op. cit. p. 289.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

261 beautiful species of Gardenia with fragant flowers and crimped
276 laurel-like leaves. These seeds or nuts are astringent and to me resemble exactly in taste those of the areca palm. They are only an occasional luxury however. The bark which he chews is almost a necessity to a Vedda, the leaves or seeds a mere luxury[1]."

[625] It is not always that the Veddas can obtain lime, which they
276 make by burning the shells of a land snail *wantaeko* (*Cyclophorus involutus*). The shells are laid on red hot pieces of charcoal, more glowing embers are heaped around and upon them, and the whole is fanned with a tuft of green leaves for a few minutes, when the embers surrounding the shells are raked away and the shells allowed to cool before being crushed and dropped into the vessel in which the lime is carried. This is
[415] often a tin match box or it may be a brass covered cartridge case. Specially made lime spatulae do not exist, but one Vedda of Henebedda had a long broad nail with which he removed the lime from his tin match box.

The betel pouch is usually a roughly sewn bag of trade
276 cloth, but the Henebedda Veddas also make pouches of monkey
415 skin, one of which is shown in Plate LXVII. We omitted to inquire how the hair was removed, but probably it was singed off, the whole skin being subsequently scraped.

[1] *Op. cit.* Vol. I. p. 191.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

ward, shoot their long-bladed arrows in the soft fleshy part under the forearm, and so disable him.* 224

They have a great dread of meeting elephants at night, and have charms to protect them from them—not only to turn them from their path, but to render innoxious the bear, the leopard, and the wild boar. And I must here record, that they are the only charms I have entire faith in. 825 789

I never shall forget the first time one of these Veddah charms was recited for my edification. It was midnight; I was in the heart of a dense and gloomy forest, twenty miles from any habitation. The moon had not quite risen, and the stems of the trees and the gigantic pendent creepers were flickering in the uncertain light cast by the torches, which my Veddah guides, gliding through the forest, bore before me. I was chatting to an intelligent Veddah by my side and then learnt for the first time, that they had charms, having been till then, like Tennent, ignorant of the fact.† I begged him to recite one—and, in an instant, the forest re-echoed with such unearthly yells, that I felt he would be a bold bear indeed, whose heart did not die within him, and whose legs did not carry him far out of hearing of the repeated and discordant "behegang! wirooowee! wiroowah!" which formed the burden of the charm. Of its perfect efficacy, my friend had no doubt; nor indeed had I, but he was rather huffed when I suggested that the mere noise may have had something to do with its success.‡

Honey, and the grub in the comb, before it becomes the bee, are both staple food with the Veddahs, and their acuteness in discovering hives, when bee-hunting, is very remarkable. I have seen a Veddah stealing through the forest, suddenly stop—listen for an instant with uplifted hand—dart off into the jungle and return in an incredibly short space of time with a fresh honey-comb; while I have been in vain endeavouring 222 [262]

* This fact I established beyond a doubt. I questioned many Veddahs on that practice, which Knox treats as a fable, p. 63, viz., striking an axe into the sole of an elephant's foot; and I was assured by several that, though they never practise it themselves, the Veddahs of Batticaloa do, and that they even hamstring elephants. To those who know the pluck and dexterity of the professed elephant catchers in the north of the island, there is nothing extraordinary or incredible in a Veddah approaching sufficiently close to an elephant to wound his foot or to hamstring him. But I have inquired, and cannot satisfactorily establish the truth of the statement; and I confess that I am inclined to doubt their physical power to do either.

† Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 448, 2nd edit.

‡ Tennent, vol. i, part ii, chap. i, p. 139, gives a lamentable account of the inefficacy of a charm for bears. I dare say the unhappy moorman there mentioned would have been more fortunate had he known the Veddah charm. The Singhalese have charms for the same purpose; but they differ from those of the Veddahs. [171]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

Vela was an interesting little chap and, unlike the others, had always [157] something to say for himself. He entertained us with charms, pleasing 776 lullabies, and songs of rock and stream demons that came as fast as *na* leaves shaken by the wind, in the guise of bears, their mouths adrip with human blood. These he sang despite warnings from the others [325] who reminded him that he had sucked a chicken bone, which was a dangerous thing to do before invoking devils lest it invite their anger.

Coming to a pool, brown with decaying leaves, we asked if the water 312 was good. "Very good," said a Vedda, adding the epicurean touch, "Those fallen flowers floating there make the water sweet; they are the flowers that give good honey."

It was high noon when Veddas left us to go in search of food. But 186 Vela lingered to tell us of the oppression of the local headman. Did they but catch a young deer or pea-chick that came their way they were prosecuted. The visiting apothecary too was bad; he gave them no medicines except for gifts of honey or meat; and the poor fellows had little enough for themselves.

Having visited a cave containing the battered remains of an old 621 Buddha, we continued our circuit of the rock; and after a walk of an 342 hour and a half under a burning sky, came to the Veddas of the *Kudda Ulpotha*. These had no huts of any sort, but merely sat grouped in 222 families under various trees. It was the season of the *kong* fruit, of 252 which there was plenty about. Women were boiling down the luscious 757 pulp with which to make cakes, or extracting from the seeds an oil 262 said to be good for sores and wounds. Very fond of the fruit they all 164 were; it had been their only sustenance for days. One little urchin, his mouth be-ringed with parangi ulcers, was licking clean a coconut shell containing the acrid juice, with a relish worthy of a tastier dish.

The patriarch of the settlement, Naida, and his wife were typical [622] Veddas; but here again most of the others showed Tamil admixture. 222 One man had a large scar across his face. The manner he came by it illustrates well the aggressiveness of the little Ceylon sloth-bear. When out collecting honey he saw a she-bear and her cub. Realizing the certain disaster of such an encounter he cautiously climbed a tree; but [481] in doing so snapped a twig and gave himself away. With a series of blood-curdling cries she charged him, and clambering up the tree, bit and clawed him severely. A large flap was torn from his face. This [757] his father sewed up with a thorn and fibre, and doctored with a result that might have done credit to any surgeon. Living as they invariably do in the neighbourhood of rocks, and having kindred tastes in honey, yams, and fruit, the Veddas and bears often encounter each other, as the ugly scars on many of the men testify.

As, footsore and tired, we rounded the southern end of the rock towards 222 evening, we met parties of Veddas returning with basketfuls of *kong* fruit. One youth was up a tree making the jungle ring to his song as he beat down the berries. As it darkened we reached Manampitiya, but not before we had worried a blind old owl that had descended to a streamlet to quench its thirst.

It is hard to forget that first experience of the Veddas in their homes: 000 those voices in the jungle, that sight of their huts among the trees, and of their women roasting dainty little flowers for food.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca.1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

with men astride them, bows fitted with tridentate arrows, and all manner of cabalastic signs. Many an interesting discovery awaits here the spade of the antiquary. 172

How different is the appeal of ruins buried in the remote forest, in the setting with which Time and Nature have invested them, from those set out in the trim nudity of archaeologic display with tourist-ridden roads leading up to them.

Leaving Dolagalwella we turned up north, and soon entered the first of a series of great parklands we were now to traverse. These fine shooting grounds were probably centuries ago flourishing fields of paddy, fed by large artificial tanks, the crumbling embankments of which often outlie the glades. This is why, perhaps, the best game country in Ceylon to-day is to be found in the precincts of old kingdoms such as those of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. 000

We had put up for the night on a river bed many miles from the nearest settlement, when, to our surprise, a man armed with bow and arrows walked into camp. Approaching us without the least diffidence, he tapped us familiarly on the chest and looked us up and down appraisingly, speaking an incomprehensible jargon. Kombua, he happened to be, a Vedda of Dambana, a score of miles away. He affected ignorance of Sinhalese, and maintained the farce all the time he was with us; but if we wanted evidence that he was imposter in this, we had it the next morning when our cook accidentally dropped an ember on him: "This devil wants to burn me," he said in excellent Sinhalese, taken off his guard. A picturesque fellow was old Kombua, spare, sparse-bearded and beady-eyed. From his gaping ear-holes dangled loosely doubled strings of white beads. In a small bundle knotted round his waist was his baggage, and let into his waist-string was a small axe. He was alertness itself as he guided us the following day. His deep-set eyes took in everything. The flick of a leaf would petrify him on the instant, often with foot uplifted like a startled retriever; the faintest hum and he would search aloft, for honey is food to the Vedda. 609 [191] 142 301 412

The glades teemed with nesting green-pigeons. From many a low bough we started a bird, to discover its clutch of white eggs showing through the meagre nest. I was manoeuvring to add a couple of imperial pigeons to our menu, when of a sudden there was a flutter at my elbow and a jungle hen floated away into the cover of the bordering scrub. I had but to turn my head to discover her mottled eggs in a charred stump. The twigs and creepers about the nest gave it just that air of negligence that was its sole concealment. I debated with my companion as to the freshness of our find. "Oh, they contain young ones right enough; just feel how heavy they are," he said taking an egg in his hand with an air of expertness that disguised a tender heart. I had no pretensions to such skill, but knowing that a jungle hen lays some six to a dozen eggs and seeing that here were only three, decided to rob them, and justifiably as it turned out when we enjoyed them with bacon the following morning. 000

Coming to a stream we heard, closer than we had ever done before, the melodious mocking of that elusive cuckoo, *cuculus micropterus*. I asked Kombua to show it to me. "He cannot be seen," was the confident assertion of a Sinhalese. The Vedda awaited a repetition of the note, then peered into the dense foliage of a tall tree and in a trice was pointing 136 825

5: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 136 to something; but it was long before I saw the bird, a veritable leaf
825 among the leaves and more motionless than they.

The hilly jungles of central Ceylon echo, during certain seasons of the year, to this bird's incessant cry, the popular onomatopoeic renderings of which are, in English, "Captain Philpotts" and "Bring the tappal" and in Sinhalese "*Botuahappan*." Most people have heard, but very
S few seen, the shy author of these dolorous notes. There is a gruesome
539 story associated with the bird:—A Sinhalese king once asked his dhoby, in order to test his marital fidelity, whether he would cut his wife's neck and bring him her head! "Oh! king," said the man falling at the monarch's feet, "even if you behead me I cannot do such a thing." The following day the king called up the dhoby's wife and made a similar request of her. She replied that she would do it. Going home she helped her husband with his bath, rubbed boiled limes on his head, and cooked him a good meal. Like a good wife she asked him to lay his head on her lap where he soon fell asleep. Then, with a knife she had in readiness, she cut his throat; and severing his neck, put the head into a pot, covered it with a cloth and carried it to the king. On the way she met a man who, singing, asked her, "What do you carry in the pot on your head?"

"I am taking *mee ambu** to the king," answered the woman.

"Why cover it so carefully?" sang he.

"If I take them uncovered, wayfarers will ask me for them," she replied. "It is on a fine journey I go."

When she brought her gift to the king, he was incensed at her cruelty, and ordered her head to be struck off instantly. Ever after, has she gone about in the form of this bird, crying *botua-happan* (cut the throat), as her one refrain.

While making our way through a tree-studded glade, we surprised two men carrying sacks of dried meat on their shoulders; through rents in the bags peeped unsavoury scraps of sambur, monkey and pig. Their first impulse on seeing us was to escape; for to shoot sambur legitimately, gun and game licences are necessary; and what money have they for these, who have barely the wherewithal to purchase the ammunition for their ramshackle muzzle-loaders.

V When we camped, Kombua regaled us with Vedda songs of questionable
533 taste chanted rapidly in a high nasal monotone, lengthened indefinitely by endless repetition, and accompanied in the last staves with a clapping
V of hands. To the suggestion that he should show his skill in archery he
411 responded with alacrity; jumping up, he seized his weapons as if confident of skill. A fragment of paper, six inches square, placed fifteen paces away, was the mark. At the word he loosed his arrow. A clean miss! He walked up to the target and dashed it down in dudgeon, and nothing would induce him to shoot again. Archery is a lost art to the Veddas, though they still have considerable skill in fashioning bows and arrows. Jungles that echo to guns are no places for bowmen.

V Kombua's farewell was as bizarre as his greeting of us. Tossing head
576 and hands in the direction we were taking, and tapping us on the chest, he wished us good going in tones more peremptory than complaisant.

V Quite a number of our carriers were half-Veddas. There was one whose
515 constant occupation was to run his fingers comb-fashion through his upstanding hair scraping out vermin. His expression was of that thoughtful seriousness which is the surest mark of profound vaculty.

*A species of mango.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

3. A VEDDA OF DIVULANA

DIVULANA was recompense for our toil. The irrigation bungalow, placed high above the bund, over-looked the beautiful hill-encircled tank, whose glassy surface was broken by stones and snags on which cormorants and darters sunned.

Two miles within the forest lived Naga-Kauwa, a witless dwarf of fifty, the sole Vedda of Divulana. Born in Kovil Vannami, he came as a child to the Rasagala caves, of which in their best day his people occupied four or five. Now he and his family alone survived. Three years ago he had abandoned cave life for that of the *chena*; and there we found him amidst his cassava and the tender teak he nursed for a consideration from Government.

His stalwart sons—quite unlike the father—brought us some yams, a mouse deer and a primitive drum—the broken-off rim of an earthen pot covered with wanderoo skin and fitted with a taut fibre.

Kauwa's hut was a thing to behold. The Tamils had said, "See Kauwa, this is the way to build a house"; and Kauwa had built this crazy thing a child of twelve might have bettered. The thatch was a medley of dry grass and bark; the walls were of wattle, which stuck out untrimmed through the roof, and bark slats so poorly fitted together that there was more aperture than cover. The structure was no more than four-foot square and two-storied at that; merely a covered trestle three feet off the ground. In the lower floor his wife and children lay huddled like rats; on the upper, its irregularities smoothed with bundles of rush (primary elements of a mat), the lord and master slept. Such was the caveman's first attempt at fashioning an abode. By the entrance was a fireplace, and, scattered about, were the bones of monkeys and monitor lizards and the carapaces of tortoises that had served for food. Stuck in the roof was a broken comb of buffalo horn, true touch of civilisation, for the test of a real Vedda is that his hair must be stranger to a comb.

Getting information from Kauwa was like squeezing water out of a stone; he could no more describe the simplest thing than he could fly. Still, patience does much and this is what we gleaned:

Tortoises and pangolins are considered good eating by the Veddas; but the porcupine they abhor, calling it a *rodiya* among beasts, and only killing it to give to their dogs. Why Veddas never eat porcupine I have not been able to ascertain: it is said that, in the old lawless days, they would go the length of burning down a Sinhalese hut in which they discovered a porcupine being cooked. Pork they love because it clears the blood, and one or two pigs a month the Vedda must have. Venison causes itching and is not so good!

Vedda cookery, simple in the extreme, can still boast some tasty dishes: *Gona-perume* is a sausage consisting of alternate layers of sambur meat and fat. *Le-perume* is the same, with the addition of a third layer of blood-clot. *Goa-thal-perume* is made by skinning the monitor's meaty

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1939) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

787 To ignore such warnings would be to court failure or even disaster. When a *kotaha* (large gekko) quaintly cries "krok, krok," a Vedda will seriously lean towards it and ask, "Shall we shoot a monkey to-morrow?" "Krok," says the *kotaha*, and the questioner's face falls, for here no answer is good news. Then there is that subtle thing the *hille*, an evil 778 influence possessed by certain kinds of meat when eaten under circum- 262 stances too involved to explain. The flesh of pigs, peafowl, langurs and a species of fish (*wrang*, *monarang*, *wandoorang*, *magurang*) are said to have this property; but here it would seem that the rhyming of the names has something to do with their evil association.

776 There is an interesting little spirit, belief in which (as with many of the other superstitions already mentioned) is as universal among the Sinhalese as the Veddas. *Bothili*, *Vilirany*, or *Kunnu-yakkini** (dirty she-devil) is its name. It is said to have a nasty nack of grasping one's leg in the dark, and so making it wither to the thinness of an *illuk*-blade. The incarnation of a woman who died in child-birth it is thought to be, and comes moaning at night in the form of a light. The story is best told in the words of a solemnly sworn eye-witness:—Kalu Banda (the narrator) and his sister Balahamy were occupying a watch-hut in a *hurrukhan* field one dark night when they heard a moaning as of one in pain—"*andoa, andoa, oo oo oo.*" Kalu Banda, suspecting what it was, told his sister not to speak—for the *villirany* is shy of women and vanishes at the sound of their voice. He then charmed a little oil, and placing it some distance away, called out, "If you have a stomach-ache, come, rub some oil, and go away." A shadow appeared at which Kalu Banda [825] fired. On going to the spot, what should he find but a green blood-sucker, with a red head! This is said to be the invariable discovery when the *bodili* is killed. The same is said of the devil bird; but here apparently the rule has exceptions; for I have met several people who shot at devil birds, and had a bird to show.

825 The identity of the devil-bird—*ulama* or *ulalama*—is still a matter of doubt; and it is a pity that those who have had the rare fortune to shoot this bird have not thought it worth their while to send it up for identification. Much of the mystery surrounding it is due to the fact that it cries only at night and has wide and sporadic circuits. That it has some sort of a crest, I think, there can be no doubt; also that it is a large bird mottled in its breast feathers like a jungle-hen. These particulars all my reliable informants (who shot the bird as it cried at night) have independently confirmed. It is supposed to be the brown wood owl (*Surnium indrani*) by some, the *Huhua nepalensis* by others. The theory that different birds are capable of uttering the devil-bird's cry, is, I think, quite untenable. Its note is too invariable and distinctive for that.

825 The cry of the *ulama*, like that of the owl (*bakumuna*) and *hanga*, is 787 said to be a portent, varying according to its direction. Should it come from the west, it forbodes rain; from the east, good luck; from the north, the visit of a relative or friend; from the south, a death. One of these birds hovered about our camp one night uttering its blood-curdling calls, now from this direction, now from that, baffling the ingenuity of 825 its interpreters! Its "hoo-oo" is most eerily human; but it has an even worse note, a gurgling chuckle, strongly suggestive of a person

*This is perhaps none other than the Ceylon loris.

λ [a species of lizard.—Ed/pt]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

being strangled. I know a man who, on hearing this cry, rushed out of this house one night, lantern in hand, imagining murder was afoot! A creature with a voice like that should not complain if stories are told of it. According to some, the bird is the incarnation of a Buddhist priest who goes about seeking his stolen book wailing, "*Mai potha ho?*" (Where is my book?). Others say the *ulama* cries whenever it sees a corpse prepared for burial held up before it by an exultant demon; then uttering a succession of screams it falls senseless from its perch. The most gruesome story to its credit is the following; even the old women who relate these tales show particular reticence with regard to this one:— Once there lived a man and his wife and they had a little child. One day when the woman went out to fetch firewood, the man killed his child, cut up some of its flesh and cooked and ate it, leaving a portion on the fire for his wife. When she returned she saw the meat and asked her husband where he had got it.

825 ●

825 539

"Never mind that," said the man. "You eat."

The woman was enjoying her meal when suddenly she noticed a child's finger on her plate.

"Where is our child?" she asked apprehensively.

"That is what you are eating", said her inhuman husband.

Thereupon the woman, thrusting the handle of a coconut-shell spoon into her head, fled into the jungle shrieking, "*Mai lamaya ho? Mai lamaya ho?*" (Where is my child? Where is my child?) and became the crested *ulama*. Now this story, folk-lore though it be, confirms the assumption that the devil bird has some sort of a tuft on its head.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

front of it is a much chipped *opulu* tree from which the Veddas every now and then renew their chew. Throughout the day the surrounding woods echo to the voices of food-gatherers or the blows of axes, as combs are cut out of hollow trees. At fiful intervals the *kolong koha* (stork-billed King-fisher), lord of the rocky stream, raises a clamorous cry, or the wood-pecker startlingly proclaims to the world that it sees the great she-demon (*maha yakkini*). As evening comes, the *kotaha* (gekko) that shares the cave, drawls in quaint imitation of his name, "ko-tak-ko." The night is ushered in by the solemn notes of the night jar* and bell-like sounds of frogs. The crescent moon shines through the trees, peopling the forest with mysterious shadows. Strange noises are heard around, a breaking branch perhaps, a dropping stone, or an animal's foot-falls. Then the little one creeps to its mother whispering, "Mother, the *ketha*"; and she, fondling, replies, "Yes, it is the *ketha*, child; be still." Now fires are stirred, and the Veddas, couched on leaves, and doubled up under their meagre rags, lie as close to them as they dare. For the caves are cold at night even on the hottest day. And every now and then throughout the dark, one or other of them groans with the chill, gets up, pokes the fire, and snuggles nearer to it. Is it a wonder that ash is the morning mark of the Vedda and *Alu galge* a favourite name of his cave? By six, the morning mists have melted and the cave begins to warm.

261 825 354 513

*At dusk, and all through the night, Horsfield's night jar gathers into its rich liquid notes the silence and mystery of the forest. There is no jungle, however desolate, in which this ever welcome music is not heard. It is at once the curfew of the jungle, the embodiment of all the stealthy, nocturnal life in it, and the destiny and doom of it.

Putha-hath-peruwa (seven-sons-are) is the Sinhalese name of the bird in perfect imitation of its cry; and the following story explains it.—A woman once sent her seven sons into the jungle to fell trees. One of the trees falling in their direction, the brothers attempted to shoulder it off and were all killed. The mother, having cooked the evening meal, waited at home for her sons. But as they did not return she went out to look for them, and found them all dead beside the fallen tree. Taking up an axe she killed herself and became this bird; and now from dusk till dawn she *cries putha-hath-peruwa* through the lonesome woods.

[539]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 614 554 Uru *waraw* should carry game and honey for the men of Morane and Unapane.

291 184 Some of the village Veddas of those days had cloth, and when dancing to the *yaku* they wore the long cloth garment called *kaugalla*; the wilder Veddas had no cloth and wore leaves, but it was not clear whether they had not also a certain amount of bark cloth which was their ordinary covering, and leaves may have been worn in addition when they invoked the *yaku*[1].

685 609 778 826 The old man knew of the custom of a man keeping a piece of human liver in his betel pouch; it was universal and in his young days every Vedda desired to have a piece. Strangers, even Veddas, who intruded on the hunting grounds would be killed and their liver taken, no other part of the dead man being used, and the custom gave rise neither to warfare nor to vendettas[2].

764 768 Caves in which a death occurred were deserted, the corpse being covered with leaves; perhaps men very near dissolution were left before death had actually occurred, but this did not seem certain. Bones found in the cave when the group returned to it after an interval of some ten or twelve years were thrown away quite carelessly. The spirits of the dead became the Nae Yaku who, with Kande Yaka and Bilindi Yaka, gave game and prosperity. The *kirikevaka* ceremony was performed for the Nae Yaku, and *adukku* (cooked food), which even in the old days consisted of coconut and rice, was offered to them. The wilder Veddas gave nothing to the Buddhist priests and made no offerings at shrines, nor did they know the Kataragam God, Kanda Swami, though the village Veddas worshipped him and knew that Walliame had been taken to wife by him, and honey was presented to the goddess at certain shrines, especially one at Kokote Sila, frequented by the village Veddas.

775 769 771 184

535 751 A few of the village Veddas would dance for the Sinhalese in order to protect their cattle, bring prosperity to their villages, and secure them from epidemics; they would dance *kalamadiwa* which the old man pointed out was derived from a

[1] Cf. p. 115.
[2] For details of this custom see Chapter VIII.

1: Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

79
[539]

(Ayu bowa. Mama ada sita man golayek hadanawd
Eyin kisi waradak ganda epa.
Mage golayata man kiya denawa me puda topata denda

"May (your) life be long! From to-day I am rearing a scholar of the mind. Do not take any offense at it. I am explaining to my pupil how to give this offering to you."

The yaku understand that although the formulae invoking them are recited they are not really being called, and so the pupil does not become possessed while learning, nor do the yaku hurt him. The pupil avoids eating or touching pig or eating fowl in the same way, as the shaman, and Seli of Unuwatura Bubula stated that while learning he avoided rice, coconuts and kurakan, eating especially the flesh of the sambar and monitor lizard.

The shaman exercises complete control over his pupil and, we believe does not usually train more than one disciple. We heard of one instance in which a shaman, considering his pupil unfit, advised him to give up all idea of becoming a shaman. This happened among the Mudigala Veddas, apparently between 20 or 30 years ago. No man, however highly trained, is accounted the official shaman of a community during his teacher's life, although with his teacher's permission he will, when he is proficient, perform ceremonies and become possessed by the yaku.

79
826

At Sitala Wanniya we discovered that a shaman must not cut his hair unless he takes special precautions. One of us was collecting specimens of hair, and on asking Handuna for a lock, was answered affirmatively but told that as he (Handuna) was a shaman a cloth must be held over his head "because of the yaku." As we had used a great deal of cloth, we asked if a piece of newspaper would do; Handuna replied that it would be as good, but he must keep it always to cover his head when he danced. We explained that the paper would probably rot; the said he, "I shall die." He said he did not know why, but he believed this, as his father had told him that even should his son want a lock of his hair (hair is given as "seisin") he must cover his head with a cloth when it was cut, and ever afterwards must cover it when dancing, or else the yaku would kill him. Yet such was his politeness that rather than refuse our request

1:Seligmann and Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

791 826 he was ready to suffer this inconvenience. Of course under these conditions we did not take a lock of his hair.

His son-in-law Kaira, although he assisted Handuna in dancing, offered no objection to our collecting a sample of his hair, nor did any of the other members of the community.

769 791 Besides the shaman one or more of the near relatives of the dead man may become possessed, but this though common is not invariable. The yaka leaves the shaman soon after he has promised his favour and success in hunting, the shaman often collapsing as the spirit departs and in any case appearing in an exceedingly exhausted state for a few minutes. However, he soon comes round when he and all present, constituting the men, women and children of the group, eat the offering, usually on the spot on which the invocation took place, though this is not absolutely necessary, for on one occasion at Sitala Wanniya when a rain squall threatened, the food was quickly carried to the cave a few hundred yards distant from the dancing ground.

769 It was clear that this eating of the food which had been offered to the yaku was an act of communion, and an essential part of the ceremony which was thought to bring health and good fortune, for some communities even anointed the heads of their dogs with the milk of the offering, explaining that this was done because of their value. This was the case at Henebedda, while the patriarch of the Godatalawa Veddas explained that some of the offering was always given to their dogs to eat, for the reason that they depended upon them in hunting. In one Nae Yaku ceremony (Bandaraduwa) the shaman fed the nearest relatives of the dead man immediately after the yaku left him, holding the bowl containing the offering to their mouths, while among the Sitala Wanniya Veddas, not only did the shaman, while still possessed, feed the children of the group from the bowl and smear its contents over their faces, but a number of members of the group, including the grandchildren of the dead man whose yaka possessed the shaman at the time, place a small portion of the offering in the shaman's mouth. The strength of the desire for the companionship and communion with the spirits of the kindly dead was very strong, and it was generally felt that shamans, and those frequently possessed by

361 "But surely there are Veddas in Galmada; everybody told us so," I insisted.

"Veddas of a sort, yes," was the reply; "and perhaps among them, one or two good ones; but the best live away in the caves, in those rocks yonder. Now if you'd come yesterday you'd have seen two of them who brought me some *gear* in exchange for betel and tobacco."

Disappointment melted into sudden hope. So, there were real Veddas still left. But oh! these people. Was ever chase so disheartening? Always the promise, never the fulfilment. Were we chasing phantoms of the wilderness, mocking spirits of a dead race, intolerant of the intrusion on their tranquil sepulchres?

There was no possibility of visiting the cave-Veddas that day. So I decided to stay over and visit them the next morning, travelling across the pathless hills to the high road; while my companion,—fed up to the teeth by now at the very mention of the word Vedda, and in a bad way with festering tick-bites, heat exhaustion, and lack of fresh food—tried to dissuade me from an adventure that promised no success. But I was bent on it. So we agreed that most of the bearers should accompany him to Maha Oya by an easier route, while I remained behind with three men and a two days' ration of tinned food.

With nightfall my prospect of securing a guide to the Galmada hills was no nearer than in the morning. The only man who could be relied on was down with fever. I was seated disconsolately in the Chetty's garden after dinner, close to a chatting group, when suddenly I saw a shadow slip in out of the darkness and join them; there was some whispering; "Ah, is this the man they call Meenemaruwa?*" I heard one of my bearers ask.

"Yes, I am he they call murderer, rogue and everything besides." The answer came loud and unabashed from the man himself.

Rumour had spoken of him as far away as Kotelinda; and it had not spoken kindly. He lived three miles up the river by himself, inspiring the neighbourhood with awe of him. He was in a quandary that night. Returning home after a short absence, he had found that his brother had been taken into custody for illicit *chena* cultivation. He waxed eloquent on his wrongs, while the others listened: "Now what I want to know," he said "is why they should have taken my brother, who is a fool and cannot say a word in his defence, when they might have taken me? No, they wouldn't do that because I can talk. My brother cultivated the *chena* it is true, but it was I who gave it to him; the land is mine. They want me to pay taxes, I who am a Vedda! My grandmother was a Vedda of Veddas, you should have seen her. How well I remember the piece of human liver she carried in her betel-bag. We children would take it from her and want to throw it away; she would pluck it from us, saying, 'Hu, what do you want with this, isn't it mine?' Io, why do they treat me like this? Someone is angry with me. It must be the *avaichi*. No, the *avaichi* is good to me; he and I are friends. Now *Hettyar*, what must I do? I must go to the courts myself and get a petition drawn." Thus he talked interminably, while I wondered how a Vedda could come to argue like a lawyer.

"Now leave all that aside," I interrupted, "and tell me how I am to see these Veddas of the rocks tomorrow."

*Murderer.

5c Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

2. VEDDA CHARACTERISTICS, RELIGION, AND SUPERSTITION

If 'tis not a true philosophy
That the spirit when set free,
Still lingers about its olden home,
In the flower and the tree,
It is very strange that our pulses thrill
At the sight of a voiceless thing,
And our hearts yearn so with tenderness
In the beautiful time of Spring.

N. P. WILLIS

241 The genuine Vedda is a quite incompetent agriculturist; that is a mark
181 by which you may know him; and none are more so than the Veddas of Bingoda who can no more develop a *chena* than they can fly. They will make a fine beginning; valiantly fell trees and sow grain; but there it ends; whenever the mood seizes them they leave it all and go into the forest, and the wild animals wander in. This is why I consider the Veddas
[184] of Bingoda the most primitive I have met; better even than the classical Veddas of Henebedde and Danigala who are more of the agriculturist and less of the hunter.

221 Though these Veddas live close to Sinhalese settlements, they spend a
222 large part of their time in the jungle. When the forests have much to give—as in January and February, the good yam months, and June
177 and July, the honey and fruits months—the Veddas take their families and forsake their huts for caves and stream-beds; here to-day, there to-morrow. But in times of jungle impoverishment—March to May, and September to December—they remain near the village, where at a pinch they can beg a pittance of grain; but even then foraging parties frequently wander forth and return in a few days with honey, flesh and swiftlets' nests for barter.

144 There is, almost certainly, no Vedda to-day without some trace of Sinhalese (or Tamil) blood in his veins; a reason why anthropometry is so often arid of results; still, one can usually tell a Vedda from a
142 Sinhalese at a glance: The sparsity of hair on the Vedda's face is his outstanding characteristic, in marked contrast to the heavily bearded Sinhalese; add to this a darker complexion, a shorter stature, a greater reserve, simplicity, and apathy, and an easily aroused ferocity of nature—
[326] and there is no more to be said. But Kaurala of Kotlinde would have it there was a further distinction: "See," said he, placing my hand on his Adam's apple. "I am a true Vedda; where is my throat-knot?"

181 Veddas are an independent folk. They are no respectors of persons; and if you wish to know them, it does not do to stand on your dignity. Displease them, and they will not come near you; treat them kindly and they are your good friends. Childish and ingenuous to a degree, they will address you on equal terms, and often show an embarrassing

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

It is not suggested that the conscious element is entirely absent from the Vedda possession dances, it is impossible to believe that such a sudden collapse as that occurring in the Henebedda *kirikoraha* ceremony (p. 222) (when Kande Yaka in the person of the shaman shoots the sambar deer), followed by an almost instantaneous recovery, is entirely non-volitional. and the same holds good for the pig-spearing in the Bambura Yaka ceremony (p. 243) at Sitala Wanniya. We believe that these facts can be fully accounted for by a partial abolition of the will, that is to say, by a dulling of volition far short of complete unconsciousness. The shaman in fact surrenders himself to the dance in the fullest sense, and it is this, combined with a high degree of sub-conscious expectancy, which leads him to enact almost automatically and certainly without careful forethought the traditional parts of the dance in their conventionally correct order. Further, the assistant, who follows every movement of the dancer, prepared to catch him when he falls, may also greatly assist by conscious or unconscious suggestion in the correct performance of these complicated possession dances. Again, we do not think there can be any doubt as to the non-volitional nature of the possession, by the *yaka*, of the bystanders, near relatives of the dead man, which may take place during the *Nae Yaku* ceremony[1].

One remarkable fact may be chronicled here, viz. that we have never met a Vedda who had seen the spirit of a dead man, that is to say, no Vedda ever saw a ghost, at least in his waking hours. We have never been able to obtain any corroborative evidence for Bailey's assertion that "the spirits [of the dead] appear to them in dreams and tell them [the Veddas] where to hunt." Veddas certainly dream, but Handuna and his son-in-law Kaira, two most trustworthy informants, said that they did

[1] There was nothing about the general behaviour of any of the Veddas with whom we came in contact that suggested a specially neurotic or hysterical tendency. The graver stigmata of hysteria such as would warrant a diagnosis of functional disease were always absent and the Veddas, even when ill, were in no sense fuss makers or inclined to magnify their ailments in the way so many Melanesians do. We are indebted to Dr C. S. Myers for the suggestion that possession by the *yaku* can best be explained as an affection (dissociation) of altered personality. If this be so the condition is comparable to a number of well-known cases in the sphere of mental pathology.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

987 not often have dreams. Dreams are considered uncanny, and
828 Handuna said that, although a shaman, he himself feared them. He told us that a man would usually remain quietly in the rock-shelter for a whole day after a dream, and would not leave it to get food, even if staying in the cave meant going hungry. Handuna once dreamt that he had shot a monkey and brought it back to the cave, so he did not go out hunting the next day but stayed in the cave. He said that he had never had dreams that were of themselves of a terrifying nature, such as being attacked by bears or falling over a precipice. He dreamt of his father a few days after his death, but seldom or never since then. In his dream his dead father invited him to come hunting with him, and together they went into the jungle and found some yams and cooked and ate them. Handuna said that he was not afraid "because he was my father; what was there to be afraid of? Nevertheless I stayed in the cave, for I was sorry that day." Handuna told us that children—even small children that cannot talk—may wake up shrieking, but he has never heard of people talking in their sleep.

787 With regard to the causation of dreams there was a real but
775 ill-defined belief connecting the dream-forms of dead relatives with the spirits (*yaku*) of the dead. Discussing this matter in connection with his dream of his dead father, Handuna said, "We think it is through love they come," but he showed that he realised that living people who were not near relatives might be seen in dreams, by volunteering the statement that at our departure he might dream of one of us (C. G. S.) to whom he was speaking.

Although the dream-forms of dead persons were vaguely associated with their *yaku*, it was generally denied that the dead seen in dreams told the living where to hunt, and it must be remembered that the general opinion was that no living person had ever seen a *yaka*, and it was only when specially discussing dreams that it was said that *yaku* were seen in dreams. Nor did the *Nae Yaku* regularly make their presence known in any other way than by possession, though some Veddas translated the minor noises of the jungle into signs of the presence of the *yaku*. These facts also seem to militate against the idea that any

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

entirely in caves; trading places called *tundis* near the caves, 342
but out of sight of them, under a tree or rock, were used for 437
bartering, where all strangers would stop and shout and then wait until their calls had been answered from the caves.

The Veddas were extremely jealous of their women, and 662
intimate as our informant was with them as a young man, he was never taken to their caves while their women were there. The wilder Veddas could not count, at least they used no 802
numerals beyond one, the method being to say "one" "and one" "and one," etc., probably putting a piece of stick on the ground or making a mark for each unit mentioned. Both hands with fingers extended were held up for ten, or perhaps for any number above six. The "silent trade" was only a tradition 437
even among the wildest Veddas and had probably been extinct in this part of the country for at least two generations. The wilder Veddas had no areca nuts but chewed the bark of trees 276
mixed with lime which they obtained by burning land shells which they called *wantale*.

Cousin marriage took place, the unions being arranged by 582
the parents of the young people. Honey, dried venison and 584
flesh of the monitor lizard were brought by the young man to 583
the girl's father[1], who would call his daughter and give her in charge of her husband, for whom she would immediately make a waist string (*ele kawma*). She made no pretence of running away from her husband. Widows married an unmarried brother 587
of their first husband if this were possible, in any case they 831
might remarry and their sexual morality was as high as that of unmarried girls.

The wilder Veddas of the district belonged to the Morane 614
and Unapane *maraga*; each clan had its own set of caves, 554
though, since their members intermarried, there could have been no rigid exclusiveness about the arrangement. There were people of Uru *maraga* at a little distance; their status was lower [582]
than that of the Morane and Unapane folk, neither of whom would marry into this clan, and it was even said that the men of

[1] It was not clear whether more than one formal present of food was made; it must be remembered that a youth always gives part of any important kill to his prospective father-in-law, cf. p. 67.

Go and drop behind the body of the monitor lizard!
Pierce it, dear cousin.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle (or edge) of the back.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and cleave it in the angle of the tail.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the neck.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and doubly (?) cleave it in the stomach.
Leave that place, arrow-brother,
Go and fix (yourself) in the middle of the armpit.

"In order to rhyme all the lines ought to end in a long a.

"*Ettanna* is an evident mistake for *stanama*.

"*Tonnna* is for *tunna*, a Vaedi word for tail, the Sinhalese is *tubu*.

"*Accen* and *accen* are for *assen*, abl. of *assa*, angle or corner.

"*Laeffen* is a word I have not previously met with. The only probable derivation with which I am acquainted is the Tamil *iraffu*, Sin. *reffu*, double, two-fold.

"*Mnelli* means younger brother.

"*Kiri kurd*, lit. milk cousin, simply means dear cousin."

Love Charms.

Love magic or charms to compel love do not seem to exist among the wilder Veddas, though in the Bintenne we were told that women may charm the waist strings they give to their husbands, in order to ensure their fidelity.

Amulets.

Before discussing the existence of these it is necessary to determine to what extent the Veddas now wear, or formerly wore, ornaments.

Disregarding the stories current among the Sinhalese that the Veddas formerly had valuable jewellery and pots of pure gold—legends of which the Veddas themselves are quite

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

the other heel. Python fat is used for fractures. *Nagamaru-alla* has a great reputation as an aphrodisiac, less among the Veddas than among the Moors and Tamils. *Bing kohomba* (*munronia pumila*) gathered in the hills, and *hansa* (*cannabis indica*) grown surreptitiously, are always barterable. Besides the lesser poisons used for stupefying fish, there are the deadly *neragalla-alla* (*gloriosa superba*); *manna-kolle* (*laportea crenulata*); *thea-haduruggedda* (*cerbera odallam*) and *kirinthea*. 757 752 832 276 824

There can be little doubt that much of the *cannabis indica* obtainable in Ceylon is grown in the forests by the encouragement of Moors. Traffic in the drug being illegal, the plant is cultivated clandestinely in sequestered jungle clearings or scattered amidst the vegetation of *chenas*. Though the plants fetch a good price, they are hardly worth the trouble and risk involved in tending them; and they say that "money got from *hansa* never stays in the hand." Not only have the plants to be watered for at least three months, but, very often, just as the crop is ready for harvesting, a thief helps himself to it. The commodity is conveyed to the lonely coast or the high road in the dead of night, along unfrequented game trails, in bags containing nests, grain, or dried meat. 276

A poignant story concerns the discovery of the *nagamaru-alla*, that esteemed aphrodisiac so difficult to find. A Vedda boy and his sister were travelling alone in the forest, when a shower of rain drove them to seek shelter under a tree. As is usual with Veddas when they rest, the boy stuck his arrows into the ground. Then, taking out of his pouch of monkey skin a chew of *demata* bark, he shared it with his sister; and, plucking out an arrow from the ground, placed on its point a little lime and gave it to her. She had scarcely tasted this when she began to manifest unsisterly familiarity. Her brother, incensed and shamed, drew his bow and killed her on the spot. Overcome by sorrow at what he had done, he debated in his mind as to why his sister, so good before, should suddenly have behaved so shamelessly. It occurred to him that the explanation might lie in the spot the arrow had been implanted; digging there he found a yam his arrow had transfixed. Thus was its named derived *nagamaru-alla* or yam that killed a sister; the Tamils call it *thangai kolai* which means the same thing. The marks of the tragedy are said to be evident to this day in the red spots that fleck the flower and leaf. I have seen the plant, a ground orchid, twice, but only the white-flowered variety not the reputedly more potent mottled. The slender stalk, bearing a delicate flower about half the size of a lupin, grows out of two downy ovoid yams. 832 539

The proper home of the Vedda is the *galge* or cave; and in these until recent years, the wilder of them exclusively lived. Now they only serve as occasional haunts, and therefore often have other occupants besides Veddas, chiefly bears; for this reason no Vedda approaches an unoccupied cave without warning: "*Cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho,*" he shouts. "*Kiribala, haria, haria, cho-ho-ho, cho-ho-ho.*" A snarl and a rush often greet the words. These rock-shelters are invariably hidden away among trees and boulders, and are extremely difficult to find except by those who know them. 342 [178] [574]

Many of the caves are spacious, open and inviting; others dark and forbidding. Some source of water, such as a stream or spring, is usually at hand. The sloping roofs of the caves often present such crude picture galleries as we saw at Henanagalla, also wasps' nests, and the clustering

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

844 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at 843 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *wadu*, which fruits are 262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard 853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would 262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wandura*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The 844 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round [184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's 262] flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be dangerously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *katandirale* (devil dancer) [165] would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who 834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa 551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

836 children so they came together as they grew up. The community came to know of what had occurred, the couple were considered married, and now go about together. We were told that no resentment was felt or expressed by the girl's parents or the community, and there was no formal giving over of land or property to Kaira by his father-in-law, because, as was pointed out, the fathers of Kaira and Hudi both belonged to the same group and together moved about over the same land.

We think it may be said that among most Veddas at the present day, especially such as have come in contact with the Sinhalese, there is no violent feeling against prenuptial connection of the sort here described, but we believe that formerly public opinion was definitely and strongly against the practice, though on this point we do not attempt to dogmatise. There was no doubt as to the attitude of public opinion towards connection between people who were not allotted to each other. This was, and still is, strongly disapproved, and there is no doubt that in the old days the guilty parties risked their lives. 835 It was, however, clear that intrigues of this sort did sometimes 684 occur, and we heard of two instances of what are regarded as incestuous unions which occurred among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas some fifty or sixty years ago. In both cases the girls cohabited with their mothers' sisters' sons, and in both instances the guilty parties were promptly killed by the outraged group. The men were set upon in the jungle, their own fathers it was said taking a prominent part in the assault, while the girls were killed in the huts in which they were living[1].

582 As already mentioned the correct marriage among the Veddas, as among the Sinhalese, is for a man to marry his

[1] The matter has been well stated by Nevill who writing more than twenty years ago says: "The Vaeddas marry young, and are strict monogamists. Consequently the husband and wife are watchfully jealous, each of the other, and love-intrigues are few and far between. Nothing short of murder would content the injured party. This strict morality extends to unmarried girls, who are protected by their guardians with the keenest sense of honour" (*Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 178). We do not, however, agree even partially with his statement as to the considerable liberty allowed to widows, we believe that among the wilder Veddas their morality was as strict as that of the maidens and it must be remembered that it was, and is, unusual for any but old women to remain widows for any length of time.

[835]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

V 585 291

bind it round him. Many a more civilized wife would rejoice if she could forge new fetters for her husband as binding as these. The utility of the string is simply to keep in its place the scanty rag which constitutes the Veddah costume.* Married or single he must wear one; but when he is married he substitutes for his batchelor's string one of the lady's twisting, and besides its use, it is emblematic of the marriage tie; for as he never parts with it, so he clings to his wife through life.†

V 582 835

I have spoken of the monogamy and conjugal fidelity of the Veddahs as favourably contrasting with the opposite practices among the Kandyans. But there was an ancient custom amongst them which has scarcely yet become extinct, a custom most revolting to every civilized mind. It is that which sanctions the marriage of a man with his younger sister. To marry an elder sister or aunt would, in their estimation, be incestuous, a connection in every respect as revolting to them as it would be to us—as much out of the question and inadmissible as the marriage with the younger sister was proper and natural. It was, in fact, *the* proper marriage, as much so as the marriage between the father's sister's son and the mother's brother's daughter is the most proper that a Kandyan can contract.‡

V 582 835

How far this practice has become obsolete it is hard to say. Amongst the Veddahs of Bintenne it has certainly ceased, and they now regard it with disgust.§ Still it has not very long died out, for many amongst them have seen the children of such marriages, and even cited some by name to me. But I question if it has yet disappeared from amongst the wilder Veddahs of Nilgala. For some time I believed that it was invariably practised there, and

---

* It is, in fact, what the Singhalese call the Diya lancowa, the "water-string," *i. e.*, the string which supports the rag of cloth which natives wear when bathing, and which is "full dress" among the Veddahs.

† The following anecdote is an apt illustration of the value set by a Kandyan on the marriage tie. One of the civil officers of the fort was travelling through his district, explaining the provisions of the new Kandyan marriage ordinance, when a native said to him—"I don't like that ordinance at all." "Why?" he asked. "Why, you tell us we are not to send away our wives, if we like. Now, suppose I bought a piece of rice land, *and afterwards found my wife did not know how to weed!*"

‡ "Every Bedouin has a right to marry his father's brother's daughter before she is given to a stranger; and hence "cousin" (bint' amm), in polite phrase, signifies "wife." Burton's *El Medina Mecca*, vol. iii. A Kandyan would regard such a marriage incestuous, for such first cousins are considered sisters. The term applied to such a female cousin as is mentioned in the text as the proper bride for a Kandyan is "noona," which in Veddah dialect is the word for "wife." The corresponding word "noora" is the Veddah term for "husband."

V 5 [601]

§ Mr. Birch informs me that the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district "indignantly deny marrying their sisters."

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

it is only because, after repeated and careful inquiry, I cannot establish the fact of such a marriage now actually existing, that I am inclined to consider that it is becoming obsolete. But I should be almost justified as describing it as an existing custom, for many of the young men are the offspring of such connections. The practice is spoken of by them in the present tense, and alluded to as a matter of course, without the smallest repugnance.* 582 835

Amongst the Bintenne Veddahs, then, it may be said to have been, for perhaps two generations or so, extinct. Amongst those of Nilgala it is, at most, only becoming so. And it has, undoubtedly, been the custom among both from time immemorial. Utterly revolting as it is to us, we must remember that with them it was a custom sanctioned by the practice of ages. It is not the consequence of a "poor community," nor the growth of mere barbarism. If it were, the elder sister would be equally sought after; if it were, polygamy in all its forms would be found among them. There would, in fact, be no restraint.†

I have before described the short stature of the Veddahs—their weak and vacant expression, their striking resemblance to each other, characteristics much more marked upon the Veddahs of Nilgala than those of Bintenne. The practice I have just noticed is quite sufficient to account for these. 142 143

It might naturally be supposed that such marriages would produce, besides a stunted growth, insanity, idiocy, and epilepsy. But I find few traces of these maladies. Madness rarely occurs, idiocy still less frequently; though dogged stupidity is not at all uncommon amongst them.‡ But in other respects the injurious effects of this custom would seem to be plainly discernible. The 143 158 000

* I am not surprised that Tennent should be ignorant of this custom. It is a most difficult task to obtain intelligible answers to the commonest questions from these ignorant creatures; and unless a clue to some subject is accidentally found, the inquirer would learn little. There are practices as revolting, though not so peculiar, among some of the Indian tribes.

† It is curious that the only trace I can find of anything approaching to a belief in retributive justice is a tradition of a man, whose name even has been preserved, and whose family still exists, who, they say, was eaten by worms for having exceeded the authorized limit, and formed connections with his elder sisters and aunts. By whom this punishment was inflicted they do not pretend to say; but the painful death they regard as the direct consequence of his incest.

‡ Madness is by no means common among them. They believe if one man curse another, the man who is cursed becomes mad. This is evidently the same superstition as is common among the Singhalese, and known as the "Kata waha," "the evil mouth," or "poison of the mouth," equivalent to the prevalent faith in the "Ess waha," "the evil eye," or "poison of the eye." Burton, in his *El Medinah Mecca*, says, "the national type has been preserved by systematic intermarriages. No evil results are anticipated from the union of first cousins; and the experience of ages and of a nation may be trusted." 754

S: Spinal D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

582 The correct Vedda marriage is that between the children of a brother
835 and sister. A marriage between children of two brothers or of two sisters is regarded as incest. And here their standard is higher than ours.

587 Marriage for the Vedda is a very simple affair. Suthubanda, for instance, espoused a widow in his household. When she was freed by the death of her husband, it was right that he should take her, and he made no demur, though she was old and ugly and he young and robust.
583 Kaurala went to the younger of his two wives with a length of cloth, a bead necklace, a bangle and two hair pins, and brought her away. Gama, whose wife was an orphan of Henebedde, did much the same. But
911 the rule is that a man should cast in his lot with his wife's people. Then, the morning after marriage the pair go into the jungle and bring home, it may be a *hanave* comb, a monitor lizard, or some yams, and thus the common life begins.

585 The waist-string plays as important a part in Vedda matrimony as
291 does the ring in ours. When a woman has tied round the waist of a man a string of her own twisting, he becomes her husband. This string, some
[283 six encircling loops, lasting practically a life-time, is made of *wiyanda*
824 (bow-string hemp), the long bayonet-shaped leaf of which is shredded to fibre by being drawn repeatedly between the palm of the hand and a bare branch.

586 Divorce is as informal as marriage; the woman being merely returned to her parents or requested to go to whomsoever she chooses. But the Vedda is not, as a rule, unreasonably capricious in the exercise of his power; he has too great a sense of responsibility and of fair-play towards the mother of his children and partner in his toil. A lad I knew blew
762 out his chest with a gun, from remorse at having taken to himself two sisters who continually quarrelled with each other over his affections.

593 A Vedda will not hesitate to chastise his spouse when necessary; but that, after all, is only a mark of affection! We saw one belabour his wife unmercifully because she would not let him accompany us; she took all the beating she got, but had her own way in the end.

551 These people do not address their women-folk by name. Ask a man to name his children, and he will stutter and stumble at the task. A Vedda
515 hails his wife somewhat as follows: "What are you doing there? Come here and break my head." This apparently suicidal request is only his way of requesting her to perform the delightful uxorial duty of cleansing his hair of vermin.

614 The Veddas of Bingoda claim to be of the Morana *waruge*, the best
565 Vedda clan. Those of Danigala, of the Unapane clan, come next. But for the Veddas of Henebedde the Bingoda folk profess disdain, calling
515 them *Uro* (swine) and *Waliyo*, and saying it was their duty in old-time to pour water on the Morana's hands when they had fed. How much water these Moranas themselves use we have yet to learn; for, if the saying be true, that the worse the odour the better the Vedda, then the Veddas of Bingoda are aristocrats. What a thing is human nature after all, when even this wretched little remnant of humanity, without a rag to their bodies claim social precedence over each other?

614 There are nine Vedda clans or *waruges*; and each has its own story:

173 The Morana *waruge* was so called by a Sinhalese king who yearned for the *mora* fruit when it was out of season, and had his want proclaimed.

which the food for the community was cooked, but we do not think they would touch it or assist in any way in the cooking. At Omuni a menstruous woman is isolated under a rough shelter where she is waited upon by a younger unmarried sister or cousin who, it was stated, should not herself have attained puberty. During her seclusion she may eat any food cooked at the ordinary fire, but a special platter is kept for her use. The girls who look after her suffer no restrictions. This happens every time a girl or woman menstruates. 841

Marriage takes place at an early age; it was said that girls sometimes married before puberty, and as we heard of this at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, and Omuni, we see no reason to doubt the truth of the statement[1]. At Omuni it was pointed out that a certain amount of breast development was necessary before marriage, so that it is probable that connection does not antedate puberty by more than a short time. 582 [856]

With regard to the frequency of such child marriages, we can only say that we never saw any very young girls with babies. Perhaps at the present day prenuptial connection is more common than marriage between the very young, though it is obviously difficult to decide when prenuptial love-making between individuals destined for each other gives place to marriage, among people whose marriages are accompanied with but slight ceremony. It must be remembered that the marriage gift of landed or personal property to a son-in-law, which was formerly customary, is obsolescent at the present day, and this not only makes it more difficult to determine whether marriage has taken place, but probably actually tends to make the exact time of the assumption of the married state less clearly defined. 836 [585] [583]

On account of these considerations we are unable to express any definite opinion as to the frequency of prenuptial connection, the few instances we heard of were between individuals occupying the relationship of *kura* and *naena*, who would in any case marry each other. Thus Kaira of Henebedda and his wife grew up in the same group, and as they had played together as

[1] We are indebted to Mr Frederick Lewis for the information that this is a common practice among Tamils.

836 children so they came together as they grew up. The community came to know of what had occurred, the couple were considered married, and now go about together. We were told that no resentment was felt or expressed by the girl's parents or the community, and there was no formal giving over of land or property to Kaira by his father-in-law, because, as was pointed out, the fathers of Kaira and Hudi both belonged to the same group and together moved about over the same land.

We think it may be said that among most Veddas at the present day, especially such as have come in contact with the Sinhalese, there is no violent feeling against premarital connection of the sort here described, but we believe that formerly public opinion was definitely and strongly against the practice, though on this point we do not attempt to dogmatise. There was no doubt as to the attitude of public opinion towards connection between people who were not allotted to each other. This was, and still is, strongly disapproved, and there is no doubt that in the old days the guilty parties risked their lives. 835 It was, however, clear that intrigues of this sort did sometimes 684 occur, and we heard of two instances of what are regarded as incestuous unions which occurred among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas some fifty or sixty years ago. In both cases the girls cohabited with their mothers' sisters' sons, and in both instances the guilty parties were promptly killed by the outraged group. The men were set upon in the jungle, their own fathers it was said taking a prominent part in the assault, while the girls were killed in the huts in which they were living[1].

582 As already mentioned the correct marriage among the Veddas, as among the Sinhalese, is for a man to marry his

[1] The matter has been well stated by Nevill who writing more than twenty years ago says: "The Vaeddas marry young, and are strict monogamists. Consequently the husband and wife are watchfully jealous, each of the other, and love-intrigues are few and far between. Nothing short of murder would content the injured party. This strict morality extends to unmarried girls, who are protected by their guardians with the keenest sense of honour" (*Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 178). We do not, however, agree even partially with his statement as to the considerable liberty allowed to widows, we believe that among the wilder Veddas their morality was as strict as that of the maidens and it must be remembered that it was, and is, unusual for any but old women to remain widows for any length of time.

[837]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

place. The "arsenal" at Bendiyagalge is well seen in Plate XIX, figures 1 and 2, while at Pihilegodagalge all the bows and arrows were rested on an old ant heap in the centre of the cave. 621 422

Though men do sometimes dig for yams, hunting is essentially their work, and yams were usually dug by the women who also do the cooking. This is of the simplest kind; yams are roasted in ashes, in which way meat may also be cooked, while practically everything else is boiled in a pot over three stones. Many Veddas also know how to cook curry, and deer's flesh is dried on a rack and smoked. A rack is built usually in a sunny place, the meat is put on this and a smoky fire kept burning beneath it, the flesh is thus dried in the sun and smoked simultaneously. This process is usually superintended by men. [462] 252 251

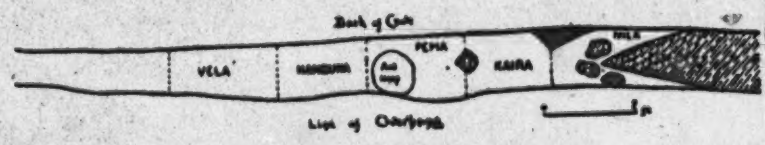


Fig. 2. Plan of Pihilegodagalge. [342] [423] 592

Plate XVII, figure 1, shows a rack built to smoke meat on the top of the Bendiyagalge rock-mass.

A Vedda will never sleep on the ground if there is any rock upon which he can lie. If he has a deerskin or a piece of cloth he will lie on it, if not he does not seem to object to the cold rock, and so avoids contact with the ground damp from the heavy dews. He always keeps a small fire burning beside him; this was noticed by Nevill, who says: "A Vaedda never sleeps without a smouldering fire by his side. I am assured, should accident oblige them to do so, they have usually died from a fever caught by the omission[1]." 513 374

The Veddas are strictly monogamous, and we were able to confirm Bailey's observations as regards their marital fidelity. "Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, [595] 837

[1] *Theosophist*, Vol. 1, Aug. 1886, p. 187.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

●837 whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was very careful in my inquiries on this subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Sinhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it[1]."

The only case of suicide of which we heard took place in
762 connection with a breach of the common rule of conjugal fidelity.
837 Tissahami, the husband of Kumi, younger sister of the headman of the Bandaraduwa Veddas, carried on an intrigue with his *naena*, an unmarried girl named Kirimenike. When his wife who was not one of his *naena* discovered the intrigue, she scolded her husband most unmercifully, "Why go to another woman while I live?—better to have gone to your mother than her." Although his intrigue with Kirimenike was of old standing, Tissahami was so upset with the disgrace of publicity that he killed himself in the compound outside his own hut early one morning. He had a gun, and holding the muzzle to the suprasternal notch, he pulled the trigger with his toe. The dead man's
[626] relatives were very angry with Kumi for driving him to desperation but they did not threaten her, nor in any way molest her. Kumi and Kirimenike belonged to the same *waruge* (Morane) but were unrelated. Kirimenike subsequently married a Vedda, and went to live at Syringawala where she remained until she died.

562 (In every respect the women seem to be treated as the equals
of the men,) they eat the same food; indeed, when we gave
609 presents of food the men seemed usually to give the women and children their share first; the same applies to areca nut and other chewing stuffs. The women are jealously guarded by the men, who do not allow traders or other strangers to see them, and those at Sitala Wanniya were too shy to visit our camp, though they welcomed us to their cave, and the dances performed for our benefit took place in the dense jungle so that the women might be present and partake of the food offered to the *yaku*. We had offered to clear a space by our camp where the light would have been better for photography; however, the

[1] J. Bailey, "Wild Tribes of the Veddahs of Ceylon," 1863, *Trans. Ethnol. Soc.* Vol. II, p. 291.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

836 children so they came together as they grew up. The community came to know of what had occurred, the couple were considered married, and now go about together. We were told that no resentment was felt or expressed by the girl's parents or the community, and there was no formal giving over of land or property to Kaira by his father-in-law, because, as was pointed out, the fathers of Kaira and Hudi both belonged to the same group and together moved about over the same land.

We think it may be said that among most Veddas at the present day, especially such as have come in contact with the Sinhalese, there is no violent feeling against prenuptial connection of the sort here described, but we believe that formerly public opinion was definitely and strongly against the practice, though on this point we do not attempt to dogmatise. There was no doubt as to the attitude of public opinion towards connection between people who were not allotted to each other. This was, and still is, strongly disapproved, and there is no doubt that in the old days the guilty parties risked their lives.
835 It was, however, clear that intrigues of this sort did sometimes
684 occur, and we heard of two instances of what are regarded as incestuous unions which occurred among the Kovil Vanamai Veddas some fifty or sixty years ago. In both cases the girls cohabited with their mothers' sisters' sons, and in both instances the guilty parties were promptly killed by the outraged group. The men were set upon in the jungle, their own fathers it was said taking a prominent part in the assault, while the girls were killed in the huts in which they were living[1].

582 As already mentioned the correct marriage among the Veddas, as among the Sinhalese, is for a man to marry his

[1] The matter has been well stated by Nevill who writing more than twenty years
[837] ago says: "The Vaeddas marry young, and are strict monogamists. Consequently the husband and wife are watchfully jealous, each of the other, and love-intrigues are few and far between. Nothing short of murder would content the injured party. This strict morality extends to unmarried girls, who are protected by their guardians with the keenest sense of honour" (*Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, p. 178). We do not, however agree even partially with his statement as to the considerable liberty allowed to widows, we believe that among the wilder Veddas their morality was as strict as that of the maidens and it must be remembered that it was, and is, unusual for any but old women to remain widows for any length of time.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica, L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum, L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

---

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5
Sinhalese AX4

237 very careful in my inquiries on the subject. Had it existed, the neighbouring Singhalese would have had no hesitation in accusing them of it, but I could not obtain a trace of it. Tennent's remarks on this subject are wholly inapplicable to the wild Veddahs of Bintenne or Nilgala, though they may apply to those Veddahs of whom he writes.*

[582] They never marry out of their race, and, with the very smallest cause, the men are exceedingly jealous of their most unattractive wives. They are very careful to keep them apart from their 592 companions. Their huts contain but one family each, and when they live in caves, each dwelling-place is carefully screened off. There are as many as seventeen separate huts and caves among the seventy-two Veddahs of Nilgala; hardly more than four individuals to each habitation.

Polyandry is unknown among them. The practice is alluded 595 to with genuine disgust. I asked a Veddah once, what the consequence would be if one of their women were to live with two husbands, and the unaffected vehemence with which he raised his axe, and said, "a blow would settle it," showed conclusively to my mind, the natural repugnance with which they regard this national custom of their Kandyan neighbours. Their abstinence from a practice, which, till 1859, was recognized by the laws of the land, is remarkable. So sensitive are they on these subjects, that I know an instance of a Veddah—and he was by no means one of the wildest—drawing his knife, and being with difficulty restrained from using it, at a remark made in jest which he considered a reflection on the honour of their women.†

It is notorious that the Kandyans have no scruples with regard 586 to divorce. Among them, husbands desert their wives, and wives their husbands, for any or no reason. Sickness is perhaps the most common cause. The heartless desertion of a sick wife is, I think, the worst trait in the Kandyan character, and the cool and unconcerned manner in which they themselves allude to it, shows that it is as common as it is cruel.‡

---

* Tennent, vol. ii, part ix, chap. iii, p. 444, 2nd edit.

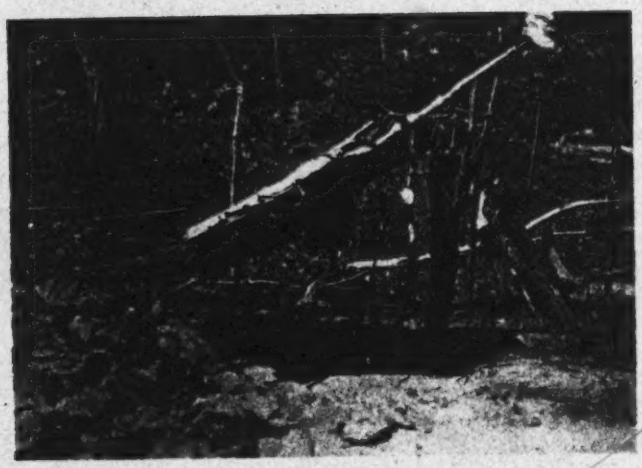
† Tennent says, "The community is too poor to afford polygamy," but I am convinced that is not the cause of its non-existence. We find it in smaller communities than these.

‡ In a civil suit in the District Court some years ago, a witness said in reply to a question from me—"How can I tell how many wives he had? A woman is married to-day, and leaves her husband to-morrow. If the wife gets sick, the husband deserts her; if the husband, the wife deserts him." A young girl of sixteen or so once coolly confessed before me to having had five husbands, three of whom were living, and two present in court, of whom one had just attempted suicide for her sake! I met with an instance of a man who had been married fifteen times; and I have heard of a woman who had had thirteen husbands.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XX

343
●841



Rough shelter built for isolation of women at Unuwatura Bubula

[facing p.94]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

with the Sinhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests[1].

"I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The 'wilder sort' have had too little communication with Sinhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessities of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrowheads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax, and honey, elk flesh and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Sinhalese, or 'the ubiquitous Moors'[2]."

There are no puberty ceremonies for either sex, except among certain Veddas who have been much influenced by Tamils or Sinhalese, among whom the girls are isolated for a short time at puberty. Thus although the following ceremony is observed at puberty by the Uniche Veddas, there is no doubt that it has been borrowed from the local Sinhalese who have a similar ceremony, though according to our information the latter people do not break the pot. When a girl becomes unwell for the first time one of her *naena* places a pot of water on her head and goes with her to some place where there is a *nuga* tree. Here the *naena* takes the pot from the girl's head and dashes it on the ground so that the pot breaks. The girl is then secluded in a specially built shelter in which she stays until the end of the period, when she washes and returns to her parents' house. During her seclusion she is attended by a girl, always one of her *naena*, who brings her food in a vessel set apart for this purpose but which is not cooked at a special fire. Among the wilder Veddas no special measures are taken when a woman menstruates, she is allowed to eat the ordinary food, and to sleep in the cave as usual. But among all the village Veddas, and most of those who have mixed at all with the Sinhalese, the menstruous women are strictly isolated, a little shelter being built for them a few paces from the family hut (Plate XX). At Bendiyagalge, where the Henebedda and Kolombedda people were staying at the time of our visit, menstruous women stayed apart at one corner of the cave, they were fed from the pot in

[1] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285—286.

[2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 291.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

which the food for the community was cooked, but we do not think they would touch it or assist in any way in the cooking. At Omuni a menstruous woman is isolated under a rough shelter where she is waited upon by a younger unmarried sister or cousin who, it was stated, should not herself have attained puberty. During her seclusion she may eat any food cooked at the ordinary fire, but a special platter is kept for her use. The girls who look after her suffer no restrictions. This happens every time a girl or woman menstruates. 841

Marriage takes place at an early age; it was said that girls sometimes married before puberty, and as we heard of this at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, and Omuni, we see no reason to doubt the truth of the statement[1]. At Omuni it was pointed out that a certain amount of breast development was necessary before marriage, so that it is probable that connection does not antedate puberty by more than a short time. 582 [856]

With regard to the frequency of such child marriages, we can only say that we never saw any very young girls with babies. Perhaps at the present day prenuptial connection is more common than marriage between the very young, though it is obviously difficult to decide when prenuptial love-making between individuals destined for each other gives place to marriage, among people whose marriages are accompanied with but slight ceremony. It must be remembered that the marriage gift of landed or personal property to a son-in-law, which was formerly customary, is obsolescent at the present day, and this not only makes it more difficult to determine whether marriage has taken place, but probably actually tends to make the exact time of the assumption of the married state less clearly defined. 836 [585] [583]

On account of these considerations we are unable to express any definite opinion as to the frequency of prenuptial connection, the few instances we heard of were between individuals occupying the relationship of *hura* and *naena*, who would in any case marry each other. Thus Kaira of Henebedda and his wife grew up in the same group, and as they had played together as

[1] We are indebted to Mr Frederick Lewis for the information that this is a common practice among Tamils.

136 The grass in the glades was so tall that it covered us entirely. One's only chance of encountering game lay at the forest margins, or in the infrequent patches of burnt ground, overspread with the tender spicous shoots of which the chital are fond. Parrots and doves broke the stillness of the evening with their crooning. Startled quails whirred from our feet crying vociferous caution to their crouching young, and sometimes we would flush a *pathan kuhula*, a species of partridge. But the note that accorded most with the brooding genius of the place, was the mournful, incessant 'ho-ho, ho-ho' of the *botua-kapan*, a cuckoo which, try as we might, we failed to see.

361 The next morning, provided with a small langur we shot on the way,
231 we visited the Henebedde Veddas in their homes. Handuna's hut stood at the foot of a densely wooded hill. There were a few cattle about which the Veddas tended for a consideration from the Sinhalese; and, what was even more unexpected, we found here a couple of hens with excellent broods; for, even the Sinhalese of these parts, as we learnt to our cost, kept no fowls. In these pursuits lie the nuclei that bid fair to tie nomadic hunters to fixed abodes.

342 Handuna's hut was a long low structure of wattle and bast thatched with straw, and partitioned into three or four dark rooms, occupied by his family and those of his sons-in-law. At one end of the building was an
[281 362] open living-room in which we were entertained with deer skins for seats. Slung from the eaves, at the other end of the hut, was a gourd, the mouth
231 of which was plugged with wax pierced with two small holes, through which bees busily entered and emerged. As I focussed my camera on this interesting example of Vedda apiculture, the enterprising showman naively remarked that a gentleman had once given him a rupee for that picture; but he might have spared the hint for the good it brought him.

343 Standing a little apart from the main hut, was a squat, kennel-like
[84] structure for the segregation of women, during their monthly indis-
[171] position. This feature is universal among jungle folk, whether Vedda, half-Vedda, Sinhalese, or Tamil. These sheds, barely sufficient for an individual to sit or lie crouched in, are often overgrown by jungle, and only crudely protected with bark-slats or deer skins; they have a fire-place at the open entrance; sometimes they are more hygienically built over trestles. Considering the poor protection they afford, and their nearness to the forest around, it must require some fortitude on the part of those occupying them, especially at night.

252 We now saw the monkey we had brought prepared for food. A slow fire was kindled in the garden; on this the carcase was placed, and turned over until well singed, emitting a most appetising odour. The smooth stone on which Handuna had up to now been seated, and which did service as seat or platter as occasion demanded, was requisitioned; the half-roasted animal was placed on it, disemboweled, and quartered with the blade of an arrow. A dog, that had been awaiting the opportunity, feasted on the offal in full view. The head was severed and split in half,
[824 264] the limbs, dismembered, and the trunk broken flat. The various fragments were then put back to roast. When all was ready, dainty morsels were served out to us on broad *kenda** leaves (the usual plates of these
262 people), with the polite request that we must eat first. A fragment of liver done to a turn, and a dainty hand with the charred little fingers

*Macaranga tomentosa.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

582 Since the children of two brothers or two sisters cannot
601 marry each other, they are not *hura* and *naena* but call each other "brothers" and "sisters," using the terms for elder or younger brother or sister according to their age[1].

(Every Vedda so readily helps all the other members of his
621 community and shares any game he may kill or honey he may
224 take in so liberal a manner that at first it was difficult to deter-
606 mine who were the individuals who had a special claim on others of the group. Certainly at first sight it seemed as if all game were equally divided among the members of the group, but after a little time we perceived that while an unmarried man looked especially after his mother, a married man's father-in-law had at least an equal claim on his son-in-law and in practice often received more attention, since a man generally spent most of his time with his wife's family) That the relationship between
606 father-in-law and son-in-law is very close was shown in a number of ways, thus, when discussing children and their bringing up with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, we asked him whether Veddas
[842] preferred to have a son or a daughter, the answer was prompt and decided, "a daughter, for thus a man obtains a son-in-law"; and on another occasion when discussing relationship he stated very decidedly, *amma mama ekei*, mother and mother's brother (i.e. father-in-law) are alike, and pointed out that as a man treats

[1] It may be worth while to say something concerning the alleged intermarriage of brother and sister among the Veddas, since Bailey and Hartshorne believed that such marriages occurred, and the Sarasins considered further investigation advisable. Our conclusions agree so thoroughly with Nevill's that we feel that we need do no more than quote what he has written on this subject. "Much nonsense has been written by persons who ought to have known better, about marriage of Vaeddas with their sisters. Such incest never was allowed, and never could be, while the Vaedda customs lingered. Incest is regarded as worse than murder. So positive is this feeling, that the Tamils have based a legend upon the instant murder of his sister, by a Vaedda to whom she had made undue advances. The mistake arose from crass ignorance of Vaedda usages. The title of cousin with whom marriages ought to be contracted, that is, mother's brother's daughter, or father's sister's daughter, is *naga* or *nangi*. This in Sinhalese is applied to a younger sister. Hence if you ask a Vaedda, 'Do you marry your sisters?' the Sinhalese interpreter is apt to say, 'do you marry your naga?' The reply is (I have often tested it), 'yes—we always did formerly, but now it is not always observed.' You say then, 'What? marry your own sister naga?' and the reply is an angry and insulted denial, the very question appearing a gross insult; and if put by a Sinhalese, the Vaedda would probably not even reply to him, but turn away with a gesture of contempt." *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 172.

1.Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

114 p. 135, but it may be noted that Bailey clearly did not know of the existence of shamanistic ceremonies and we have little doubt that the information given him, which he took to refer to dreams, in fact described the experiences of possession. The "few sticks...with a branch thrown over them" are clearly remains of the *massa* upon which the offerings are placed.

775 753 The *Maha Yakino* are the spirits of old Vedda women, the chief of whom is the Maha Kiriamma, who, as Bailey pointed out in 1863, is more feared than loved, and in many cases is supposed to send sickness. It was said that her name was Anami and that she lived at Okegala near Alutnuwara, dying of old age; but in spite of these circumstantial details, which are perhaps due to the teachings of Tissahami, neither the name nor the memory of her husband has survived.

775 Unapane Kiriamma is another important *Maha Yakini* who lived near Unapane[1].

Unapane Kiriamma also gives luck in honey getting, and it is thought that she in some way causes bees to build good combs, in fact, all the *Maha Yakino* are associated with rock honey from the belief that they especially affect the rocky crests of hills[2].

Although the *Maha Yakino* are looked upon as the spirits of old Vedda women and are reputed to show their fondness for children by kidnapping them, they are regarded with considerable awe, for they are considered to send disease, and it is necessary to make an offering to them in order that this may be removed. This is generally done at the *kolamadutwa* ceremony described on p. 268. With the exception of the

[1] She is known to the jungle Sinhalese of the Vedirata, who state that with her husband Unapane Kaira Wanniya she made the Unapane paddy fields. She is particularly invoked by barren women, and those who have brought forth still-born children, for increase of cattle and milk, to prevent cattle being taken by leopards or damaging the crops and to give good harvests. [842]

[2] Offerings of honey made to the *Maha Yakino* are described elsewhere. The belief that the *Maha Yakino* are especially associated with hills is also found among the Sinhalese of the Vedda country, who especially associate these spirits with hills on which springs are found or on which streams arise. One such hill near Nilgala, which at the end of the rains has many small streams running down its face, is known as Yakini Ela and is especially associated by the neighbouring Sinhalese with the *Maha Yakino*, who they say can be heard moving about the crest at night. [823]

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
593 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The individuals concerned in the polyandrous marriage at Henebedda are Handuna (8), the Vidane Appuhami (4), and Kandi (10)[1]. It will be seen from the genealogy that Handuna and Appuhami are the sons of a brother and sister, both have intercourse with Kandi, though the latter is nominally the wife of Handuna who is the older man. Kandi is an unusually pretty woman and considerably younger than either. We were told that Appuhami at one time lived with Badeni (11), his father's sister's grandchild, but was compelled to give her up on account of the jealousy displayed by Kandi. 595

We have already pointed out that a man spends much of his time with his father-in-law, i.e. with his wife's people, hunting and wandering with them and having perfect free access to his father-in-law's hunting ground and fishing pools; at Sitala Wanniya we were told that after a few days spent in a shelter on the territory in the man's community to which the bridegroom carried his bride on first receiving her, the young couple should return to the bride's group. Even at the present day this is the case to a great extent, though among settled communities as at Bandaraduwa there is a tendency for the women to come to the man's community and stay there with him[2]. 591

Pregnancy is diagnosed after two menstrual periods have been missed. The change in the breasts is not noticed. Birth takes place in the cave (unless labour should come on suddenly and occur in the jungle); no screen is put up, and any woman will assist the parturient woman; the cord is cut with an arrow—the common tool used for all cutting purposes—and the after-birth is thrown away. The umbilicus is treated with cloth and ashes, and the portion of the umbilical cord which drops from the navel is not preserved. We never heard of a case of twins. [843] 844 [845]

During labour the patient leans back with one shoulder or

the Ordinance the name of the elder brother was given as that of the bridegroom, but everyone was aware that the girl would regard the other brothers as being equally her husbands."

[1] The numbers in parentheses refer to the genealogy on p. 60.

[2] Both *kanu* and *diga* marriages occur among the peasant Sinhalese but, according to Mr Bibile, *diga* marriage is the common practice.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

844 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at 843 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *madu*, which fruits are 262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard 853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would 262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wanduru*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The 844 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round [184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's 262] flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be dangerously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *katandirale* (devil dancer) [165] would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who 834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa 551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[782] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

776 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

the bowstring aiming in the air he did not loose his arrow. Soon he slipped down on one knee letting the other leg trail on the ground, and we were told that the wild boar had turned and charged him. Immediately one of the Vedda onlookers sprang forward and "medicined" the leg, that is to say, he wiped it down with a leaf as though he swept the pain from the leg to the earth, and the shaman, apparently cured, continued to hunt. Three times he shot at the *welemula* and hit it each time, then leaning back in the arms of his supporter he gasped: "I have shot the boar, now I am going." After more gasping and quivering he fell into his supporter's arms and the *yaka* left him.

535
796

After the ceremony all the food was eaten except the pumpkin which was left to rot on the *maesa*. Wannaku told us that the *yaku* would come and eat this, getting under the *maesa* and sucking the goodness out of it; the pumpkin would remain there and would look perfect, but should anyone cook it and try to eat it, he would find its substance was gone, so that it would be like trying to eat grass. As we asked to keep the bow and arrows, which would otherwise have been left to rot on the *maesa*, Wannaku sprinkled some water over them and muttered an explanation to the *yaku* before giving them to us.

THE PATA YAKU CEREMONY.

All Veddas recognise childbirth as a time of extreme pain and even danger to women, and the individuals of the Sitala Wanniya group invoke the aid of the *yaku* as soon as pregnancy is diagnosed[1]. A week before we arrived at Sitala Wanniya this ceremony had been held on behalf of Bevini, the wife of Vela, who did not appear to be at all far advanced in pregnancy. On the other hand, Mari, the wife of Pema, on whose account the Pata Yaku dance which we witnessed was performed, appeared to be quite six months pregnant. The delay had probably been caused only by the lack of the good things which it was necessary to offer to the *yaku* on these occasions, and both Pema and his father-in-law Nila seemed very gratified when

843
796

[1] We did not hear of this ceremony among the Veddas of any other group.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 we provided the rice and coconut necessary for the ceremony.
796 This food is always eaten by the community after the *yaku* have inspected it.

The *yaku* invoked to ensure safety during pregnancy and
843 childbirth are three in number and are called Pata (bark) Yaku.
796 No story could be discovered concerning them, nor could any
776 reason be elicited for the name Pata (bark) or the large quantity of bast which is used in the dance. This can be taken from any tree in the jungle, and is torn into strips about half-an-inch broad. It may, however, be suggested that these particular *yaku* require the *inner* bark of trees as a resting-place just as the *yaku* invoked to come to the *kolomaduwa* or *alutyakagama* come first to the leaves used in making these structures, and then may or may not enter the person of the shaman, while they may take refuge again in the leaves after they leave the shaman. In the instances cited the leafy structures were beaten with sticks after the ceremony to drive the *yaku* away; this ritual was not observed in the Pata Yaku ceremony, but it must be remembered that only three *yaku* were invoked and the shaman may have been thoroughly satisfied that they had gone away from the place, while, on the other hand, in the two other ceremonies we were told that hosts of attendant *yaku* rested amid the leaves, and that the more important spirits alone entered the persons of the dancers.

The properties used in the Pata Yaku ceremony held for
843 Mari at Sitala Wanniya were as follows: three stout posts,
796 which were thrust into the ground in a line; the tallest was about 2 ft 6 in. high and the shortest somewhat less than 2 ft, the upper ends of all being forked and large quantities of strips of bast lashed to them. These bast covered stakes are called
[293] the *usmukaliya*, *medamukaliya* and *balakanna*, i.e. the high, middle and young post respectively, and each one belongs to one of the Pata Yaku. The *wilakodiya* or *kude* (umbrella), which belongs to all the Pata Yaku, is a similar bunch of bast strips tied to a rather longer stick which is not driven into the ground. The *amamula* is a stout stick about 18 inches long, to which bunches of bast are tied at each end and doubled back so as to present somewhat the appearance of a dumbbell. All these

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843
796

properties had been used previously in the ceremony performed for Bevini[1].

843
796
535

Two dancers must take part in the ceremony, and one of them should be the woman's father, whether he be shaman or not; if the woman has no father, or if he is unable to dance, her paternal uncle or her husband may take his part. In the ceremony we witnessed Nila, the father of Mari, and Vela, who was no relation to her, both wore the *hangala*. Nila also wore wristlets and cross shoulder straps of bark which represented beads.

As usual all the women and children collected at one side of the cleared space to watch the ceremony, and Mari joined the other women in preparing the offering of cooked food. An arrow was struck (Plate XLV, fig. 1) in the ground beside the *usmukaliya*, and Nila, standing in front of the three posts, began an invocation (No. XXX) which was soon taken up by the other men. Nila salaamed, took the arrow out of the earth and began to dance round the three posts, and then in and out between them, without observing any particular order, holding the end of the shaft with one hand and the head of the arrow with the other. The usual steps and movements were performed, the knees bent, the body inclined from the waist and swaying to and fro, the arms with the arrow between them being moved to and fro, but not raised higher than the chest. Vela followed Nila closely; it appeared that he should have held an arrow, but not having one, he did the next best thing and pretended that he had one, holding his hands as though there was an arrow between them.

Suddenly when between two of the posts Nila dropped the arrow on the ground and leapt over it. Kaira, one of the onlookers, immediately picked it up and returned it to Nila. Nila then dropped the arrow between the other two posts and again leapt over it. This was repeated several times, Kaira always picking up the arrow and returning it to Nila, whose movements Vela imitated. Although we asked numerous questions as to the meaning of this figure no reason could be supplied, "Our fathers did it" was all the information we could obtain. The movements had gradually become quicker and

[1] See genealogy, p. 61.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843 796 535 wilder till after a final leap between the posts Nila fell supine with outstretched arms, and was immediately supported by one of the onlookers. The *yaka* of the high post now possessed Nila who, after a few minutes' immobility, began to shiver and gasp, then springing forward he danced to the posts with shuffling feet and head bent forward, and examined each one in turn. This he did by dropping his head on them so that his face was partly buried in the bast, his supporter always close behind him (Plate XLV, fig. 2). We were told that Nila was now possessed by all three *yaku*, who appear to have entered him as he bent over the posts. The exact moment of the entry and exit of the *yaka* into the person of the shaman was often very ill-defined, although in this instance, and indeed in most cases when more than one *yaka* was present at a dance, it was clear when the first *yaka* arrived, it seemed that the other *yaka* entered the shaman without giving any immediate sign of their presence.

The *yaku* speaking through Nila signified that they were pleased with the posts built for their reception. Then Nila picked up the *wila* and shouting, apparently with approval, held it up by each end and whirled the handle round making the bast strands fly out, then he approached Mari and waved it over [787] her head and rested it there, so that her head was buried in the bast for several seconds while Nila predicted a male child (Plate XLVI, fig. 1)[1]. Nila then danced to Handuna and waved the *wila* over him. No particular reason was given for [554] this, Handuna being no relation to the woman, but he was the most important old man in the community.

After covering Handuna with the *wila*, Nila danced wildly, always with the rapt expression of a man possessed by a *yaku*, showing his pleasure by holding the *wila* aloft and whirling it round and round. Then Nila put down the *wila* and took the *amamula* and dancing with it in his hand he approached Mari stretching it out towards her, but he only stayed a few seconds and passed on to Handuna and falling on the latter's chest spoke and again foretold the birth of a male child to Mari.

[1] The sex of the child is determined by the position assumed by the strips of bast as they fall over the woman's head. If most fall over the woman's face the child will be a girl, if over the occiput a boy.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

843
535
796

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the beginning of the dance (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman buries his face in the *usmukaliya* (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250a]

843
535
796
[787]

Fig. 1. Pata Yaku ceremony, the shaman predicts the sex of the child (Sitala Wanniya)*

Fig. 2. Pata Yaku ceremony, Nila prays for his daughter's safe delivery (Sitala Wanniya)*

[facing p. 250 b]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Nila exchanged the *amamula* for the *wila*, and coming to Mari again, raised the *wila* above her head and lowered it to the ground, letting the bast strips brush her face and body and then sweep the ground. This was done in order to wipe away the pain of labour. Then he leapt back to the centre of the cleared space and danced in and out between the three posts, hitting them with the *wila*. This was probably a sign of pleasure, for the driving away of *yaku* by striking their resting place would probably only take place at the end of the ceremony. He again approached Mari and fell back into the arms of his supporter, only remaining quiet for a few seconds until, trembling and gasping, he bent his head over the *usmukaliya* and buried his face in the bast. After doing this over each post he returned to the *usmukaliya* and said he must go, speaking in the usual husky and gasping *yaku* voice; then he fell exhausted into the arms of his supporter. All the Veddas now began to sing the invocation, and it was clear that the *yaku* had not departed from Nila for he soon began to quiver and gasp again, and sprang forward and danced between the three posts; then he began to search for something, lifting the strands of bast on the *usmukaliya*, and after an exaggerated pantomimic search he found the *wila*, turning this in his hands so that the bast swung at right angles, he waved it over each of the three posts; then turning to the *usmukaliya*, bent his head low over it and fell back exhausted. The *yaku* now left him and he recovered consciousness without any quivering or trembling, salaamed to the *usmukaliya* and sat down to rest. All the properties were immediately piled together under a tree. It may be noted that although Vela began to dance with Nila, he did not become possessed and so took no part in the latter portion of the dance.

After a short rest Nila went to the pile and holding a few strands of bast in one hand (Plate XLVI, fig. 2) repeated the following prayer to the Pata Yaku for his daughter's safety a number of times:—

Ani! mayé daruwata kisi antarāwak wenda epā mé wara.
Goda yanta denda ōnae.

Ani! (May) any harm not happen to my child this time.
(You) must permit (her) to land (i.e. to escape from her sea of troubles).

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

165 the other hand, the mortality would be very considerable among the offspring. This mortality, when infantile, would generally be among the first born and last born, owing to maternal immaturity in the first case and constitutional depletion in the last.

842 On the question of sex I found that the prevalent idea was
893 that if a wife was not thoroughly obedient to her husband she would invariably give birth to females, and it was only complete subjection to the husband's will that could secure a preponderance of males.

I could get no information on the subject of barrenness or sterility.

776 As regards the religion of the Veddas previous to their
782 modernization, it appears that they believed in certain "Yakko," who exercised certain influences for good or evil. There was no conception of a Supreme Creator. On the other hand, the "Yakko" possessed, in common with humanity, a tendency to favour; so that it was always possible to secure its influence in return for special molifying ceremonies. Thus, by certain incantations, ceremonial offerings, or honorific declarations, the Yakko who exercised specific powers could be induced to subtend influence to the advantage of the individual then desiring it. Thus, the Yakka who guarded the deer might be induced to direct the deer to come within the reach of the Vedda's bow and arrows. On the other hand, another Yakka might be propitiated so as to render the hunter invisible to the leopard, so that the hunter would escape harm.

789 Special incantations were supposed to render an individual
224 successful in the chase, so that his aim would be deadly, or that more game would come his way.

753 Again, disease or sickness was the direct outcome of certain
843 malign Yakko, who could be propitiated, and this was specially to be considered when a woman was pregnant, so that the evil might be diverted from the unborn child.

241 I was not able to discover from my informant if the Veddas, in their primitive times had any definite form of agriculture. It is certain that they were acquainted with rice, but I could not ascertain how it was procured.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The individuals concerned in the polyandrous marriage at Henebedda are Handuna (8), the Vidane Appuhami (4), and Kandi (10)[1]. It will be seen from the genealogy that Handuna and Appuhami are the sons of a brother and sister, both have intercourse with Kandi, though the latter is nominally the wife of Handuna who is the older man. Kandi is an unusually pretty woman and considerably younger than either. We were told that Appuhami at one time lived with Badeni (11), his father's sister's grandchild, but was compelled to give her up on account of the jealousy displayed by Kandi. 595

We have already pointed out that a man spends much of his time with his father-in-law, i.e. with his wife's people, hunting and wandering with them and having perfectly free access to his father-in-law's hunting ground and fishing pools; at Sitala Wanniya we were told that after a few days spent in a shelter on the territory in the man's community to which the bridegroom carried his bride on first receiving her, the young couple should return to the bride's group. Even at the present day this is the case to a great extent, though among settled communities as at Bandaraduwa there is a tendency for the women to come to the man's community and stay there with him[2]. 591

Pregnancy is diagnosed after two menstrual periods have been missed. The change in the breasts is not noticed. Birth takes place in the cave (unless labour should come on suddenly and occur in the jungle); no screen is put up, and any woman will assist the parturient woman; the cord is cut with an arrow—the common tool used for all cutting purposes—and the afterbirth is thrown away. The umbilicus is treated with cloth and ashes, and the portion of the umbilical cord which drops from the navel is not preserved. We never heard of a case of twins. [843] 844 [845]

During labour the patient leans back with one shoulder or

the Ordinance the name of the elder brother was given as that of the bridegroom, 'but everyone was aware that the girl would regard the other brothers as being equally her husbands.'

[1] The numbers in parentheses refer to the genealogy on p. 60.

[2] Both *binna* and *diga* marriages occur among the pattat Sinhalese but, according to Mr Bible, *diga* marriage is the common practice.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

844 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at
843 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *madu*, which fruits are
262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard
853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would
262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wanduru*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The
844 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round
[184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's
262] flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be danger-
[165] ously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *katandirale* (devil dancer) would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who
834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth, the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa
551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX3 Vedda AX5

775 the present shaman was called Suwanda, and no dance to his
755 spirit was held till a long time, perhaps as much as a year, after his decease. But when the shaman's mother became ill he was invoked and offerings were made, with the result that the patient got well. In connection with this it was explained that it was not
775 unusual for the *Nae Yaku* to make even their nearest and dearest
753 relatives ill for the sake of the offerings they would then receive.

It was stated that the *Nae Yaku* are not allowed to kill people but only to make them ill, permission to do this and to accept offerings being obtained from Kataragam Deyo, Saman Deyo, and Numeriya Deyo. We could not ascertain with
775 certainty whether the *Nae Yaku* have anything to do with sending luck in hunting, but if they are concerned in this they clearly play quite a subordinate part. When taking honey a little is left at the foot of the tree, this was said to be for the
[762] *Nae Yaku*, who may be called to it by some such expression as "here is honey, be pleased to eat[1]."

A female spirit Elle Yakini is invoked when a woman is
[843] pregnant, to protect mother and child; beads which belong to the shaman, who seems to keep them for this purpose, are placed on a piece of cloth and invocations are spoken. After
[844] childbirth a bower apparently resembling the *kolamaduwa* is made, Elle Yakini is invoked and an offering of food made to her. At the time of our visit it was said that a dance would shortly be held to Elle Yakini in thanks for having given a woman, who at first had difficulty in nursing her child, an abundant flow of milk. Elle Yakini will be invoked with an ordinary hunting arrow, and when possessed by her the shaman will gasp out some such formula as this "Now I have made you well, remember me in future." Offerings would not be made to Elle Yakini until her help was again needed.

ELAKOTALIYA.

776 The most important spiritual agencies are the gods and demons who are worshipped at Kalukalaeba. Indigollae Yaka is said to give good luck to hunters, for neither Kande Yaka,

[1] The geographical position of Kalukalaeba allows the Veddas of this group no opportunity of collecting rock honey.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

of the bark of the Ritti (*Antiaris toxicaria*) for males, and a sort of leaf-skirt for the females. 291 824

No jewellery was worn by the males or females. Sometimes a necklace made of shells ("Bellan") was worn by the younger females, but such things as rings were unknown to the earlier Veddas. 301

They had no idea of time beyond the subdivision of the 24 hours into two divisions, viz., that of light and darkness. Other than this there was no computation except a man's knowledge of a certain striking event that happened in his "small time," but how long ago that was could not be stated. 805

The taking of a woman to wife required mainly the sanction of the girl's father, after which a few exchanges might be made in signification of the consent of parties. After this the man and woman lived together, while before they would not so much as dare speak to one another in public, unless related. 583

The age of the woman was invariably extremely youthful at the time of her "marriage," and even at the present day, notwithstanding the comparative civilization of the modern Vedda descendants, youthful marriages still prevail. 582

I found in response to my inquiries in all parts of the Vedda country that I visited, that 12 years was a common age for a girl to be taken to wife at. In one village I was present at an inquiry by a headman into a case where the girl was only 8. In this case the headman expressed the opinion that the marriage was "very bad."

My informant told me that with the Veddas there was no custom for the woman, when about to give birth to a child, to go to a separate house or hut for the purpose, but that this custom had only come in later. 844 177

Among the Veddas there was no such thing as prostitution, nor could I learn that there was polyandry. 548 595

The bearing age of women would be at about 14, that of puberty being a year earlier. 145

Women would have children up to about 28, and as might be expected from the condition of youthful cohabitation for one or two years prior to puberty, the proportion of males and females in a family would be pretty nearly equal. On 165

291 When Kauwa was young his people wore threshed *riti** bark suspended
[287] from the waist by a *riti* strip. A Vedda belle would sometimes trick
824] herself out in such adornments as a *riti* collar sewn at the back with
nuga† fibre, anklets of red ixora blooms, lotus petals in ear lobes and as
301 garlands round neck and loins, and circlets of strung wild jasmine round the hair knot. Difficult, though it be, to reconcile this picture with the wretched specimens one meets to-day, it must be admitted that Kauwa had no imagination to run loose. An old song tells of Vedda maidens whose heads were adorned with peacock plumes.

● 844 Vedda man and wife usually walk the forest together, and accouche-
ments often occur away from home and female assistance; the man then
84[does duty for midwife by placing the woman with her back to a rock
and two stones to her feet. For nine days after child-birth he feeds her
26 only on *gonala* yams and the flesh of monitors.

*Antiaris toxicaria.
† Ficus altissima

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

The individuals concerned in the polyandrous marriage at Henebedda are Handuna (8), the Vidane Appuhami (4), and Kandi (10)[1]. It will be seen from the genealogy that Handuna and Appuhami are the sons of a brother and sister, both have intercourse with Kandi, though the latter is nominally the wife of Handuna who is the older man. Kandi is an unusually pretty woman and considerably younger than either. We were told that Appuhami at one time lived with Badeni (11), his father's sister's grandchild, but was compelled to give her up on account of the jealousy displayed by Kandi. 595

We have already pointed out that a man spends much of his time with his father-in-law, i.e. with his wife's people, hunting and wandering with them and having perfectly free access to his father-in-law's hunting ground and fishing pools; at Sitala Wanniya we were told that after a few days spent in a shelter on the territory in the man's community to which the bridegroom carried his bride on first receiving her, the young couple should return to the bride's group. Even at the present day this is the case to a great extent, though among settled communities as at Bandaraduwa there is a tendency for the women to come to the man's community and stay there with him[2]. 591

Pregnancy is diagnosed after two menstrual periods have been missed. The change in the breasts is not noticed. Birth takes place in the cave (unless labour should come on suddenly and occur in the jungle); no screen is put up, and any woman will assist the parturient woman; the cord is cut with an arrow—the common tool used for all cutting purposes—and the afterbirth is thrown away. The umbilicus is treated with cloth and ashes, and the portion of the umbilical cord which drops from the navel is not preserved. We never heard of a case of twins. [843] 844 [845]

During labour the patient leans back with one shoulder or

the Ordinance the name of the elder brother was given as that of the bridegroom, but everyone was aware that the girl would regard the other brothers as being equally her husbands."

[1] The numbers in parentheses refer to the genealogy on p. 60.

[2] Both *ásna* and *diga* marriages occur among the peasant Sinhalese but, according to Mr Bible, *diga* marriage is the commoner practice.

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

291 When Kauwa was young his people wore threshed *riti** bark suspended
[287] from the waist by a *riti* strip. A Vedda belle would sometimes trick
824] herself out in such adornments as a *riti* collar sewn at the back with
nuga† fibre, anklets of red ixora blooms, lotus petals in ear lobes and as
301 garlands round neck and loins, and circlets of strung wild jasmine round the hair knot. Difficult, though it be, to reconcile this picture with the wretched specimens one meets to-day, it must be admitted that Kauwa had no imagination to run loose. An old song tells of Vedda maidens whose heads were adorned with peacock plumes.

844 Vedda man and wife usually walk the forest together, and accouche-
ments often occur away from home and female assistance; the man then
● 84[does duty for midwife by placing the woman with her back to a rock
and two stones to her feet. For nine days after child-birth he feeds her
260 only on *gonala* yams and the flesh of monitors.

*Antiaris toxicaria.
† *Ficus altissima*

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

The
162 race is rapidly becoming extinct; large families are all but un-
163 known, and longevity is very rare. I have been at some pains to obtain reliable data to elucidate these points. Out of seventy-two Veddahs in Nilgala, fifty were adults, twenty-two children. In one small sept, or family, there were nine adults and one child; in another, one child and eight adults; and so on. In Bintenne, out of three hundred and eight Veddahs, a hundred and seventy-five were adults, a hundred and thirty-three children. Here the disproportion is not so marked; but in one of the smaller tribes, more isolated than the rest, there were twenty adults and but four children.

The paucity of children, I think, must be ascribed to the degeneracy produced by such close intermarriages, for I have never heard a suspicion of infanticide existing among them.* Out of
[847] fifty adults in Nilgala, only one appeared to have numbered seventy years, and but eight to have exceeded fifty. In Bintenne, of a hundred and seventy-five adults, two only seemed to have reached their seventieth, and but fourteen to have exceeded their fiftieth years. Such statistics seem to show the practical results of such connections. The Nilgala Veddahs, who still maintain an almost total isolation from other people, are rapidly disappearing.† The Veddahs of Bintenne, who have abandoned the pernicious custom which I have described, and still intermarry among themselves, are becoming extinct, though more gradually.

The Veddahs have no ceremonies at the birth of a child, nor
[852] when the name is given; and though, in Bintenne, they have
764 long buried and mourned their dead, those of Nilgala have only commenced, in this generation, to do either.

Till very recently the dead man was left where he died. The survivors covered the body with leaves, put a heavy stone upon its chest, and sought some other cave, leaving that in which the death occurred to the spirit of the deceased. They still desert the scene of the death, and the bones, constantly found in good preservation in the caves of Nilgala, prove how recently the practice of leaving the body unburied has been abandoned.

000 Tennent says, truly, that they have "no system of caste among

* It certainly *was* practised among the Kandyans, but never, I think, to any great extent. I have, however, seen two persons who, when infants, were buried alive by their mothers, and rescued.

† Knox speaks, page 62, of Veddahs, "who lived about Hourly, the remotest of the king's dominions," who were "pretty tame," and used "to come and buy and sell among the people," who resented "being pressed to serve the king" in some expedition, and so "removed further into the woods and would be seen no more." "Hourly" is evidently the village of "Oora-oola," on the furthest boundary of the Nilgala district, which, though, as tradition has it, it was once peopled by Veddahs, is now exclusively inhabited by Singhalese.

2: Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

The
162 race is rapidly becoming extinct; large families are all but un-
163 known, and longevity is very rare. I have been at some pains to obtain reliable data to elucidate these points. Out of seventy-two Veddahs in Nilgala, fifty were adults, twenty-two children. In one small sept, or family, there were nine adults and one child; in another, one child and eight adults; and so on. In Bintenne, out of three hundred and eight Veddahs, a hundred and seventy-five were adults, a hundred and thirty-three children. Here the disproportion is not so marked; but in one of the smaller tribes, more isolated than the rest, there were twenty adults and but four children.

The paucity of children, I think, must be ascribed to the degeneracy produced by such close intermarriages, for I have never heard a suspicion of infanticide existing among them.* Out of
[847] fifty adults in Nilgala, only one appeared to have numbered seventy years, and but eight to have exceeded fifty. In Bintenne, of a hundred and seventy-five adults, two only seemed to have reached their seventieth, and but fourteen to have exceeded their fiftieth years. Such statistics seem to show the practical results of such connections. The Nilgala Veddahs, who still maintain an almost total isolation from other people, are rapidly disappearing.† The Veddahs of Bintenne, who have abandoned the pernicious custom which I have described, and still intermarry among themselves, are becoming extinct, though more gradually.

[852] The Veddahs have no ceremonies at the birth of a child, nor
764 when the name is given; and though, in Bintenne, they have long buried and mourned their dead, those of Nilgala have only commenced, in this generation, to do either.

Till very recently the dead man was left where he died. The survivors covered the body with leaves, put a heavy stone upon its chest, and sought some other cave, leaving that in which the death occurred to the spirit of the deceased. They still desert the scene of the death, and the bones, constantly found in good preservation in the caves of Nilgala, prove how recently the practice of leaving the body unburied has been abandoned.

000 Tennent says, truly, that they have "no system of caste among

* It certainly *was* practised among the Kandyans, but never, I think, to any great extent. I have, however, seen two persons who, when infants, were buried alive by their mothers, and rescued.

† Knox speaks, page 62, of Veddahs, "who lived about Hourly, the remotest of the king's dominions," who were "pretty tame," and used "to come and buy and sell among the people," who resented "being pressed to serve the king" in some expedition, and so "removed further into the woods and would be seen no more." "Hourly" is evidently the village of "Oara-eela," on the furthest boundary of the Nilgala district, which, though, as tradition has it, it was once peopled by Veddahs, is now exclusively inhabited by Singhalese.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

844 side supported by an angle of the rock, and a woman behind her supports her and presses down upon her shoulders. The woman remains in the cave for three or four days after the birth. At Sitala Wanniya there are no food taboos, but at
843 Henebedda a pregnant woman avoids *madu*, which fruits are
262 said to produce diarrhœa and vomiting, and two kinds of yams which also purge and are believed to induce still-birth. A nursing mother must eat neither the fat of the monitor lizard
853 nor *rilawa* flesh, as these are said to produce purging and would
262 kill the infant. She may, however, eat the meat of the grey ape *wandurु*. The fat of the spotted deer also spoils the milk, and if the mother eats *mora* fruit the child will get worms. The
844 Henebedda Veddas, who are partially cave and hut dwellers, say that if a birth occurs in the cave a screen is made round
[184] the parturient woman. Among all the settled Veddas, as among the rural Sinhalese, a special hut is built in which birth occurs. The afterbirth is commonly buried in the hut among village Veddas, and no Veddas seem to attach any special importance to its disposal.

[843 At Uniche a pregnant woman would not eat venison or hare's flesh. The pains and danger of childbirth are so well recognised
262] by the Veddas that a special ceremony is performed by the wilder Veddas, and a prayer offered for the safety of the young mother (cf. p. 251). We were assured at Sitala Wanniya that if this ceremony were omitted the mother and child would die. At Henebedda it was said that if a woman appeared to be dangerously ill in childbed, a Sinhalese *katandirale* (devil dancer
[165] would be called in. Death during childbirth seemed rare, but a few cases were recorded. Except among those Veddas who
834 have come most under Sinhalese influence connection is not avoided during pregnancy, or for any considerable period after childbirth, nor is chastity enforced before hunting or dancing.

[553] Children are usually named within a month of their birth the name being decided upon by their parents. At Godatalawa
551 it was said that a child's name would be freely mentioned, but at Sitala Wanniya and Henebedda we were told that, although every child was given a name soon after birth, they were never called or spoken of by their names until they were at least four

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Plate XIII

142
291
854

Women and girls of Sitala Wanniya

[facing p. 44]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

142
144
441
291

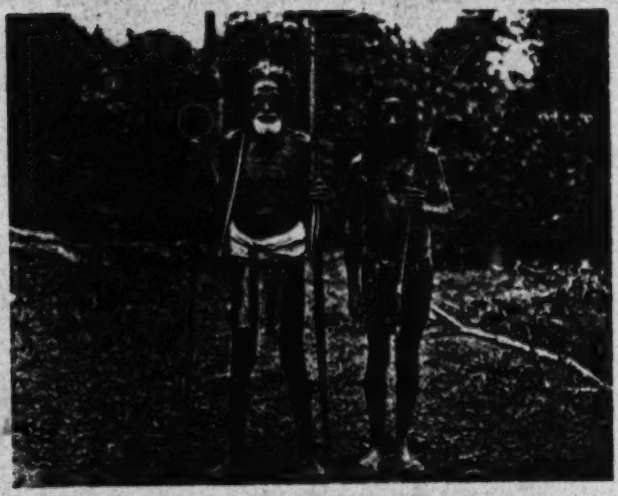


Fig. 1. Men of mixed Sinhalese and Vedda blood from the neighbourhood of Maha Oya.

142
291
854

Fig 2. Women of Omuni

[facing p. 46]

Plate XVI

142
291
[854]

Fig. 1. Men of Yakure

Fig. 2. Veddas of Ulpota

[Facing p. 56]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

considerable part of Vedda possession is a fraud, deliberately conceived and perpetrated, for knowing, as many Veddas do, of the frequency with which the Sinhalese see "devils" and "spirits" of all sorts, nothing would appear easier, if fraud were intended, than for a shaman to assert that he could see the spirits which every Vedda believes are constantly around him.

Arrows play a considerable part in the Vedda religion, two forms of arrow being used. The first is the ordinary arrow used for shooting game, the second a ceremonial arrow called *aude* with a blade 8 to 18 inches long, which is usually but not always hafted into a handle often considerably shorter than the blade[1]. Both forms of arrows are used in the possession dances described in Chapter IX, but in addition to this the shooting arrow is used as a protection to infants, being commonly thrust in the ground by the side of a sleeping child when its mother is forced to leave it. We heard of this custom in several communities, and at Sitala Wanniya, where arrows were scarce, were shown a wooden bladed arrow which was said to be used in this way (figure 7 (*a*)); *aude* might also be made of wood when an iron blade was not available, and figure 7 (*b*) shows a wooden *aude* made for us at Henebedda. These facts are important as showing that the power of the arrow lies in itself and not in its iron blade.

The protective power of the arrow was noted by Nevill, who stated that the Nilgala Veddas "regard the symbol of an arrow, placed by their babe, as efficient protection for it. They leave tiny babes upon the sand for hours together, with no other guard than an arrow stuck in the ground by their side. Their belief in the efficacy of this has received no shock. They never knew such a child to be attacked by wild beasts, pigs, leopards, jackals, etc. or harmed[2]."

With regard to the long-bladed and short-handled ceremonial arrows, the handles of these are sometimes covered with incisions so roughly executed that they do not form a pattern and can hardly be decorative even in intention, so that probably they only serve the useful purpose of preventing the hand from

[1] These ceremonial arrows are doubtless identical with the large blades described by various authors as formerly used in shooting elephants.

[2] *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 184.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

174 effectual so long as there were no influences to weaken it, but when once a preponderating force came to surround these clans, their chance of survival was small, and to prevent individual extinction amalgamation presented the path of minimum resistance.

The effect of this amalgamation was to break down the primitive methods, and concurrently to infuse new blood, and with it to stay, or lessen, the forces that were weakening an already over-inbred stock.

101 If we refer to certain statistics, as recently as 1840 we find
161 that a rough enumeration of the so-called Rock-Veddas disclosed that only thirty families in Bintenna then existed.

Since then the increase of civilized races pressed with yearly greater insistence, till we are forced to conclude that the primitive Vedda is now no more, or nearly so.

142 In my Paper read at the meeting of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society on September 19, 1914, I have described the features of the Vedda family I found at Setawa, but I venture here to repeat it for easy reference.

The man Dissan Hamy is about 5 ft. 10 in. in height, thin, small round the chest, with rather short arms, slender legs, with hardly any calf development. He does not know his age. His head is small, with small dark-brown beady eyes set far back in their sockets. His hair is short, not tied in a [302] knot, staring, and frizzy. His younger brother is shorter in stature, but with the same character of hair on the head. The elder has short, scanty, and bristly moustaches, but in both brothers there is a marked scarcity of hair on the face and body. Dissan Hamy's two sisters are both of normal height, and dress like the other women of the country. They are about 5 ft. 3 in. in height, with slender limbs. Both women are mothers, and both indicated the small breast development that appears to be characteristic of women residing [302 in the arid parts of the country I explored. In both women 354] the hair is short and frizzy. Their infants had shaved heads.

I remarked that the skin of Dissan Hamy's body is darker than that of the other members of the family. The nose is strongly formed, with thin dilated nostrils. The mouth is rather wide, with lips of no unusual thickness.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854

Handuna's household. (Page 18)

142
291
224
411
482

Hennebedde Veddas (Page 16)

The iguana hunter. (Page 17)

[facing p. 17]

5: Spinel D-5 (ca. 1930) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
482
854

"Sedate, wistful children." (Page 36)

[facing p. 36]

411

Kaurata and his wife. (Page 55)

291
516
854

A Galmede home. (Page 60)

[Facing p. 59]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

342
516
854

Veddas of Buhugahadena. (Page 93)

[411]

Veddas of Buhugahadena. (Page 93)

[Facing p. 93]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

142
291
516
854

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 93)

142
291
351

Veddas of Dambana. (Page 93)

[Facing p. 94]

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

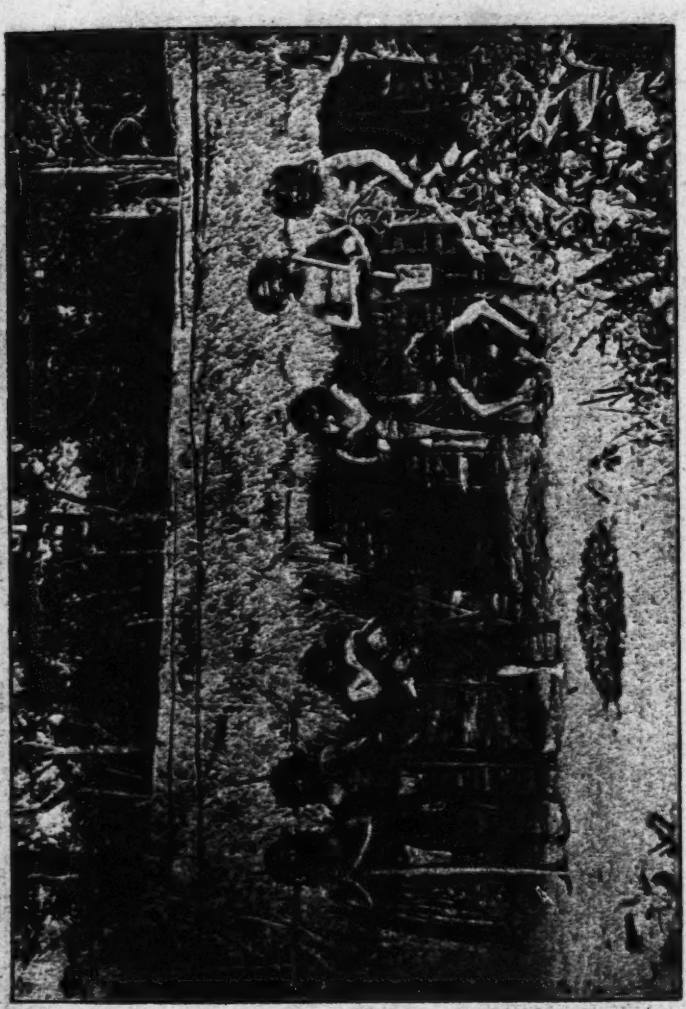


Photo Fr. Sarasin.

342
137
291
516
411
854

Fig. 17. Veddas of the Nilgala Region

L:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

562 609 "It is probable good-looking women have often been kept back by others who had not equal confidence in me[1]."

855 Veddas are affectionate and indulgent parents, never refusing a small child anything it wants and giving it always of the best. We have frequently seen men save for their children food which had been given to them and which they considered specially good, such as bananas or coconuts. The babies are generally happy, but should they cry their wishes are immediately gratified by either parent. We saw a naked boy of about two and a half years strut proudly up and down outside Pihilegodagalge with his father's axe hung on his shoulder, he was extremely happy and all went well until he threatened one of the dogs with the axe, then his mother was obliged to interfere and the child tried to hit her with it; the father seeing this got up and tried to coax the child into giving up the axe, but the boy was now excited and would not give it up, at last he flung it at his father and hit his leg. The man was obviously annoyed and threw the axe from him into the jungle, but he did not attempt to scold or punish the child who was now howling with rage, indeed, after a little while some food was given him to pacify him.

Another time a woman who had been cutting yams with a knife put this down, when her baby snatched it up, and although she was obliged to watch lest he hurt himself, she allowed him to play with the knife. Yet when a child is old enough to wear a little rag in the way of clothing, possibly from
858 six to eight years old, he is expected to behave himself properly and strange to say he does so. One day it was raining heavily, and we were all sitting in the rock shelter at Pihilegodagalge; at the further end of the cave we noticed a lad of seven or nine years old having a heated argument with his mother, suddenly he turned round and went out into the rain, when he returned he had controlled his temper; later we remarked on this and were told that the lad was considered old enough to behave as a man; a boy of this age would not hit his mother as a little
855 child might do and yet be excused. It may here be mentioned
291 that children of both sexes go naked until about six or seven years old, though perhaps the general age for the assumption of

[1] *Tiphrahamian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 192.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clothing is younger in the case of girls than boys. The boy assumes a piece of rag attached to a string in the same manner as men, while girls wear a piece of stuff fastened round their hips like a sarong. A child's first cloth is put on by its mother without any ceremony. The only toys seen were bows and arrows, and these are possessed by every male child. We never saw a little girl play with a bow and arrow, but mothers make them for the baby boys while these are still crawling about. Such toys of course are small and roughly made, but bigger boys of five years old and upwards make quite neat little bows, and shoot with them tolerably well; they do not feather their arrows. Other children were seen playing with clay and sticks; and girls frequently play with broken pots with which they pretend to cook.

As women take the children with them when they go out to dig for yams, little girls soon learn to do this, and boys would begin to be taken out hunting when about ten years old. It was difficult to find out whether the fathers' or mothers' brothers took the greater part in training the boys and it seemed that a lad eager to go out hunting would be taken by any grown man, who in the very small community is usually a relative. Lads would be encouraged by their elders to shoot at a mark with their bows and arrows, and later they would stalk small birds and shoot fish[1].

When a child tells a lie he may be told "Go away, I do not believe what you say," but it appeared that even young children were usually truthful. One thing is taught the lads systematically, that is the method of collecting honey from the combs of the rock bee. Whenever the caves are conveniently situated a ladder of creepers is suspended from a tree in the jungle above and hangs over the end of the face of rock which forms the cave. On this the youths play at "honey getting." At Pihilegodagalge the lads were quite willing to demonstrate to us how it was done, and the elder men showed clearly that this

[1] Nevill, in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. i, 1886, p. 189), says ".....a pellet bow is used occasionally by small boys, and birds are often shot with it, though the aim seems very uncertain." Pellet bows were seen at Henebedde, they are used regularly by the fishermen in the neighbourhood, and we do not doubt that the practice was introduced by them.

S: Spittel D-8 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

these Veddas. Bingoda is not all Vedda; essentially it is a Sinhalese chase village of about six or eight families, within a stone's throw of which are the crude huts belonging to the few surviving Veddas. Through a tangle of overgrown scrub we reach them; they are not so numerous that we cannot easily name every single Vedda there.

Three we have met before, Suthubanda, Gama and Badapissa; it was they who led us such a chase at Galmede. In the first hut we find the swarthy Gama and his comely young wife Kalu—his fifth experiment in matrimony: and he barely twenty-five! Not far from this is Suthubanda's abode, in which are his wife, the skinny Thuthi, mother by previous marriage of Gamma; their two little boys, Handuna and Naida and girls Kumi and Punji. Handuna is the quaintest brat imaginable; he is ash-coloured from top to toe, through crouching by the hearth all night to keep warm his naked body; for, all he has for cover is a little strip of loin cloth drooping erratically from a slack waist-string that sags well below his nates; his rotund abdomen accommodates an enormous spleen; with hands crossed over shrugged shoulders to keep the chill away, he gazes quizzically at you.

Away from these two homes, across the stream, is the only other Vedda hut. Unlike those of Suthubanda and Gama which are of wattle and bast, this is a sadly dilapidated mud structure once occupied by a Moor. It is the most pathetic and curious menage here, and belongs to Kaira brother of Suthubanda. His wife Randunna, a hideous squint-eyed thing, is mother by a previous husband to Heenthuthi the twelve-year old wife of Badapissa (Muthua), Kaira's younger brother! A more ridiculous pair it would be hard to find: the wife a mere child, the husband barely more. The Veddas favour such early marriages, saying that, growing up thus together, the two learn to love each other well. Be that as it may, it does seem a most piteous travesty of human matings. Huddled by the hearth and shivering with ague, is old Thanthi mother of the clan, and wife of the dead chief Neela. And, lastly, we have here the most pathetic figure in all Bingoda—Kummi, a girl of fifteen, dust-besmeared, ulcerated, crippled, and so scantily clad that she is ashamed to stand lest she reveal her nakedness. A misery to herself and others, she sits apart with face shyly lowered, taking timid glances every now and then, like some wild thing, from large black lustrous eyes that might have shone befittingly on the face of some proud beauty.

To these, though they now dwelt apart at Mullegama, we must add Kaurala and his family, for he too was of Bingoda, and is maternal uncle of Suthubanda. By his two wives, Balli and Ranni, he has four little sons, Kaira Vamuiya, Heratha, Kalua and Sela; and two daughters, Ranni and Dingi.

These details, though perhaps tedious, serve to bring out vividly the intimate inter-relationships of the Veddas, their apparent disregard of appearance or age in their choice of wives, the promiscuity of life in their one-roomed homes—mother, child and father all lying huddled together in a little space. For all that it must not be assumed that Veddas are devoid of a moral code. A man may have more than one wife, it is true; and, if it pleases him, he may cast her aside like a worn garment; but to each man his own woman while she is his; that is the Vedda law which all respect.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

which the food for the community was cooked, but we do not 841
think they would touch it or assist in any way in the cooking. At Omuni a menstruous woman is isolated under a rough shelter where she is waited upon by a younger unmarried sister or cousin who, it was stated, should not herself have attained puberty. During her seclusion she may eat any food cooked at the ordinary fire, but a special platter is kept for her use. The girls who look after her suffer no restrictions. This happens every time a girl or woman menstruates.

Marriage takes place at an early age; it was said that girls 582
sometimes married before puberty, and as we heard of this at Henebedda, Bandaraduwa, and Omuni, we see no reason to doubt the truth of the statement[1]. At Omuni it was pointed [856]
out that a certain amount of breast development was necessary before marriage, so that it is probable that connection does not antedate puberty by more than a short time.

With regard to the frequency of such child marriages, we 836
can only say that we never saw any very young girls with babies. Perhaps at the present day prenuptial connection is more common than marriage between the very young, though it is obviously difficult to decide when prenuptial love-making [585]
between individuals destined for each other gives place to marriage, among people whose marriages are accompanied with but slight ceremony. It must be remembered that the marriage gift of landed or personal property to a son-in-law, which was [583]
formerly customary, is obsolescent at the present day, and this not only makes it more difficult to determine whether marriage has taken place, but probably actually tends to make the exact time of the assumption of the married state less clearly defined.

On account of these considerations we are unable to express any definite opinion as to the frequency of prenuptial connection, the few instances we heard of were between individuals occupying the relationship of *kura* and *naena*, who would in any case marry each other. Thus Kaira of Henebedda and his wife grew up in the same group, and as they had played together as

[1] We are indebted to Mr Frederick Lewis for the information that this is a common practice among Tamils.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clothing is younger in the case of girls than boys. The boy 855
assumes a piece of rag attached to a string in the same manner 291
as men, while girls wear a piece of stuff fastened round their hips like a sarong. A child's first cloth is put on by its mother without any ceremony. The only toys seen were bows and arrows, and these are possessed by every male child. We never 524
saw a little girl play with a bow and arrow, but mothers make 857
them for the baby boys while these are still crawling about. Such toys of course are small and roughly made, but bigger boys of five years old and upwards make quite neat little bows, and shoot with them tolerably well; they do not feather their arrows. Other children were seen playing with clay and sticks; and girls frequently play with broken pots with which they pretend to cook.

As women take the children with them when they go out to 868
dig for yams little girls soon learn to do this, and boys would begin to be taken out hunting when about ten years old. It was difficult to find out whether the fathers' or mothers' brothers took the greater part in training the boys and it seemed that a lad eager to go out hunting would be taken by any grown man, who in the very small community is usually a relative. Lads would be encouraged by their elders to shoot at a mark with their bows and arrows, and later they would stalk small birds and shoot fish[1].

When a child tells a lie he may be told "Go away, I do not believe what you say," but it appeared that even young children were usually truthful. One thing is taught the lads systematically, that is the method of collecting honey from the combs of the rock bee. Whenever the caves are conveniently situated
a ladder of creepers is suspended from a tree in the jungle 524
above and hangs over the end of the face of rock which forms 857
the cave. On this the youths play at "honey getting." At 868
Pihilegodagalge the lads were quite willing to demonstrate to us how it was done, and the elder men showed clearly that this

[1] Nevill, in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. 1, 1886, p. 189), says ".....a pellet bow is used occasionally by small boys, and birds are often shot with it, though the aim seems very uncertain." Pellet bows were seen at Henebedda, they are used regularly by the Sinhalese in the neighbourhood, and we do not doubt that the practice was introduced by them. [411]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

524 was a game which they encouraged. A lad of about thirteen
857 collected some green leaves and tied them together with creeper,
868 then taking an arrow, a toy *masliya*, and a broken gourd tied with creeper, which hung over his arm, for a *maludema*, he set fire to the leaves and climbed the ladder[1]. While lowering the smoker and letting the smoke blow into the crevice in the rock where the comb was supposed to be, he pretended to cut round its sides with an arrow and thrust at it with his *masliya* (figure 3), from which he transferred the honey into the gourd. As he descended from the ladder he beat his chest and sides as though driving off the bees, and directly he reached the ground rushed into the jungle to escape from them, all the smaller children imitating him with great glee. Obviously this was a well-known and favourite game, for even the elders took part in it, throwing their cloths over their heads and running into the jungle.

524 At Henebedda (which we visited before Pihilegodagalge)
857 there were no children present when we spoke about honey getting, but four young men were eager to show us how it was done and acted the scene with great spirit. They took from our camp a piece of white and a piece of brown paper, and fastened them with some wax to the roof of their cave, then as there was no tree above the cave around which to fasten a creeper, one man crouched on the top of the rock and held the ends of the ladder in his hands, another stood above and lowered a smoker of green leaves while a third climbed the ladder and collected the honey from the white paper and the grubs from the brown. Afterwards the collector divided the spoil equally and amid much laughter they all sat down and pretended to eat one actually going through the pantomime of washing his hands after the meal. They eat the grubs as well as the honey.

[439] As regards clothing, pedlars have brought them cloth for so
291 long that no Vedda living knows what was done when they could not buy it, but it is generally stated that they made bar

[1] The *maludema* is the vessel made of deerskin in which honey should be collected and the *masliya* the wooden four-pronged implement with which the comb is broken up and transferred to the *maludema*. For figures of *maludema* and *masliya*, see Plate LXV and figure 3 (p. 93) respectively.

[412 415]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

562 609 "It is probable good-looking women have often been kept back by others who had not equal confidence in me[1]."

855 Veddas are affectionate and indulgent parents, never refusing a small child anything it wants and giving it always of the best. We have frequently seen men save for their children food which had been given to them and which they considered specially good, such as bananas or coconuts. The babies are generally happy, but should they cry their wishes are immediately gratified by either parent. We saw a naked boy of about two and a half years strut proudly up and down outside Pihilegodagalge with his father's axe hung on his shoulder, he was extremely happy and all went well until he threatened one of the dogs with the axe, then his mother was obliged to interfere and the child tried to hit her with it; the father seeing this got up and tried to coax the child into giving up the axe, but the boy was now excited and would not give it up, at last he flung it at his father and hit his leg. The man was obviously annoyed and threw the axe from him into the jungle, but he did not attempt to scold or punish the child who was now howling with rage, indeed, after a little while some food was given him to pacify him.

Another time a woman who had been cutting yams with a knife put this down, when her baby snatched it up, and although she was obliged to watch lest he hurt himself, she allowed him to play with the knife. Yet when a child is old enough to wear a little rag in the way of clothing, possibly from
858 six to eight years old, he is expected to behave himself properly and strange to say he does so. One day it was raining heavily, and we were all sitting in the rock shelter at Pihilegodagalge; at the further end of the cave we noticed a lad of seven or nine years old having a heated argument with his mother, suddenly he turned round and went out into the rain, when he returned he had controlled his temper; later we remarked on this and were told that the lad was considered old enough to behave as a man; a boy of this age would not hit his mother as a little
855 child might do and yet be excused. It may here be mentioned
291 that children of both sexes go naked until about six or seven years old, though perhaps the general age for the assumption of

[1] *Taprobanian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 192.

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

clothing is younger in the case of girls than boys. The boy assumes a piece of rag attached to a string in the same manner as men, while girls wear a piece of stuff fastened round their hips like a sarong. A child's first cloth is put on by its mother without any ceremony. The only toys seen were bows and arrows, and these are possessed by every male child. We never saw a little girl play with a bow and arrow, but mothers make them for the baby boys while these are still crawling about. Such toys of course are small and roughly made, but bigger boys of five years old and upwards make quite neat little bows, and shoot with them tolerably well; they do not feather their arrows. Other children were seen playing with clay and sticks; and girls frequently play with broken pots with which they pretend to cook.

As women take the children with them when they go out to dig for yams little girls soon learn to do this, and boys would begin to be taken out hunting when about ten years old. It was difficult to find out whether the fathers' or mothers' brothers took the greater part in training the boys and it seemed that a lad eager to go out hunting would be taken by any grown man, who in the very small community is usually a relative. Lads would be encouraged by their elders to shoot at a mark with their bows and arrows, and later they would stalk small birds and shoot fish[1].

When a child tells a lie he may be told "Go away, I do not believe what you say," but it appeared that even young children were usually truthful. One thing is taught the lads systematically, that is the method of collecting honey from the combs of the rock bee. Whenever the caves are conveniently situated a ladder of creepers is suspended from a tree in the jungle above and hangs over the end of the face of rock which forms the cave. On this the youths play at "honey getting." At Pihilegodagalge the lads were quite willing to demonstrate to us how it was done, and the elder men showed clearly that this

[1] Nevill, in the *Taprobanian* (Vol. 1, 1886, p. 189), says ".....a pellet bow is used occasionally by small boys, and birds are often shot with it, though the aim seems very uncertain." Pellet bows were seen at Henebedda, they are used regularly by the Sinhalese in the neighbourhood, and we do not doubt that the practice was introduced by them.

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

was a game which they encouraged. A lad of about thirteen collected some green leaves and tied them together with creeper, then taking an arrow, a toy *masliya*, and a broken gourd tied with creeper, which hung over his arm, for a *maludema*, he set fire to the leaves and climbed the ladder[1]. While lowering the smoker and letting the smoke blow into the crevice in the rock where the comb was supposed to be, he pretended to cut round its sides with an arrow and thrust at it with his *masliya* (figure 3), from which he transferred the honey into the gourd. As he descended from the ladder he beat his chest and sides as though driving off the bees, and directly he reached the ground rushed into the jungle to escape from them, all the smaller children imitating him with great glee. Obviously this was a well-known and favourite game, for even the elders took part in it, throwing their cloths over their heads and running into the jungle.

At Henebedda (which we visited before Pihilegodagalge) there were no children present when we spoke about honey getting, but four young men were eager to show us how it was done and acted the scene with great spirit. They took from our camp a piece of white and a piece of brown paper, and fastened them with some wax to the roof of their cave, then as there was no tree above the cave around which to fasten a creeper, one man crouched on the top of the rock and held the ends of the ladder in his hands, another stood above and lowered a smoker of green leaves while a third climbed the ladder and collected the honey from the white paper and the grubs from the brown. Afterwards the collector divided the spoil equally and amid much laughter they all sat down and pretended to eat, one actually going through the pantomime of washing his hands after the meal. They eat the grubs as well as the honey.

As regards clothing, pedlars have brought them cloth for so long that no Vedda living knows what was done when they could not buy it, but it is generally stated that they made bark

[1] The *maludema* is the vessel made of deerskin in which honey should be collected and the *masliya* the wooden four-pronged implement with which the comb is broken up and transferred to the *maludema*. For figures of *maludema* and *masliya*, see Plate LXV and figure 3 (p. 93) respectively.

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
AX5 Vedda AX5

They are very rude in their cookery, often burning the flesh in the fire, which they produce by rubbing together two pieces of the wood of the vellan tree (*Pterospermum suberifolium*, Sam.). A hole is scooped in one piece with an arrow-blade, and the other, which is pointed, is inserted into it, and twirled rapidly round between the hands till it ignites. [252] 372

They are fond of betel, when they can get it; but in lieu of the compound which goes by this name, they have the following substitutes. Instead of the betel leaf, they eat the astringent bark of the demette tree (*Gmelina Asiatica*, *L.*), or the leaves of an aromatic plant called the madurutala (*Ocimum sanctum*—or *O. canum*, *L.*) For areka nut, they chew the bark of the moratree (*Nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the oupaloo or wellan connitta tree; and calcined snail shells, or the bark of the areloo tree (*Terminalia chebula*, Retz.), supplies the place of lime or chunam, which forms so important an ingredient in a prepared quid of betel. They do not smoke, and are very temperate, drinking water only. 276 824 [237] [271]

I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The "wilder sort" have had too little communication with the Singhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessaries of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrow-heads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax and honey, elk flesh, and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Singhalese, or "the ubiquitous Moors." 177 [439]

They are very harmless, too; though, according to Knox, were much dreaded once. Even yet there are traditions that they kidnapped children, ran off with young girls, way-laid travellers, and attacked the tavalams or bullock-caravans. But now, at any rate, they are as peaceful as it is possible to be. They are proverbially truthful and honest. They are fond of their children, who early become useful to them; the boys soon are familiar with the use of the bow, while the girls, armed with a pointed stick, add to the family larder at a very tender age, by killing the iguano, and digging for wild yams. 648 181 [868]

Their constancy to their wives is a very remarkable trait in their character in a country where conjugal fidelity is certainly not classed as the highest of domestic virtues. Infidelity, whether in the husband or the wife, appears to be unknown, and I was 837

kadura (*strychnos, nux vomica*), the diwi kaduru (*taberna montana dichotoma*, Roxb.), the kolong (*nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb.), the milla (*vitex altissima*, Linn.), the mora (*nephelium longanum*, Camb.), the kaluwera (ebony, *ebenum*, Retz.), which they say would stupify them; but though the three first mentioned trees would be injurious, it is probably that the rest would be harmless. [824] [261]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

with the Sinhalese, although, unless for the purpose of barter, they avoid intercourse with strangers. Their wants, however, are so few, that they rarely emerge from their forests[1].

"I need not say that they are very simple and primitive in their habits. The 'wilder sort' have had too little communication with Sinhalese to have acquired the vices of civilization. The few necessities of life which the forest does not supply, such as steel and iron for their arrowheads and axes, and the very scanty clothing which they wear, they obtain by barter, their wax, and honey, elk flesh and ivory, being eagerly sought after by the neighbouring Sinhalese, or 'the ubiquitous Moors'[2]."

There are no puberty ceremonies for either sex, except among certain Veddas who have been much influenced by Tamils or Sinhalese, among whom the girls are isolated for a short time at puberty. Thus although the following ceremony is observed at puberty by the Uniche Veddas, there is no doubt that it has been borrowed from the local Sinhalese who have a similar ceremony, though according to our information the latter people do not break the pot. When a girl becomes unwell for the first time one of her *naena* places a pot of water on her head and goes with her to some place where there is a *nuga* tree. Here the *naena* takes the pot from the girl's head and dashes it on the ground so that the pot breaks. The girl is then secluded in a specially built shelter in which she stays until the end of the period, when she washes and returns to her parents' house. During her seclusion she is attended by a girl, always one of her *naena*, who brings her food in a vessel set apart for this purpose but which is not cooked at a special fire. Among the wilder Veddas no special measures are taken when a woman menstruates, she is allowed to eat the ordinary food, and to sleep in the cave as usual. But among all the village Veddas, and most of those who have mixed at all with the Sinhalese, the menstruous women are strictly isolated, a little shelter being built for them a few paces from the family hut (Plate XX). At Bendiyagalge, where the Henebedda and Kolombedda people were staying at the time of our visit, menstruous women stayed apart at one corner of the cave, they were fed from the pot in

[1] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 285—286. [2] Bailey, *op. cit.* p. 291.